



The Journal

April - June 2008



*"Change will come from the bottom up and not from the top down."
From the first issue of Corpus Canada Journal, July 1989*

From Corpus Canada Journal, January/February 1990, issue #3

THE ONE WHO PRESIDES AT EUCHARIST

by Richard T. Szafranski reprinted with permission from Worship, July 1989

It is difficult for most Catholics today to imagine ministry not being built up around liturgy. The focus is still on the ordained liturgical ministry, primarily because it is in the liturgy that we most experience church. Part of the difficulty also is that we seem to have lost the sense of ownership of the church, lost the sense that each one of us is important and has a role. All too often, the sense of church is what "happens to me" rather than what "we do".

It is noteworthy that in the early church, ministry did not develop around the celebration of the eucharist or other liturgical celebrations. The focus was rather on the building up of the community with preaching and leadership. The ministry of leadership meant that leaders served as models through whom the community could identify the gospel.

Who presided at eucharist did not seem to be a concern in the early church... A special authorization was not seen as necessary. Thus according to Schillebeeckx, the hosts and hostesses of the churches presided at eucharist precisely because they were also leaders in the community. This concern was not with succession or continuity of ministry but rather "the apostolic tradition or content of faith... In the early church there was really an essential link between the community and its leaders, and therefore between the community leader and the community celebrating the eucharist."

This essential link is crucial for the ministry of community leadership. Thus the modern-day question of whether a "lay-person" could preside at eucharist would not have made sense to the early church community. "Anyone who was required by the community to preside over the community (and thus at eucharist) ipso facto became the authorized leader of the community." This link to the community is very important even as the concept of "priest" and "priesthood" begins to develop....

Raymond Brown points out that "We have no basis for assuming that early Christians would have considered as a priest the one who presided at the eucharistic meal." He believes that perhaps the reason for this was that the early Christians accepted the Jewish priesthood. This may well have been true, but in describing the Old Testament priesthood, Brown says, "The priest was an intermediary between God and men, the bridge uniting them in a two-way interchange." Could it not also be that the early Christians did not see the one who presided at the eucharist as a priest because they did not need an intermediary? The Risen Lord was already in their midst.

The development of the Christian concept of "priest" and of "priest as the one who presided at eucharist" was a gradual process in the early church. Because of this, Brown states that we "must of necessity modify our understanding of the claim that historically Jesus instituted the priesthood at the Last Supper." It was only as the belief in the sacrificial nature of the eucharist grew, that the one who presided at eucharist was seen as exercising a priestly role.

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FOCUS TOPIC

for the July - September 2008 Issue

There is no Focus Topic for this issue

Note: Articles for this issue are due by August 15.

Reader's may send in items of interest to the Corpus Canada Forum at
www.corpuscanada.org

Sophia

by Dianne Peck, Halifax, NS



I have two purposes in writing this edition of the Sophia column. One is that I want to share some thoughts on the focus topic, which is how our favorite books feed our soul, and the other is that I want to respond to two of the contributions to the recent Corpus-n list dialogue.

My response is to Rev. Michele Birch-Connery,

woman-priest and her sister Roman Catholic women priests, and to Alanna Menu following the announcement by her husband Arthur of Alanna's ordination in the United Church in Victoria, BC on May 25, 2008.

To bridge the seemingly unconnected space between these two topics, I am taking great literary license and speaking from my heart to Michele and Alanna, through the voice of the late John O'Donohue as he speaks to us in his mystical and magical and long-standing soul-piece, *Anam Cara*, a book that speaks more powerfully every time I return to it. Most of the content of this article I have copied directly from the book, and then inserted a few sign posts in order to direct and personalize the author's message. All acknowledgements belong to John O'Donohue and his book, *Anam Cara*.

From John O'Donohue to my beloved sisters and ordained ministers, Michele and her RCWP sisters, and Alanna:

Your presence as ordained women is much more profound than you can realize. To the world and to all of us you are:

Light

Immediately before dawn the darkness deepens and becomes more anonymous. If one had never been to the world you couldn't possibly imagine how the darkness breaks, how the mystery and color of a new day arrive. When you attend to the way the dawn comes, you learn how light can coax the dark...pull the mantle of darkness away from the world.

Darkness is the ancient womb. Night-time is womb-time when our souls come out to play.

We desperately need a new and gentle light where the soul can shelter and reveal its ancient belonging. We need a light that has retained its kinship with the darkness. For we are sons and daughters of the darkness and the light.

You are that new light.

Love

When love awakens in our life, in the night of our heart, it is like the dawn breaking within us. Where before there was anonymity, now there is intimacy; where before there was fear, now there is courage; where before in our life there was awkwardness, now there is gracefulness; where before we used to be jagged, now we are elegant and in rhythm with ourselves.

The sacrament of baptism includes a special anointing for the

baby's heart. The heart is anointed as a main organ of the baby's health, but also as the place where all its feelings will nest. The prayer intends that the child will have a fluency of feeling in its life, that its feelings may flow freely and carry its soul out of the world and gather from the world delight and peace.

Love and love alone can awaken what is divine within us. In love we come home to ourselves.

In the warmth of love the soul can be itself. All the possibilities of our human destiny are asleep in our soul. We are here to realize and honor these possibilities. When love comes into our life, unrecognized dimensions of our destiny awaken and blossom and grow.

Love is the sister of the soul. It is the deepest language and presence of the soul.

The greatest gift new love brings into our life is the awakening to the hidden love within.

You are that new love.

Presence

Presence is the way a person's individuality comes toward you. It is the soul texture of the person.

We need to bring sound out of silence and coax the invisible to become visible.

Words are like the god Janus, they are outward and inward at the same time.

Human presence is a creative and turbulent sacrament. Nowhere else is there such intimate and frightening access to the mystery.

You and your words are that presence.

The Body

The human body is beautiful. It is such a privilege to be embodied, and perhaps even more so to be female embodiment.

We have a relationship to a place through the body. Our body is our clay home; our body is the only home we have in this universe. It is in and through our body that our soul becomes visible and real for us.

Our body is our home on earth, the place where the soul shows itself.

The body is the angel who expresses and minds the soul. The body, in particular the female body, has been a scapegoat for the deceptions and poisons of the mind. It has been much sinned against even in a religion based on the Incarnation. Religion has often presented the body as the source of evil, ambiguity, lust and seduction. It has used the body's gender as a dividing line and a point for exclusion.

This is utterly false and irreverent. The body is sacred. It is sacrament.

All our inner life and intimacy of soul longs to find an outer mirror. It longs for a form in which it can be seen and felt and touched. The body is the mirror where the secret world of the soul comes to expression.

Our body knows us very intimately; it is aware of our whole spirit and soul life. Far sooner than our mind, our

body knows how privileged it is to be here.

A primordial innocence surrounds the body, an incredible brightness and goodness. Because the body is in the soul and the soul suffuses us completely, the body is illuminated all around with soul light. It is suffused with a gentle sacred light.

The body is the angel of life.

You, woman-priest, are that body.

Anam Cara

In everyone's life there is great need for an anam cara. Anam is the Gaelic word for soul. Cara is the word for friend. When you have an anam cara you are joined in an ancient and eternal way with the friend of your soul.

In this love we are understood as we are. When we are understood, we are at home.

When we really feel understood, we feel free to release ourselves into the trust and shelter of the other person's soul. This act of love

discloses the special and sacred identity of the other person.

Jesus said, Behold, I call you friends. Jesus is the secret anam cara of every individual. Many people have an anam cara of whom they are not truly aware. It is wise to pray for the grace of recognition. Inspired by awareness, we may then discover beside us the anam cara of whom our longing has always dreamed.

A friend is a loved one who awakens our life in order to free the wild possibilities within us.

You are that friend.

Sophia wisdom:

"The soul knows".

Gordon Lang

"The soul knows the geography of our destiny better than the mind ever will".

John O'Donohue

My Ordination: Yesterday, Today, & Tomorrow

by *Emil Kutarna, Regina, SK*



The Pen is mightier than the Sword, so they say. The sword can kill, and so can the pen. Yet the pen can heal, but the sword cannot. The sword penetrates the world of matter, but

the pen cuts deep into the spirit. From the mighty fountain of the pen flow books, some that heal and some that kill. May I share with you my journey of how the pen became for me a sword that killed, and then a revelation that healed. The books I've read have profoundly changed my life. I will look back on this memory through the lens of my ordination.

"Yesterday"

So on May 29th this year I will have been ordained fifty-three years! I can't believe it. I remember being on cloud nine. The seven long years of Seminary were actually over! I was realizing my boyhood dream! There were just two of us ordinandi vesting in the Cathedral sacristy. My mother had sewn a beautiful linen alb and decorated the bottom half with crochet work that took her countless hours that only a mother's pride for her priest son could know. My dad had a beautiful golden chasuble especially tailored for me. The family of five brothers and a sister had commissioned a local sculptor to create a chalice of hammered silver with turquoise inlay, which the bishop agreed to be used for the ordination Mass. Everything was perfect. I'm sure I was in ecstasy as I prostrated before the Archbishop and the choir chanted the ancient "Veni

Creator Spiritus..."

I suppose most priests of my day could relate. The first blessing is for the Archbishop, he kneels before me, his new priest! Then blessing mom and dad and the family and friends, everyone kissing the newly anointed hands of the priest. Wow!

Those first years were a honeymoon. I couldn't be happier: celebrating Mass with such reverence (not like some of the older priest mumbling away); listening with such compassion to the humble confessions of everyday people, giving nothing but encouragement along with a light penance. Visiting families at home, baptisms, weddings, funerals, anointing the sick – everything I did, people couldn't thank me enough. Wow!

Why was I so happy? Some of it, surely, was because of what I read, before Seminary days. Remember the poem *The Beautiful hands of the Priest*? That was my dream. In the Seminary I finally got to learn the secrets of God. I was especially drawn by Tanqueray's *The Spiritual Life*. And the Scripture courses, finally getting to know the Bible. And then with *De Sacramentis* by Noldin, like a thirsty dog I lapped up the real work of the priest. Life was so beautiful! I am a priest at last! Even the Angels bow before the priest, because they cannot change the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus. AND I CAN! Wow!

"Today"

That lasted fifteen years. Fifteen beautiful years. The Second Vatican Council came along. "The game was afoot" as Sherlock Holmes would say. The sword of the spirit was drawn, and it began to cut and it also began to kill. Old ideas were slain – oh, not without a battle, sometimes fierce. New books, new authors, Kung, Schillebeeckx, Haring, Suenens, Rahner, Baum, to list a few. These were cutting away a lot of dead stuff, but still the Redemption theology hung on in my soul. I still went to Mass. I celebrated Mass sometimes, and felt it a privilege. I did a few Baptisms, heard a few confessions. After all, I was still a priest.

My Ordination Continued...

Then the axe really began to hack away. New books, not all by Catholic authors. Some attacked the notion of God, like Hitchens and Dawkins. Anglican Bishop Spong exposed the sins of Scripture. Joseph Campbell explained Myth. Manning questioned whether the Pope was Catholic. Other swords cut and cut, old ideas fell like rotting trees. Books by Tillich, Mary Malone, Karen Armstrong, Boff, Darwin, Schussler Fiorenza, Teilhard de Chardin, Morwood, O'Muchu, Chopra, Dalai Lama, Rosemary Ruether, and such like. What died? Adam and Eve, Original Sin, virginity of Mary, divinity of Jesus (as popularly understood), the Real Presence through transubstantiation, the Resurrection (as popularly understood),

Redemption (as popularly understood), heaven and hell, and a few other ideas that I can't think of right now. Is this enough to excommunicate me?

"Tomorrow"

So where does that leave me? What is my future? Well, I don't have all the answers, but I'm reading on. The books don't scare me anymore. Strangely, I feel free, yet there is a twinge of nostalgia. Am I no longer a priest? But I loved the ministry; it fed my ego and lifted my spirit. How and to whom do I pray? What happens when I die? That could be anytime, I'm seventy-eight. I must read more quickly! Emil.

Spirituality: Favourite Lines, Stories, Books

by Chris Diamond, Cobble Hill, BC



"Two girls discover/ the secret of life/ in a sudden line of poetry/ I who don't know the/ secret wrote the line./ They told me/ they had found it/ but not what it was,/ not even What line it was./ I love them/ for finding what I can't find./ And for wanting to know it./ for assuming there is/ such a secret, yes,/ for that most of all." ("The Secret" by Denise Levertov)

"The world is charged with the grandeur of God" wrote Gerard Manley Hopkins and I know that he was not talking about books. But much literature is charged with the grandeur of God. Sure enough, not all of the books, stories, or poems that I read are worthwhile though there is generally something to learn in each of them. It does not take too long to find out which ones to set aside and which ones to spend time with. And then there are those that are worth returning to over and over again for the pleasure they give.

That's part of the treasure of literature- finding the words from a Levertov or a Hopkins and being free to use them in order to express an idea that may be far different from what the original intended. In 1977, Edward Fischer wrote a little book, *Everybody Steals from God*, and even when I don't remember all that he wrote in it, I remember well the title, and his words have provided enough justification for my borrowing ideas and words from others and making use of them in my own spiritual development.

"The world is not with us enough./ **O taste and see/** meaning **The Lord,**/ meaning / if anything all that lives to the imagination's tongue/ (we) transform into our flesh, living in the orchard and being/ hungry, and plucking/ the fruit." (Levertov, "O Taste and See") That's a spiritual principle I can live with. "O taste and see that the Lord is good." (Ps 34:8) meaning that all creation is the revelation of God's goodness. Thanks, Denise, I can identify with the way you put it.

Karl Rahner put it another way, "The world and its history are terrible and sublime liturgy, breathing of death and sacrifice, which God celebrates and causes to be celebrated in and through human history in its freedom..." (quoted by Andrew D. Ciferni, O. Praem in Assembly Vol 18:3, May 1992 in a worthwhile article on the web in which he reviews *The Rituals of Dinner* by Margaret Visser) My thanks to Fischer, Ciferni, Visser, and Rahner who requires a lot more thinking about.

Images, metaphors, allusions, they do not all have to be ponderous to be deep, delightful and memorable:

"Miracles occur./ If you care to call those spasmodic/ Tricks of radiance miracles..." wrote Sylvia Plath in "Black Rook in Rainy Weather";

"Frogs sit more solid / Than anything sits... Heads high/ Like Italian tenors..." is from Norman MacCaig's "Frogs";

"My father worked with a horse-plough... I was a nuisance, tripping, falling./ Yapping always. But today/ It is my father who keeps stumbling/ Behind me, and will not go away." Seamus Heaney in "Follower";

"I sure would hate to do this all my life./ And dammit, that's just what/ I've gone and done." Gary Snyder in "Hay for the Horses";

"God made me *me*./ He made you *you*./ For God's sake/ Let me be *me*." Roland Tombekei Dempster in "Africa's Plea";

"I saw a famous man eating soup... When I saw him./ He sat bending his head over a plate/ Putting soup in his mouth with a spoon." Carl Sandburg's "Soup";

Sounds sum and summon the remembering of summers./ The humming of the sun/ The mumbling in the honeysuckle vine/ The whirring in the clovered grass/ The pizzicato plinkle of ice in an auburn uncle's amber glass." Isabella Gardner in "Summer Remembered".

Spirituality Continued...

"I hang my cap on a crag./ And bare my head to the wind that comes/
Blowing through the pine trees." written about 750 A.D. by Li Po, "A
Summer Day" translated by Shigeyoshi Obata;

"Receive, dear friend, the truths I teach;/ So shalt thou live beyond the
reach/ Of adverse Fortune's power." Horace "To Licinius" translated by
William Cooper.

The world, Nature, the farm, personal expression, the ordinary, the
familiar seen through another's eyes, each one is part of the grandeur of
God who inspired authors to proclaim it loudly.

Stories, myths, legends, history, and fiction, real and imagined, each a
meditation beautifully crafted, provide substance for spiritual reflection.
For example, for me it is impossible to assess these in the Bible
without a grasp of the history of the Hebrews, the Israelites, and the
Jews. The various possible interpretations of the biblical stories,
myths, legends, insights are contained in their texts: the literal, the
parabolic, the allegorical, the cultic interpretations, and the
combinations of these in getting to what they may have meant to the
followers of G-d. Others may read the Bible stories without giving any
thought to the various interpretations. There has been much mystical
reflection- and a lot of nonsense and abuse- that has come about without
considering these interpretations.

The history of the beautiful "Canticle of Canticles" is a good example
of the various interpretations. The Canticle has been a favourite for
Jews and Christians though it does not mention G-d. It does transport
readers to another world and lays out love-sick lovers' longings,
language, allusions, customs, images, and metaphors in a collection of
love songs that are older than the Jews and, of course, Christians.
Lovers can still be transported by it. But because it is not "religious",
some think that it must mean more than what it says. Many Jews
claim it depicts the relationship between G-d and Israel, and Christians
claim it is about Christ and the Church. Isn't it enough to describe the
ecstasy of one lover for another? My thanks goes to the Jews for the
inspiration to preserve the Canticle and the other stories of Ruth,
Jonah, Judith, Esther, Tobit, Joseph....

Stories take the reader vicariously to other worlds. James Herriot's
adventures among the Yorkshire farmers tell the story of their care for
animals in the struggle to eke out a living in an age that no longer
exists. With Joseph O'Connor's historic novel, *Star of the Sea*, I made
a trip across the Atlantic on a famine ship bound for New York in
November 1847. O'Connor blended the horror of the voyage with the
background history of the people on the voyage. I can't usually read
books about Ireland's Great Famine, but O'Connor's book, like Walter
Macken's *Silent People*, tells of the hardships through the stories of a
few people. O'Connor uses historical letters, newspaper accounts, and
ship's documents to substantiate the reality of the story. For example,
"History happens in the first person but is told in the third" was written
by one of the main characters in a school essay. G. G. Dixon of the
New York Times writes in the epilogue "We still tell each other that
we are lucky to be alive, when our being alive has almost nothing to do
with luck, but with geography, pigmentation, and international
exchange rates. Perhaps this new century will see a new dispensation,
or perhaps we will continue to allow the starvation of the luckless, and
continue to call it an accident, not a working-out of logic."

Through stories I have also rediscovered and rekindled earlier images
and sentiments that I had forgotten. In the "The Wolf of Gubbio" I

recall that harmony can be restored between opposing powers,
and I picture again the hills around Assisi.

John R. Aurelio's *Earth Stories* has also been a fund of tales for
reflection:

"Flight of the Eagle" is an Aurelio story about a fledgling eagle.
"Flapping his still immature wings and testing his bravado" he
is tumbled out of the aerie high up above a cliff face onto a ledge
where he forlornly cries for help until his cry is heard by one of
his parents. The only way the parent can help is to convince the
youngster to jump off the ledge.

"You must be joking," he shot back.

"There's no other way," says the parent.

"I'm afraid," he says.

"Trust me," says the parent. "I will bear you up on my wings."
Aurelio tells the story well, but I have added to it and used it at
weddings. The young eagle grows up and falls in love and finally
has to take courage and leave the nest to follow his loved one
into their own new life together. The story helps to build trust in
those who care for us and courage to form new relationships with
faith in the future. Thanks, John, for the inspiration.

Tales Of The City Of God by Carlos G. Valles, S.J. is a
collection of stories of the East that has given me much to
reflect on. In it Valles gives the Sufi version of "Good Luck?
Bad Luck?" attributed to Sheik Mohammed Jamaludin of
Adrianople in 1750. This is a story of Fatima whose experiences
that were unpleasant at the time turn out to make for her future
happiness. There are almost 250 traditions in this collection and
each one of them has something for reflection.

In the Diamond home on Christmas Eve we have a tradition that
everyone has enjoyed for nearly 40 years. After supper, the
family gathers round our Christmas candle and the crib that we
made (Years ago the young ones named it "the Jesus farm".) and
in the Christmas lights we tell stories: Jesus' birth story from
Matthew and Luke; Christmas tales or poems that we have found
earlier and would like everyone to hear; favourite Christmases
from our past, and so on. It's not only a quiet time but a fun
time with questions and comments and quiet moments too. It's
the right time for it. It is God's gift to us, the inspiration of a
moment.

Joseph F. Downey S.J. writes the following:

"Scholars and other interpreters of the human experience have
begun to see that the deeper side of life- call it the faith side- can
be reached intuitively and richly examined via story, myth...
Thus Christian myths- symbolic stories presenting the ideals,
attitudes, values of a believing people- are receiving attention
from spiritual writers. Alternatively, myths are the Scriptures
with emphasis on the Gospels as portraits of Jesus... As such,
they speak primarily to our hearts and feelings." Preface to *Tales
Of The City Of God*, Loyola UP, Chicago

*front cover photos of Jesus & the disciples and the
oikoumene cross by Christie Diamond*

Two Models Of Priesthood

by Bishop Pat Fresen

TWO MODELS OF PRIESTHOOD - CONVERGENCES AND DIVERGENCES ORDAINED MINISTRY AS ENVISIONED BY RCWP AND THE DUTCH DOMINICANS



A Church in Crisis

Our church is in crisis on many fronts. But the good news is that responses and solutions to the crisis are emerging which are moving the church forward in the great paradigm shift which is happening in our times. It is a *kairos* time, “when the church is called to return to its

authentic, deeper self”.

The two particular aspects of the ecclesial crisis on which I wish to focus are:

- liberation from sexism by embodying equality for women and men, especially in ministry, and
- the shortage of priests in the West, especially in Europe and North America.

We all know that official church teaching holds firmly to the view that only celibate males can be ordained and that only these ordained celibate men may lead Eucharistic and other sacramental celebrations. Women are excluded from diaconate and priestly ministry. Many parishes are being shut down, not because there are not enough parishioners but because there are not enough priests. The few priests left have to go around the parishes in turn to celebrate Eucharist and the other sacraments, and in some cases they are able to visit each parish community only once every few months. Or else, priests from the East or Eastern Europe or Africa are imported to minister in Europe and North America, and this often does not work out well. For the official church, the need to enforce their rigid model of priesthood, to insist that it is reserved to celibate males, is more important than the right of communities to celebrate Eucharist.

People have a right to the sacraments, the sacraments are for the people, and the people are coming up with alternative solutions to the critical shortage of priests as well as to the unjust exclusion of women from priestly ministry. It is a scandal that “the church that speaks justice to the world, refuses to practice justice within the church itself”.

Women in Ministry

There is now new evidence that women were in ministry in the church for 1500 years. The research by Dr. Dorothy Irvin and the latest book by Gary Macy are just two examples of the growing body of scholarly literature that give ample evidence of this.

Since the 1960's, the contemporary impetus for women's ordination has been reawakened in Europe and North America. In the 1990's, the group now called Roman Catholic Womenpriests (RCWP) started preparing seriously for ordination and in 2002 they found a bishop

who was willing to ordain them. Several of them were subsequently ordained as bishops, so that the ordinations of women could continue. For the sake of credibility and also as a matter of justice, these women are ordained in apostolic succession. Women have the right, not only to be ordained to the diaconate, priesthood and episcopacy, but to be ordained in the same way, in the same tradition, as men. At this early stage of women's ordination, it is important, even essential, to claim this right. The sacrament of Orders is founded on baptism, not on gender.

However, it is possible that, once women's right to be ordained equally with men, and in the same way, is more firmly established, there may be some new developments. These could include a new, broader understanding of apostolic succession (I will develop this thought a little more further on.) and also a renewed model of priesthood within a renewed church. This is already happening, both in RCWP and in the new model of ministry put forward by the Dutch Dominicans.

Different Models of Priesthood

•RCWP model

As the RCWP women and men are ordained, for they are striving to exemplify a different, renewed model of priesthood, one which is not a sellout to hierarchy and clericalism. Their structures are community - based, not pyramidal; there is no promise of obedience to the bishop but they all try to live in prophetic obedience to the Spirit; their structures and liturgies are inclusive rather than exclusive; they do not regard themselves as being members of the clerical caste in the sense of being higher or better or holier than others - (they do not believe that ordination brings about a change in essence); priesthood is in the first place a ministry, not a status - symbol and they try to live servant - leadership; they generally avoid the use of titles or clerical collars or mitres. Finally, there is no insistence on priestly celibacy: priesthood is a separate issue, a separate calling, from being married, single, hetero - or homosexual. It is very difficult to hold these two elements together: to stand within the line of apostolic succession, on the one hand, and to build and live a non - hierarchical, inclusive model of priesthood on the other. One walks a very thin line here, in fact, the RCWP community is making the road by walking it. But it can be done, it is being done.

•Dutch model

The Dutch Dominicans' document, entitled *The Church and Ministry*, holds many of the same perspectives and values about priesthood as RCWP. Their starting - point, however, is different. They start with the alarming shortage of priests in the parishes and they point out that the “Services of Word and Communion” led by chosen members of the parish, are usually recognized as Eucharist and many people see little or no difference between those services and a Mass celebrated by a priest. The document asks the question: Does celebrating the Eucharist depend on the ministry of ordained celibate men? Their answer is a clear NO and they point to what is already taking place in many parishes in the Netherlands and other countries in Europe, where the community calls forth its own pastors. These may be men or women, married or single, gay or straight.

What the communities are looking for are people who can be

Two Models Of Priesthood Continued...

leaders within the community, people with a faith that is inspiring, people who can empower others and minister to and with them. The community chooses the person they want to be their pastor; they ensure that the person has sufficient training and they then present the person to the bishop and ask that the bishop confirm their choice, hopefully by ordination. However, they insist that, if the bishop refuses to ordain the person, (most likely because the candidate is married or is a woman) *“parishes may be confident that they are able to celebrate a real and genuine Eucharist when they are together in prayer and share bread and wine.”*

This position has elicited much criticism. The French theologian, Fr. Herve Legrand, for instance excoriates the entire proposal as leading to schism. But Prof. Herman Haering writes: Perhaps Dutch Catholics are thinking about this point more critically and accurately than is the teaching church.”

Broader View of Apostolic Succession

To return to the question of apostolic succession, I suggest that our whole understanding of apostolic succession could be considerably broadened. It does mean that the tradition of laying on of hands for community ministry comes down to us through the centuries from the time of the early church, and in fact goes back even beyond that. However, it need not necessarily be limited to the laying on of hands by the bishop only. When we trace what we call apostolic succession, it usually goes back, in its written form, to some time during the Middle Ages. This is a hierarchical form of apostolic succession, passed down from one bishop to the next. It could still be accepted as apostolic succession, I propose, if the community, not the bishop, were to lay on hands, and that would fit the communitarian model. However, as I have said, I do not think we can omit the present intermediate stage of being ordained in apostolic succession, at least for women.

To sum up:

Convergences:

Both models:

- are responses to the crisis in the RC church, especially regarding priesthood
- see themselves as *within* the RC church, not sects, not split - off groups, although both groups are accused of schism
- are somewhat subversive, part of an “underground church” not officially recognized, but growing among the people of God and I believe it will not be too long before these models of priesthood will replace the present model
- have a similar ecclesiology: Church is, in the first place, the People of God.
- have community - based, rather than hierarchical, structures.
- have a similar theology of priesthood, one which is non



- sexist and non •clericalist.
- ecumenically inclusive.
- include the desire for ordination by a bishop.

Divergences:

•RCWP places more emphasis on apostolic succession in ordination. This is done to claim equality for women who have a right to be ordained in the same way as men. The Dutch model places more emphasis on the role of the community in selecting, supporting and even ordaining the candidate. RCWP is presently also placing more and more emphasis on community selection and support.

Combination Of Two Models, Or Harmonious Co-Existence

However, the two models could possibly be combined for the benefit of all concerned.

Once a person has been elected by the community for priestly ministry in the Dutch Dominicans' model, he or she could go through the RCWP program of preparation for priesthood and be ordained by RCWP bishops. At this stage, it seems like wishful thinking to hope that local (male) bishops would be willing to ordain women who are RCWP candidates - though they may be willing to ordain the men.

Alternatively, the two models can certainly co-exist in mutual respect and support, for they embrace a similar model of church and priesthood, one towards which the church is inevitably moving. It would be a good idea to find ways for members of both groups to get to know one another better, possibly by internet and by means of a shared conference.

Evolutionary Leap?

I started by saying that we are a church in crisis.

Eckhart Tolle writes: “When faced with a radical crisis, when the old way of being in the world, of interacting with one another and with the realm of nature doesn't work anymore, when survival is threatened by seemingly insurmountable problems, an individual life - form - or a species - will either die or become extinct or rise above the limitations of its condition through an evolutionary leap.”

Could we be in the midst of an evolutionary leap in the life of the church? A leap which is part of the reconstruction of the church as we build the church of tomorrow, the church that we

believe is closer to the community Jesus had in mind.

5. Tolle, Eckhart: A New Earth, Awakening to your life's purpose. A Plume book. ISBN 978-0-452-28996-3. p 20.

Patricia Fresen, D.Th.
CNWE Conference,
Victoria, Canada
May 29th - June 1st,
2008.

A Promise Of A New Day: An Experience

by Fred Williams, Calgary, AB



Those of us who attended the ordination of Monica Kilburn Smith of Calgary and Jim Lauder of Victoria on May 29, 2008 experienced poetry in motion. I read once that the most prophetic utterances have emanated from the most poetical minds. Truly, what we call prophecy is the ability to see through the complex machinery of the present into the true nature of events. Truth is truth and we need the humility and

willingness to let our emotions play freely.

I was asked by François Brassard to inquire among our Calgary contingent, who attended this historical ordination at St. Aidan's United Church in Victoria, what they experienced as they were touched by the magic of the moment. Here are some reactions:

Shelagh: "The moment of seeing a woman dressed in full red robes at the altar."

Genevieve: "Bishop Patricia holding her hands out in prayer and blessing - what a powerful image."

Helen: "All of us sharing our priesthood. And the hymn: 'God is Here! No doubt that God WAS here!'"

Suzanne: "Being invited to the laying on of hands... I felt assured of my divinity, of my priestly right to do this."

Marie: "Being in the sanctuary and facing the people, seeing the joy of the people at this moment."

Angelina: "The simplicity of the moment, of it all, nothing pompous, nothing hierarchical... we all did the ordination."

Catherine: "I broke down at the laying on of hands, it was so powerful, the presence of the Holy Spirit through the people."

Helen: "That the priests at the altar took communion last, not first. Guests are to be served first."

Louise: "The singing of the 'Litany of the Saints,' it was so

inclusive."

Leslie: "At communion, when my two and a half year old daughter reached into the basket to take communion. It was so natural, so real."

Janet: "At the 'Litany of the Saints,' to hear the names of Oscar Romero and Thomas Merton."

Fred: "Tears came to my eyes at the 'Litany of the Saints' when I heard the names of Abraham and Sarah, Jacob and Rachel - to me they were present in the moment! St. Francis of Assisi, too."

Francois from the island community: "At the laying on of hands, the mother with the baby in her arms - the baby, so gently, followed suit and laid her hand on each of them. I just crumbled."

Debbie Kellner from Nova Scotia: "I was raised not to question my faith nor any of its teachings. My children were raised to ask. After fifty years, I am so pleased to see and hear that an Ordination of this magnitude is about to take place. I wish I were there to witness and bask in this new journey of faith."

Circumstances alter cases. This is from Elizabeth Barrett Browning:

" 'Yes,' I answered you last night.

'No,' this morning, sir, I say.

Colours seen by candlelight

Will not look the same by day."

We are all influenced 'by candlelight.' It is time for male authorities to stop being inflexible about women's role in the Church. Stop fighting them. Join the rest of the human race, the universal church, the 'catholic' one! Feel free to change. It is liberating.



Theological Soapbox: Some Recent “Excommunications”

by Arthur Menu, Sidney, BC



There is no question that the principle of excommunication can be justified scripturally (Matthew 18:17, 1 Corinthians 5:5, 1 Timothy 1:20, 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15, 2 John 10). Scripture also provides some general guidelines about how excommunication is

to be practiced.

Sociologically, excommunication serves the same purpose in the church as a parent's sending an offending child to their room without supper serves within the family. In the latter case, the child remains loved, but they need to be made aware of how their behaviour has seriously disrupted the harmony of the family. The punishment is designed to produce this awareness. The parent assumes that the child loves the family, and that once the child is made aware of the disharmony they have caused, they will repent and change their ways.

In the same way excommunication is meant to motivate a person, whose actions have created serious disharmony in the Christian community, to repent and be reconciled with the community. The excommunicated person remains dear to the community and is to be treated always with love.

Having said this, let us consider the following decree of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith published on 30 May 2008 in L'Osservatore Romano.

On the Delict of Attempted Sacred Ordination of a Woman
The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in virtue of the special faculty granted to it by the Supreme Authority of the Church (cf. Can. 30, Code of Canon Law), in order to safeguard the nature and validity of the sacrament of Holy Orders, decreed, in the Ordinary Session of December 19, 2007:

In accordance with what is disposed by Can. 1378 of the Code of Canon Law, he who shall have attempted to confer holy orders on a woman, as well as the woman who may have attempted to receive Holy Orders, incurs in a latae sententiae excommunication, reserved to the Apostolic See.

If he who shall have attempted to confer Holy Orders on a woman or if the woman who shall have attempted to receive Holy Orders is a faithful bound to the Code of Canons of the Oriental Churches, he is to be punished with the major excommunication, whose remission remains reserved to the Apostolic See, in accordance with can. 1443 of the same Code (cf. can. 1423, Code of Canons of the Oriental Churches).

The present decree enters in force immediately after its publication in L'Osservatore Romano.

Let us first consider *latae sententiae* excommunication, a kind of law that cannot be found, to my knowledge, in any nation's code of laws.

Some canons in Roman Catholic canon law are of the form: Any Catholic who does X incurs a *latae sententiae* excommunication. What this means is that if a Catholic does X, they are automatically excommunicated, without being charged and without being tried in a court of law.

This kind of law would not be tolerated in the legal systems of Canada, the United States, or Great Britain. It would be viewed as contravening fundamental justice. In these countries no person can be punished for an offense unless they are first charged with the offense and then found guilty in a court of law after a fair trial.

In fact, one can find a biblical precedent for the requirement that an offender be charged before they can be punished. Jesus asks the woman caught in adultery, “Has no one condemned you?” When she answers, “No one, sir”, Jesus says, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.” (John 8:10)

Now if her breaking the law had automatically resulted in her being charged with breaking the law, then Jesus would not have asked if anyone had condemned her since she would have stood condemned by the law itself. But as the example of Jesus makes clear, she could not be punished if no human being laid a charge against her.

Again in the legal systems in the British tradition, no one accused of a serious offense can be punished without being convicted in a court of law after a fair trial. This is true even if the person has confessed and wants to be sentenced as guilty without having a trial. Confessing to an offense and wanting to be punished for it does not necessarily mean that one is guilty of the offense or deserving of punishment.

For this there is once again a biblical precedent. When Jesus stands before the Sanhedrin, “One of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, ‘Is that how you answer the high priest?’ Jesus answered, ‘If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?’” (John 18:22-23) In other words, Jesus is saying, if you accuse me of committing an offense, you must testify that I have done so in a court of law.

Clearly, in the case of *latae sententiae* excommunication, no charge is laid by a human being and no trial is held. One must regard *latae sententiae* excommunication as procedurally unjust, and, therefore, no person who incurs *latae sententiae* excommunication is, by that provision of the law alone, excommunicated.

If a charge is laid and a trial held, and the person is found guilty of an offense that carries the penalty of excommunication, then there is no procedural injustice. However, if the law itself is unjust or the judges incapable of rendering a fair judgement in the case, then a sentence of excommunication is unjust, and no one need to feel bound by it although, in not being bound by it, one should avoid as much as possible giving scandal to those whose faith is weak (see 1 Corinthians 10:28).

Finally, by way of conclusion, let me say this. The ultimate test of whether a person, who has been excommunicated through the Church's legal processes, really is excommunicated, is how that person is treated by the local Christian community to which they belong. For the Holy Spirit speaks more powerfully through people motivated by love than through laws and legal processes.

The Life Of Gustave Victor Dubois 1943-2008



Gustave was born in 1943 in St. Isidore-de-Bellevue, Saskatchewan to Victor and Annette (Gareau). He died of cancer at his home in Saskatoon on February 20, 2008. His funeral was held at Canadian Martyrs Church on February 25. He was predeceased by his parents, and two sisters Marthe and Lorraine. He leaves to mourn, his wife Roberta, two daughters, Danielle and Janique, a son Justin, besides four sisters, Yolande, Corrine, Jeannine and Doris, as well as many other relatives and friends.

Gustave was ordained at his home parish St. Isidore-de-Bellevue, Sask. on June 1, 1968. He married Roberta Bundon in St. Francis Xavier church, Saskatoon, on June 9, 1978.

Gustave was an educator. He taught at Notre Dame College, St. Louis, Sask. He spent many years advocating for the right to a Francophone education. From 1990 to 2003 he was Principal of l'École canadienne-française the Director for French-Canadian Schools in Saskatoon. Since 2003, he occupied the position of In 2003 he was the Superintendent of Education for the Conseil des Écoles fransaskoises – the Francophone School Division in the province.

Gustave and Roberta were among the first members of Corpus Canada at the founding convention held in Saskatoon in 1989. He was also active in promoting Development and Peace. On their website, the animator for Saskatchewan, Michael Murphy, wrote that Gustave “will be greatly missed, but his unique contributions to the struggle for justice and peace will be long remembered”.

Gustave at Regina Conference 1999.

Family picture taken at Christmas 3 years ago.

Janique on the left, Justin in the centre, & Danielle on the right.



Open Letter To Cardinal Marc Ouellet

by Guy Morrissette, for the Ottawa Statement Group, Ottawa, ON

The editorial team received a copy of the following open letter and we discussed whether or not to put it in The Journal. There was no consensus to do so. However, like most other Catholics we are aware of the shortage of clergy in Canadian parishes, the concern of many Catholics over this shortage, and the efforts of those who have solutions to the shortage such as those who put together the Ottawa Statement. As far as we can tell, there has been no effort or inclination on the part of the Canadian bishops to listen to the concerns of the church in the matter of priests nor to allow parishioners to express themselves freely in much that is of importance to the church.

The one exception to the latter was the diocesan synod of the Diocese of Victoria when each parish elected representatives who over a few years met and freely made 400 decisions that were approved by the bishop. That was 20 years ago and since then the diocesan church has been returned to the autocratic rule of the bishop.

I know of only one instance when one Canadian bishop attended a gathering of Corpus Canada members, and of one other Canadian bishop who regularly paid his annual subscription to Corpus Canada. The Journal would like to hear of your experience and your opinion about the value of printing this open letter.

Open Letter to Cardinal Marc Ouellet

The "Ottawa Statement Group" is a group of Catholics engaged for more than ten years in active involvement with the problem of the shortage of priests.

On the occasion of the International Eucharistic Congress, the group calls upon Cardinal Ouellet to take action to break the crisis that leaves hundreds of Christian communities abandoned.

A Church Locked in Contradiction A Church in Denial

Will the International Eucharistic Congress simply provide a time for adoration, or rather a response to the distress of Catholics confronted with an increasingly critical situation of neglect? Will it provide hope to the thousands of Catholics who feel abandoned by their Church? Will it provide a response to one priest who said, "Being the pastor for three parishes, I no longer know where I am. There isn't anyone with whom I have a meaningful pastoral relationship. It's as if I were floating somewhere out there without any significant personal ties." The small increasingly isolated communities within our pluralistic society no longer have pastors with whom to develop a significant life of faith.

On the occasion of this 48th Congress, can one hope for a Vatican declaration to bring it out of the contradiction in which it risks remaining entrenched? Can a new emphasis on the meaning of the Eucharist as the centre of Christian life bring about recognition that the shortage of priests, which has resulted effectively from Rome's fixation on outmoded rules, cannot be maintained?

A Call to Cardinal Ouellet.

The forthcoming Eucharistic Congress is a privileged opportunity to be seized to open up the impasse. We call upon Cardinal Ouellet to take action. The principle is clear: if the Church cannot guarantee the celebration of the Eucharist in every parish, in each community, she must change the rules that control access to the ordained ministries. The classical call "to pray for vocations" will no longer suffice.

Events relating to the current crisis have brought nothing but disappointment - whether it be the May 2002 International Congress on Vocations, the October 2005 Synod, or the February 2007 Post-Synodal Exhortation. One is left with the same refusal, despite the persistent voices of the laity and the Bishops of Europe and the Americas. The Canadian Bishops and particularly the Quebec Bishops who were represented have expressed themselves consistently on the current issue.

Never in the recent life of the Catholic Church have we witnessed such denial. Everything is happening as if the Roman "intelligentsia" had lost all contact with the reality of Western countries. An entire sector of Christianity is losing its soul, more or less betrayed by the Church which should be nourishing it. The latter would rather bury itself in rules, rather than respond to the needs of its people.

Will the Quebec Congress initiate long-awaited and now-urgent change? Many feel profound disquiet prior to a display which risks abandoning basic essentials. For many others, the upcoming Eucharistic Congress will just be a major distraction and a dramatic delusion momentarily obscuring the last gasp of a resistant institution stubbornly refusing timely reforms.

The Place of the Eucharist

Yet, the Eucharist is at the heart of the life of Christians. It was vital and necessary for the first communities to experience what Jesus had lived with his disciples. The same event touches each of our Eucharistic celebrations, thus linking past and present. How otherwise could we keep alive the memory of Jesus and his work humanizing or making sacred the world which was handed over to us? But what can we do when there are fewer and fewer priests?

Another Kind of Church is Possible

To end the impasse in which the Church has become entrenched, Cardinal Ouellet, in collegiality with the Canadian Bishops, should now take the clear and bold actions which are required - not in opposition to Rome, but in response to pressing and timely needs, knowing that thousands of the faithful support them.

Time is of the essence. We must endeavour to build a new kind of Church. The Vatican must re-assess the rule of mandatory celibacy, as there is no theological basis in Rome's refusal to allow the priestly ordination of married men. It is time to invite back married priests who so wish to active ministry. It is time for dioceses, working closely with local communities, to identify married men and women suitable to become pastors.

The Vatican should look favourably on women's role in the Church; it is more than time to open the door for their priestly ordination. Let us not forget: thousands of parishes are still alive thanks to women's commitment. To count ourselves among religions which exclude women is a disgrace and a scandal.

If this International Eucharistic Congress does not result in necessary changes, it will have been another great display among the Church's series of disappointments for its people over many years.

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Two Excerpts From Catholica Australia

Excerpted from *Priesthood Part 1* by Tom McMahon in **Catholica Australia** (for full text- www.catholica.com.au)

As long as humans deal with the spirit world and the great mysteries of life and death, humans will see that there is a human middle-person set apart in the tribe to deal with the realms of the unknown and mysterious (the god/spirit world); the cover of January 2008's *National Geographic* reads **Indonesia's Ring of Fire... Volcano Gods** and on page 56 a picture of Gatekeeper Maraijan leading a procession of people to the top of volcanic Mount Merapi; "his mission: to placate the spirit believed to dwell in the mountain" ... frightened human beings will have a place of respect for the "man upstairs" (as do major league baseball players hoping to hit a home run) and his earth agents will live apart and privileged. The Latin word *religare* means to tie together, like shoelaces; religion binds the supernatural to the human, always with a designated person who knows how to make the spiritual knots. The history of religion shows that the tie often is a mixture of harsh and gentle, depending on the god involved and the social upbringing of the go-between; usually the "priest" is reserved, distant from the community, secretive, and in male dominant religions, separated from women. I have always had difficulty with the use of the word supernatural; how is something above nature (super) when the words

to describe such are from nature itself? The 'mystery' of the gods will mask much of the human; the *Wizard of Oz* is a fitting example...

Until the 21st century few had the courage and imagination to break ancient set patterns of worship... A changing notion of God dictates a new concept of priesthood and ritual. In 2008 the world is taking a different look at the mystery of God. Modern-day people need to be educated into the time period when most of our rituals started. In Ostia the followers of Mithra broke bread and drank wine in secret worship meetings in 71 CE. Study of the priests of Egypt has educated me to appreciate ancient cultures and to compare them to modern-day versions of Roman Catholic priests; I see comparisons between today's Roman Catholic celibate clergy and the clergy who served the Pharaohs, particularly in the isolated style of life and the secrecy of ritual common to both. Egyptian priesthood was closely connected to men of great wealth. Years of extraordinary preparation were involved before the Egyptian novice was introduced into the rituals of embalming the king and sending him off to his heavenly place among the stars. I see a connection to medieval bishops; the episcopal mitre is the 12th century landowner's chapeau, the two flaps being the remnants of the rain coat that covered the horse's rump. (I refer only to the horse's rear end.)

Excerpted from interview by Stephen Crittenden of ABC in **Catholica Australia** (for full text- www.catholica.com.au)

"A Spirited defence of Catholic Bishop Geoffrey Robinson", by Dr. Michael Whelan, Director of Aquinas Academy, Sydney, Australia. For full text of the Australian Bishops' statement and other comments and articles see www.catholica.com.au
"Follow me, I'm right behind you" is the title of Marist Fr. Whelan's critique of the Australian Bishops' statement criticizing Bp. Robinson.

Fr. Whelan writes: "I think what the bishops wrote echoes another statement 10 years ago which brought huge embarrassment not only to many of the bishops who were part of it in Rome at the Synod of Oceania, but to Catholics throughout Australia....(To say) that the church has been endowed with the gift of truth seems to make the whole matter very simplistic, very obvious, one would almost say fundamentalist, in the sense that there's a straight line between the mind of Jesus and the mind of the bishops, and that to defy the bishops or to defy church teaching in any way is to defy truth, and I simply don't accept that..."

"It's just an overwhelming and I think vague and imprecise dismissal of an honest attempt by Geoff Robinson to carry on the work that he began with tremendous courage back in the '90s to deal with the sexual abuse issue. Also they (Bp.s) used the word questioning. They said that Geoff is questioning church teachings and so forth. What do they mean by questioning?...I would say the Second Vatican Council and the lead-up years and the follow-on years did a lot of questioning of church teaching and church behaviour and church moral injunctions

and so forth, all to the good. Any living organism, any social institution must go on critically examining itself and asking questions of itself to see whether it is faithful to its basic mission and whether it's on task or not. It seems to be implied in this letter that we're not allowed to do that..."

I wonder when I read this (Bishops' statement) what is the future of the vision of the Second Vatican Council which is beginning to look like it was stillborn actually. I think there's a remarkable vision there which indicated the church's ability to change, to question itself, to enter into dialogue with the world, and all that's being slowly strangled I'm afraid.

Geoff is a remarkable man. He's one of the few leaders in the Catholic Church we've got here in Australia today, a man of courage, a man who speaks the truth and seeks to pursue the truth no matter where that will lead, Geoff will always be in good standing as far as I am concerned. As far as many Catholics are concerned.... I think disillusionment is fairly high. I've noticed in the last 12-18 months a change of mood. I'm coming in contact with lots of older generation Catholics, salt of the earth, shoulder to the wheel, and they are standing back saying 'We're being imposed upon; we're not part of the decision making; we don't want to have anything to do with it'. And there's a fair bit of anger out there. It's almost as if the church is being hijacked, is being taken from us, and people don't know how to deal with it, but they're certainly not willing to simply go along with it.

Two Australian bishops who support Geoff could not be at the bishops' conference. We don't know how many others at the conference did come to Geoff's defence.

Book Review: *Voices Of The Faithful: Loyal Catholics Striving For Change* by William D'Antonio & Anthony Pogorelc, reviewed by Chris Diamond

The back jacket states “*Voices of the Faithful* presents original research on the history, religious beliefs, practices, and attitudes of this new religious group (Voice Of The Faithful)... members represent educated and energetic people of faith with deep roots in Catholic culture and tradition... The remarkable findings presented in this volume make for challenging and inspiring reading for VOTF members and anyone interested in church reform.”

Sociologists, Ammerman and Dillon, document the demographic of the VOTF laity who are “loyal Catholics who choose to raise their voices for reform of the institution.” Theologians, Hines and Impelli, examine the implications of Vatican II for church reform: “ecclesiology from below” as opposed to “ecclesiology from above”.

Hines writes: “I hope this reawakening of the laity to rights and responsibilities can be sustained and grow in the midst of busy lives. This is an important moment in the reception of Vatican II, which in its inception came from above. Movements like VOTF represent the grassroots reception and ownership of the council that has been lacking.” Sociologists, Gamson and McCarthy, write that if it is to flourish, VOTF must change because “They introduce a culture of democratic participation into what is essentially an incompatible, paternalistic culture.”

Archbishop Myers of Newark says of VOTF “Through its words and deeds, we believe that this organization has as its purposes: to act as a cover for dissent with the faith; to cause division within the church; and to openly attack church hierarchy... altering Church teaching on sexual morality, and defiance of the apostolic authority that has guided the Church since its founding...”

In spite of Vatican II, *Voices of the Faithful* shows clearly the futility of any hope that VOTF or any other

church reform group might have of dialogue with the hierarchy. This problem of the hierarchy ignoring the People of God is universal. For example, in Australia on May 9, '08, the Australian bishops replied to Catholics for Ministry in regard to the crisis in pastoral ministry: “It would not be appropriate in the circumstances for the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference to engage in ongoing correspondence with you on these issues.”

The Vatican II document *Lumen Gentium*, quoted by Hines, states “decisions on faith and morals arrived at without participation of the faithful are significantly deficient.” Imbelli writes: “The active participation of the laity in the church is more than management sharing... the church is hierarchical, not so that one part can dominate another. What makes the church unique is that ultimately both the laity and the hierarchy are accountable to Christ. The ultimate goal for both is transformation through conversion in the church; the goal is growth in holiness; *communio* which can only be achieved through an ongoing process.”

D'Antonio and Pogorelc conclude that “VOTF has entered into a tense relationship with church authorities and ultimately with the wider context in which the church is embedded... VOTF seeks to extend justice and transparency in the church through the broader participation of the laity... VOTF should not go about the business of church reform alone. It needs to build relationships with other Catholic groups.”

While this survey and study focuses on one group in one country, it offers scientific analyses and useful strategies that are worthwhile reading for Roman Catholics everywhere.

Voices of the Faithful: Loyal Catholics Striving for Change.
(www.CrossroadPublishing.com)

Manitoba Ethnocultural Advisory And Advocacy Council by Dr. Neil Parado, Winnipeg, MB

In September 2007 a process was initiated for obtaining nominees from eligible ethnocultural organizations to form the new members of the Manitoba Ethnocultural Advisory and Advocacy Council (MEAAC) for the 2008-2011 term. Dr. Neil Parado, Jesus Angel Miguel Garcia, and Dr. Denise Koh, Board Member of the Philippine-Canadian Centre of Manitoba (PCCM) have been selected for appointment on the prestigious MEAAC for the 2008-2011 term.

The nomination and selection culminated on March 25th, Tuesday, at the MEAAC Reception hosted by the Hon. Nancy Allan, Minister responsible for Multiculturalism and Minister of Labour and Immigration.

For more information please log on to:
www.gov.mb.ca/labour/immigrate/multiculturalism/meaac.html

Dr. Parado being congratulated by the honourable Nancy Allen



Farewell To "Old Stinky"

by Hank Mattimore, San Jose, CA



We had our memorial service for Penny today at the Children's Village.. All the kids and most of the staff gathered at her yard where the children had made a memorial stone for her. Inserted into the middle of the memorial stone, someone had put a one cent copper coin. Each of the kids held a small polished stone which they held in their hands. After a moment of silence during which the kids

were asked to hold a memory of Penny in their hearts, one by one they placed the stones on Penny's memorial stone.

Some shared their memories out loud. Francine recalled Penny's first Thanksgiving when Francine had inadvertently left a large piece of pumpkin pie on the table. Given Penny's considerable girth and very short legs, the girl felt her dessert was safe. The pooch would never be able to get up on the dining room table. Never underestimate a hungry basset hound. Another kid recalled losing a plateful of pasta in the same manner.

Jackie, our program director, remembered the day the kids tried to arrange a "marriage" ceremony between Penny and her own dog, Cody. The kids had decked out the "groom" with a bow tie around his neck and Penny wore a white bridal veil. Unfortunately, neither bride nor groom liked the idea of an arranged marriage and ended up growling at each other. I recalled the day Sam and I went to pick up Penny from her foster home. Jo Ellen, an administrative assistant,

read a poem that reminded us that Penny was not gone forever and that we all would meet again some day at Rainbow Bridge.

While the ceremony was short, there was a lot of quiet sniffing and moist eyes. I imagine that there are people out there who think a funeral service for a dog is a little over the top but it felt right somehow to give the old pooch a proper send off. She asked little from us other than a good belly rub from time to time. In return she gave us lots of laughs and lots of love.

I am delighted that we held this little ceremony. Yes, it was sad but that is part of life isn't it? There is not one of our village kids who has not experienced deep grief in his or her young life. Sometimes they suppress that sadness and push it down in their hearts but they don't forget it. Having the opportunity to mourn for a pet allows them to express grief and bring it to the surface. Besides, isn't it important to acknowledge in our own hearts that all who share the gift of life (even old basset hounds) are connected and worthy of reverence. So, it was good for us to come together as a village community and say goodbye in a dignified way to our first beloved village dog. Old Stinky, we'll always love you.



Excerpt from : A Grandpa And His Basset
Hound July-September 2007

Good grief! I never even wanted a dog! But living as I do in the Children's Village, pets are almost a requirement for grandparents. So, here I am with this "sausage on mini legs" sharing my little one bedroom apartment. She made me laugh when I first saw her. Hells bells! With her ears that practically touch the ground, her big sad eyes, and the way she waddles when she runs, Penny would make an undertaker giggle. Penny is friendly! Omigosh! Is she friendly! A friend to humanity is what she is. Penny loves anyone with two legs. She is perfect for a children's village. The kids love her- though I must admit, it has taken this Grandpa a little more time. How can I put this? Penny is not a low maintenance pooch. She howls rather than barks; she barely tolerates other dogs; she enjoys rolling on the ground wherever she happens to be which explains how she manages to retain a strong doggy smell no matter how often she is given a bath. Penny is legendary for the amount of excrement she produces. One of the kids gave her what he calls her Indian name: "Penny Poop a Lot"

Corpus Canada

Who Are We?

We are a faith community of men and women empowered by our baptism in Jesus' Spirit to reach out to others in their need as Jesus did. We also provide support for married Roman Catholic priests, their family and friends.

Where Are We Going?

This faith community is dedicated to

- Renewal of ministries in the Church, including an ordained ministry open to men and women, married and unmarried;
 - A vision of Church that includes all people who profess faith in Jesus Christ;
 - Development of leadership among all the baptised in the Church;
 - Promotion of a wholesome view of sexuality;
 - Justice for all based on Gospel values.
- Our message is a healing one and is directed to everyone, especially the marginalized in the Church. It is our hope to reach people through many ministries, and in a special way through the creation of small faith communities.

How Do We Get There?

Through a collegial approach based on consensus reached through communal discernment in the Spirit, we share our gifts that all creation might be transformed according to God's loving plan.

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www.corpuscanada.org
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www.ca.renewedpriesthood.org
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If you wish to join or renew your membership in Corpus Canada for the year 2007 (membership is open to all regardless of denominational affiliation), write to: Corpus Canada Treasurer, 35 - 10070 Fifth Street Sidney, BC V8L 2X9. Enclose a cheque for \$50 (individual membership) or \$75 (family membership) payable to "Corpus Canada." Corpus Canada will donate \$25 of your membership fee to Xristos Community Society in your name, and Xristos will send you an official tax receipt. At the request of Corpus Canada, Xristos Community Society distributes The Journal free of charge to the membership of Corpus Canada.

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