



Niagara Anglican

A section of the Anglican Journal

NEWS • PERSPECTIVE • REFLECTION • FOR A GROWING CHURCH • JANUARY 2010



■ Synod 2009's Living the Vision Day:
Our diocese alive in God's Spirit!

Poverty is a Sin

COLLEEN SYM
SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATOR

From where Archdeacon Michael Patterson sits "poverty is a Sin with a capital S".

On December 4 2009, the one year anniversary of the announcement of the provincial government's Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Archdeacon spoke to a gathering of social activists. He told the standing room only crowd at the Welcome Inn Community Centre in Hamilton's north end that "from where I sit as a Christian, poverty is a Sin with a capital S. All of the great religions of the world believe that we are all called upon to look out for those that cannot look after themselves, to support the poor, give shelter to the homeless and food to the hungry. Even the humanists and atheists amongst us would agree that we all belong to this community we call the human family!" Spontaneous applause and shouts of "Amen" greeted his comments.

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A painful journey

CHRISTOPHER GRABIEC
EDITOR

I was once the pastor of a church that had over 3200 families. And yes, our services were packed and yes people fought for one of the 7 or 8 meeting rooms in the facility every night. We had 9 services on Ash Wednesday alone! In a decade all that seems to have changed. I haven't been back to the parish, but folks tell me that the numbers are significantly lower. Whatever has happened to our beloved church?

St. John of the Cross speaks of the dark night of the soul in our personal spiritual journeys.

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Reality shows

ELEANOR JOHNSTON
ST. THOMAS' CHURCH, ST. CATHARINES

Bishop Michael began his Charge to the 135th Diocesan Synod by quoting B.C. Bishop Gary Nicolosi's article, *Rethinking how we do church*: "The Anglican Church of Canada has lost more than half of its membership in the past 50 years. A recent survey conducted across a third or more of the Dioceses in Canada offers us a more current and just as startling picture of our rate of decline in the last eight years: Since 2001, in those Dioceses surveyed, the total number of identifiable givers has dropped by 12%, the number of parish members has declined by 19% and Baptisms and Confirmations are down 26%."

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We are living the vision



MICHAEL BIRD
BISHOP OF NIAGARA

In this season of Epiphany we are inspired by the story of the journey of the Magi who set out upon a quest that would lead a group of travelers across many hard miles. They were outsiders; dressed in strange clothes and very late on the scene but they were responding to a mysterious

longing to encounter "the child who has been born king of the Jews." It was a journey that was guided by the light of a star and the light that Epiphany shines out into the darkness of our world today is an invitation to seek out this same kind of encounter with Jesus Christ whose message of hope and peace changes our lives and changes the world.

I was profoundly moved by a story I heard on a trip to Britain about a 13th century community of monks who had a unique and incredible mission. In those turbulent days it was the monasteries that held much of society together. These communities

were the centre of religious expression, they were the seats of learning and knowledge, they practiced medicine and healing, they were experts in the current methods of agriculture and they also engaged in the important ministry of hospitality and sanctuary to weary travelers and those who came seeking justice in a cruel and violent world.

This particular community of monks, however, had a very different mission, which saw most of their members setting out upon a daily task of searching the surrounding country side for pieces of wood and other materials that they could burn. They

were situated on a lonely and rocky coastline and each day they would gather up their bundles and take them down to the sea. A boat was loaded with all they had gathered and rowed out to a small island a short distance out from the shore and there on that barren, sea-beaten and wind-swept outcrop of rock they built and maintained a fire.

You see, this coastline was one of the most dangerous and treacherous for the ships that passed that way and many, many lives had been lost there over the years.

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Caring for God's Creation | Green Parish Accreditation Program



BILL MOUS
ASSISTANT CURATE, ST. JAMES DUNDAS

If you stop and think about it, the way in which the whole of God's creation cares for us is pretty remarkable. Throughout the generations all of the unique and wonderful parts of creation have provided us with an abundance of food and shelter, a seemingly unlimited number of places for work and recreation, and countless opportunities to marvel at its beauty and complex creativity.

But as much as creation cares for us, we are also called to care for cre-

ation. Throughout our diocese, our churches and our people have long expressed a concern for the environment that is consistent with the fifth mark of mission of the Anglican Communion: "to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the earth".

In response to this call and with a growing understanding of the devastating impacts of climate change—particularly amongst the poorest and most vulnerable in our world—we acted. In 2007 our Diocesan Synod, inspired by the example of our Youth Synod, called for the creation of the Greening Niagara committee and tasked it with developing an accreditation program that would encourage and support our parishes as they endeavoured to live out their ministries in sustainable ways; seek-

ing to better care for all of God's creation.

Over the past year, a group of dedicated volunteers from the Greening Niagara committee have collected a variety of resources that included the accreditation programs of the dioceses of Ottawa and New Westminster, examined a variety of sustainable best practices, and developed a program tailored for our diocese. The Greening Niagara committee hopes that this program will encourage all of our parishes to undertake their ministries in a more sustainable manner. After all, it's an excellent example of diocese's commitment to environmental sustainability as an expression of Prophetic Social Justice-Making.

In order to be accredited as a Green Parish at the bronze, silver or

gold level, a parish must complete the goal described for 10 of the 15 categories at any given level. Each parish will decide for themselves which 10 categories are most suited for their unique context.

But our work would be incomplete if we only sought to change our corporate behaviour; for all of our lives leave a footprint on the earth, and so, there is another resource that can be used as a companion to the Green Parish Accreditation Program. The Niagara Home Challenge is designed for individuals to use in their own homes. The challenge lays out several areas for people to consider and mark on a form whether it is something they are "doing already" "working on" or "not doing."

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A new year



PETER WALL
DEAN, RECTOR OF CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

Happy Epiphany! As you read this we will be getting close to the great second Feast of Christmas—Epiphany, when we celebrate the revelation of Jesus as Saviour of the World and Light to the gentiles. How is your Christmas going? Many will have been asked, over these past days, 'How was your Christmas?' Many will have responded: 'It was great, thanks!' Of course, for the Christian, the answer should be: 'It's going very well, thanks!' since Christmas is still with us. How easily we fall into the world's way of thinking that Christmas is a day, perhaps even two or three or, if we really are trying to be traditional, a full twelve. But really, the season goes through Epiphany right up to The Feast of the Presentation of our Lord, as Messiah, the feast we call Candlemas, which we celebrate on February 2.

Last month, during Advent, we faithfully kept watch for the coming of Christmas, and for the second coming of Christ! In our parishes and communities, we 'held back' Christmas, since the anticipation and the waiting is all part of the rhythm which we so zealously keep and defend. We read those marvelous stories of hope and expectation; those challenging stories of warning and of being 'beware'. As we entered into that time of getting ready, so we should enjoy Christmas in all its length and fullness. I encourage communities to keep singing Christmas carols through to Candlemas, to keep

up Christmas decorations as long as we can—sure, many live decorations will have wilted or died and will need to be put away or disposed of, but many things about Christmas we can keep through January. The Christmas crèche, for example, replete with shepherds, animals, and magi, can stay in our churches at least until Candlemas. The music, readings, and themes of the Sundays of Epiphany all lend themselves to keeping the celebration going. The biblical records of Jesus' baptism, of the miracle at the wedding in Cana, of Jesus' opening the scriptures to his hearers in the synagogue, and even the beginnings of his ministry which already foreshadow the difficult times to come—all of these are passages of scripture which witness to the Incarnation in our lives, and are good motivators to have us sing 'Joy to the World' and "O Come all Ye Faithful", to say nothing of the many wonderful Christmas hymns—old and new—which are ours in *Common Praise and in Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.

One of the great things about our church life, and one of the things which I think we often sell short, is the gift of the seasons—each particular and with its own distinctive flavour and feel. We are sometimes told (both by those inside and outside the church) that we don't have enough Christmas—that we are so fixated on keeping Advent that folks in church feel short-changed on Christmas. Well, Advent, at its longest, can only be 28 days; the Christmas season, on the other hand, always lasts for 40 days—another significant number. So keep the holly jolly and ring out those carols—keep them all going until wondrous Simeon and Anna receive the Messiah in the temple. Believe me, it will be worth it!

Where are they?



ANDY KALBFLEISCH
MISSION STRATEGY COMMITTEE

During the last few months I have had the privilege of accompanying Bishop Michael as he has visited parishes across the Diocese to talk about our Vision. Inevitably one of the questions that arises most often during the 'Question and Answer' session is "Where are the children, youth and young families and what are we doing to bring them back into our churches?"

Let's get something straight right up front—it's not that young people don't go to church, they just don't go to our churches.

OK, I acknowledge there are some parishes in this Diocese that have active and growing children, youth, young adult and family ministries. But what about the rest of us? Are we embarrassed when the children are called to the front for 'Children's Time' and none show up? Not because they don't want to, but because there weren't any children present that Sunday. The fact is, the people who are asking these questions, if they search long and hard, probably already know the answers.

St. Matthew tells it this way, "One day children were brought to Jesus in the hope that he would lay hands on them and pray over them. The disciples shooed them off. But Jesus intervened: 'Let the children alone, don't prevent them from coming to me. God's kingdom is made up of people like these.' After laying hands on them, he left." (Matthew 19:13-15 MSG)

Some of the people I have met suggest that it wasn't this way fifty years ago and they are right. Fifty years ago there was no Sunday shopping, no Sunday sports leagues, no video games, no Internet and the list of cultural changes is virtually endless. And in that intervening period, how have we viewed the children and young people in our parishes? Did we invite young people to be Servers, food drive runners, kitchen helpers, leaf rakers, fundraisers and do the jobs that we didn't want to do or no longer could do? Or did we invite them to participate in worship, leadership and fully engage in the general life of the parish? For example how many eighteen year old churchwardens are there (Canon 4.1.8)? Or what about the family with two or three young children that run around the nave or cry on Sunday mornings and unknowingly disrupt the concentration of the congregation as they worship? Do we give the parents a look that says, "We have a nursery and your children should be in it."?

Parents of the young families that we seem to be missing today grew up in this fifty year period of constant change. They experienced firsthand, and with an eagerness previously unknown, the new opportunities that our secular society presents. Yet for the most part, the church remained the same—after all that's what tradition is.

To fully engage, the Gospels must be looked at afresh with new eyes every generation and be contextualized to give both truth and meaning to the people who are hearing them perhaps for the first time.

We lament the fact that there are no children in many of our churches. Yet what have we done to accommodate their needs? And more specific-

ally what have we done to accommodate their parents' needs? Without the active participation of parents there won't be many children in our churches.

Have our actions that we believed to be in the best interest of our children and their children, using a template that is fifty years old, driven them away? Put another way, are we now seeing the unintended consequences of our decisions and actions to ensure that our cherished worship experiences would remain comfortable and familiar to us?

Where are they? We know where they are. What are we prepared to do to help them follow Jesus with the same interest and passion that we have? Fifty years ago we were comfortable to go to church on Sunday, recite the same liturgy week after week, listen to a homily, sing some hymns and share in the Body of Christ.

Have we engaged the young people in our parishes and asked them the question, "Do you find this form of worship meaningful?" If they say 'no', then do we say "Well I'm sorry, but that's how we do it here?" Matthew said, "The disciples shooed them off". Or do we invite them into a conversation to discuss and understand where they are coming from and what we can do to meet their spiritual needs?

The question 'Where are they?' isn't a question about the survival of the church. History tells us that the church will survive. It is really a question that asks us to look deep into ourselves and ask a more serious question, "Do we want to be like the disciples who shooed them away or like Jesus who welcomed them?"

The Fresh Expressions movement has a phrase for this—'changing church for a changing world'.

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Canterbury Hills Camp needs your help

DAVID LINN
DIRECTOR, CANTERBURY HILLS

When the Diocesan Summer Camping Program welcomes campers to Canterbury Hills in 2010, one thing is certain: Diocesan financial support for this program, celebrating its 50th Anniversary year in 2010, will have been significantly reduced.

This is because in the spring of 2009, recognizing the financial pressures the Diocese was facing, the Canterbury Hills Board of Directors presented to the Bishop and Synod Council a voluntary three-year plan to reduce, and eventually eliminate the Summer Camping Program Support Grant line in the Diocesan Budget. Throughout the '90s, when the Camping Program was operated out of the Diocesan Program Department, the supporting grant and staff salaries required a budget line in excess of \$150,000 each year. In 2001, when the operation of the Camping Program returned to Canterbury Hills, this budget line was reduced to \$95,000 each year. This represented a substantial budgetary savings.

In light of the present financial challenges facing the Diocese, the Canterbury Hills Board of Directors wanted once again to be part of the solution, while finding a way to maintain this vital ministry with young people from communities across our Diocese and beyond which has impacted over 500 families every summer since 1961.

The Board's proposal is to see the Diocesan Support Grant reduced from \$95,000 in 2009 to \$60,000 in 2010, to \$30,000 in 2011, and finally elimin-

ated in 2012. In making this proposal, the Board is taking on a tremendous challenge; namely, to find alternative funding to support the continuance of this ministry in less than 30 months! We believe in the importance of the Summer Camping Program to the development of young people across the Diocese of Niagara. We believe that this challenge can be creatively met. We believe that there is widespread support for this ministry right across the Diocese. We are asking for your help.

This year, 2010, parents of campers will be asked to support a one-time fee increase of \$50.00 for residential campers and \$40.00 for day campers. Our hope is to expand each camp session by one residential camp cabin and one day camp group, in addition to lengthening the day camp season by one week towards the end of August. Again, we believe that the families who send their children to the Summer Camping Program at Canterbury Hills believe in the value of the program and the positive impact it has on the lives of their children, and will therefore do their part to help us meet this present challenge.

At the same time, representatives of our Camp Alumni have already met and have undertaken to step up and help us address this challenge. There are over 2000 staff Alumni and over 20,000 camper Alumni 'out there', most of whom we have unfortunately lost contact with because our current data base only goes back to 2005. We are asking all Camp Alumni to self-identify so we can include you in our



upcoming 50th Anniversary celebrations and give you a chance to be a part of the next 50 years of Summer Camping at Canterbury Hills. Just go to the Canterbury Hills website www.canterburyhills.ca and click on the Camp Alumni link to register. Please do that today.

The third prong of the Board's plan is to give businesses and individuals the opportunity to become sustaining partners in the Summer Camp Program. We need sustaining business sponsors for the 10 Summer Camp cabins. Companies can sponsor a whole cabin for just a \$3,000 annual donation, half a cabin for \$1,500, or a third of a cabin for \$1,000. Business sponsors will have their support acknowledged

on a plaque on the front of their cabin, and on the back of each year's Camp T-shirt. We believe there are a significant number of companies across our Diocese who could respond in this way. Please don't wait—please step up now and contact the Canterbury Hills office and volunteer your support.

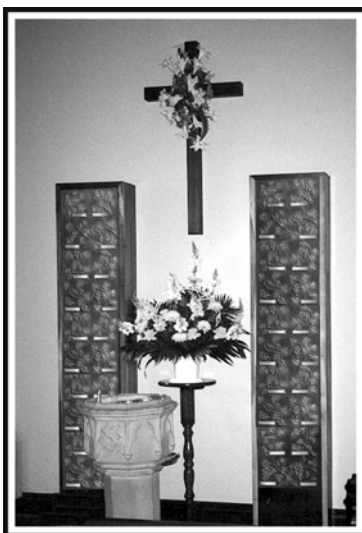
Likewise, we need individuals, individuals who understand and support this incredibly important ministry, to become individual sustaining sponsors. We believe that there are a vast number of individuals who would be willing to commit to a relatively small monthly or annual donation to secure the future of the Summer Camp ministry.

It couldn't be easier: just go to the Canterbury Hills website [\[canterburyhills.ca\]\(http://canterburyhills.ca\) and click on the Summer Camp Sponsor Donate Now link. This will take you to a secure section of our website where you can make your income tax-receiptable donation, which will also be recognized in an appropriate manner. We need your support now. By mid-2010 the decision will need to be made about summer 2011, and we need to know we have the financial support to make that decision.](http://www.can-</p>
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We believe there is no better way for the Church to make a positive impact on the life of a child. We believe in the ministry of the Summer Camping Program. We believe you do too. We are unabashedly asking for your help.

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This program provides an opportunity for lay people to grow in their commitment to Christ and Christ's Church through a deepening of faith. This winter will feature an eight-week course on the Spirituality. To register, contact the centre nearest you. Registration fee: \$35 (includes sessions plus text)

Area	Parish Centre	Start Date
Burlington	St. Luke	January 11, 7:30 PM
Grimsby	St. Andrew	January 18, 7:00 PM
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We are living the vision

» CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

And so God called this religious community to be a beacon to the lost and those caught up in a storm and so incredibly, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, they kept that fire burning and the light from that fire helped many a ship's captain find a way through the rough and stormy sea.

Back in November people from across the Diocese gathered at the Hamilton Convention centre to celebrate and give thanks to God for the gift of our new vision for our Church and it was one of the most inspiring and encouraging days we have seen for some time. These hopes and dreams for our parishes that are emerging and taking hold, offer us a revelation of a church that no longer waits for people to come to our doors but rather a church that reclaims its place and its prophetic voice in the community. Like those 13th century monks it is about building and maintaining a fire that

shines a light out into the darkness and confusion of our world and invites people to join us on our Christian journey. It is a fire that sparks a new sense of passion that generates inventive and inspired new ideas to engage with the people of a new generation, calling them back into community with each other and offering hope and healing to so many in need.

As we gathered at the Convention centre for the "Living the Vision" celebration, we discovered that the fire we are kindling in the Diocese of Niagara is burning far more intensely than we could ever have imagined and I am so grateful for the inspiration and encouragement that was offered to us all on that day. I give thanks to God for the ways that the Epiphany light burns brightly in our parishes and in the ministries that we share in together as we respond to God's mission for our church, our lives and the lives of the people we are called to serve.

I wish you every blessing in this New Year.

The present | Not a bad place



MICHAEL THOMPSON
RECTOR, ST. JUDE'S OAKVILLE

If you look at the trees this time of year, you'll see what you don't see when they're covered in leaves. You'll see the nests of birds and squirrels, nests that were there all summer long, but hidden by leafy busyness. For months and months, these nests offered shelter. Now we can see what has been going on all along.

It occurs to me that this season of Epiphany, might—at least sometimes—be like those trees. "Epiphany" means something like "wide appearing", and the stories we tell of this wide-angle season are sometimes rich and extravagant. It is the season, for example, of the magi, the outlandish visitors driven by horoscopes to seek a new king at the end of the astrological rainbow. It is the story of great power greatly corrupted in the infanticide in Bethlehem. Epiphany is cosmic.

But exotic as the magi are, theirs is not the only story of disclosure and recognition concerning the birth of Mary's child. I'm thinking about Anna and Simeon, who in their extreme old age bear witness to what God sets out to accomplish in the life of Jesus. I wonder if it is, at least in part, because of their age that disclosure and recognition are possible.

In the years before her death, and not just in the few months of pain and confusion from one broken hip and then another just before she died, my mother's life was profoundly diminished. She lost her husband, her driver's license, much of her memory, her freedom and independence, and the almost life-long pleasure she took from smoking. She moved from her home of over thirty years to a two-bedroom apartment, and then to a single room in a seniors' lodge.

The catalogue of my mother's losses was substantial, and she felt each of them keenly as they emerged. None

of them was easy, though some engendered more frustration—even flashes of anger—than others. No part of me, or of anyone who loved her, would ever have invited such losses into her life.

At the same time, there emerged in my mother's last years a rich and simple emotional life that caught us all by surprise. She expressed a sense of wonder that seemed almost naïve. Her fondness for her first great-grandchildren was almost unnervingly deep and unconditional.

My mother was an accomplished and determined teacher, writer, mother, and homemaker (a word I would apply equally to my father). As she aged, she lost almost every capacity that we imagined added up to her identity and character. I don't know what characteristic traits and accomplishments added up to Anna or to Simeon. It would not surprise me to know that many of those traits and accomplishments had fallen away, or even to discover around them people who remembered what they had once been and lamented the loss.

In the last part of her life, my mother's life had only a single tense—the present. The stripping away of past and future was—no doubt about it—a loss. It was a loss, though, that endowed the present with an importance that we often overlook, tending as we often do to treat it as a featureless bridge between the future and the past, anxious about one, burdened by the other.

In her last year, my mother could embrace the present—the taste of a lemon square, the play of light through the window, the particular straw yellow colour of a wall. My mother, that is to say, *noticed*.

I wonder if I'm thinking of Anna and Simeon, of what the bare trees disclose, of my mother's losses and of the acuteness of the present late in her life because most of us don't entertain Persian astrologers or their twenty-first century equivalent. I wonder if there's an Epiphany for the likes of us, who live in an ordinary world of rising and resting and long to be included in the great story of what God is doing in the world.

An Epiphany for Anna and Simeon. In Luke's gospel, there are no

magi, just two old people in the temple, one of who stood so still that the Holy Spirit, the story tells us, "rested on him". Still, so still as not to startle the Spirit who rests on him, there is Simeon, ready for the final loss, ready to depart in peace. Papyrus skin on a bony frame, nothing left but breath and a promise. Was Simeon marooned like my mother in the present? And did that mean he could *notice* with a kind of intensity that leads to his song—"For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples..." There were hundreds of pairs of eyes in the temple that day; it was Simeon's eyes who stared so deeply into the present, into the actual moment of Joseph and Mary and their tiny child, so deeply into the sheer fact of them that he saw the eternal meaning of their lives.

Anna had spent a long time with her loss—seven years of marriage, then alone until eighty-four years of age. No children mentioned, fasting and prayer in the temple night and day. Fasting and prayer are spiritual practices, the sort of practice that will find Jesus in the desert just a season from now. Fasting and prayer reduce and clarify things. They are a way of paying attention by deliberately embracing loss. Anna, who might be excused for thinking that widowhood was loss enough, cultivates even more loss as her holy and homeward path.

How odd that the days and weeks that follow Christmas are such shadowed days. How odd that the wide-angle season of the star and the magi is also the close-up season of two old people, one a breath away from departing in peace, and the other multiplying her widow-losses with prayer and fasting. How oddly reassuring that their losses might be the very thing that made it possible for them to notice what God was doing in the presence of all peoples, but unnoticed by all but these two, limping through their last days, entering more and more deeply into God's holy present.

On the Feast of Epiphany, 2009, we buried my mother, who taught me in her last days that the present is not such a bad place to be.

Re-imagining church for a new millennium



JOHN BOWEN
ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST HAMILTON

"When churches are dying, why try to start new ones?" I used to ask that question, but no longer. Ten years ago, in my teaching of evangelism, I came across an intriguing statistic: more people find faith in new churches than in long-established churches. That triggered my curiosity, and I determined to find out what was going on.

What I discovered was that evangelical denominations have been starting new churches for years. What is more, I found Canadian evangelicals who are very willing to share the expertise they have built up over many years, and to do so with engaging modesty: "We don't really know what we're doing, but if you want to learn from our mistakes and do something better, you're very welcome." I attended a conference of evangelical church planters—over 500 of them, mostly under the age of 35. It took my breath away.

Then I began to hear the phrase "fresh expressions" being bandied around, and had the opportunity to go to the UK and see what exactly was

going on. It was impressive: numerous fresh expressions of church—often small in size—meeting after school and on weekends, in coffee shops, pubs and community halls. But one thing that caught my attention was that the initiative had been catalyzed in part by seven annual Anglican church planting conferences.

I couldn't see myself starting a new church anywhere in my future—but planning conferences was something I knew about. Might an annual church planting conference stimulate interest in new forms of church for Anglicans in Canada?

With the encouragement of Archbishop Colin Johnson, we began in

2007, with sixty people; the second conference, in 2008, attracted eighty; this year (2009) to our amazement attracted 130—and we had a waiting list. David Neelds at Trinity College sponsored all his divinity students to attend.

This year looks like being the best conference so far, with two fine plenary speakers. In 2001, Pemell Goodyear was sent by the Salvation Army to start the FRWY—a coffee shop, arts centre, community commons, and worship centre, and a model for many younger leaders—in downtown Hamilton. Rachel Jordan is a leader of the Fresh Expressions initiative in the UK. Her background includes a PhD in church history and working with prostitutes in Amsterdam's red light

district. These two young speakers will bring us the best insights of the Canadian and the UK scenes.

"When churches are dying, why try to start new ones?" My church planting friends patiently point out that, in life in general, every day some people die and others are born. Both are natural processes... and they go on simultaneously. Why should it not be true for churches also?

Come join us at the next Vital Church Planting conference at St. Paul's, Bloor Street, Toronto, February 2-4 2010. Check out the website for details: vitalchurchplanting.com. Be a part of reimagining church for a new millennium.



■ In a parish fundraising project that goes back three decades, members of St Cuthbert's, Oakville, met to unload 850 Christmas trees while preparing for their annual sale. This project, in addition to raising much needed funds for some core ministries, is also a big community event and over 85 volunteers are involved. It's an important Christmas tradition for both those who buy their tree at St Cuthbert's and for those who volunteer.

Caring for God's creation

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At our recent synod, Bishop Michael presented the first bronze level accreditation certificates to St. Aidan's Oakville, All Saints Welland, St. James, Dundas, Church of the Incarnation Oakville, and St. Luke's Burlington. These parishes—of varying sizes, shapes and circumstances—participated in a pilot of the program this past summer. Their efforts and their leadership have helped make the program even better and their example is something to which we can all aspire.

But Bishop Michael has advanced our diocese's commitment to environmental sustainability even more by challenging all parishes to be accredited at the bronze level by Earth Sunday (April 18) 2010. This is a bold challenge, but one in which all par-

ishes with a small investment in time and energy can realize. To start your parish on the path of accreditation, simply visit the Greening Niagara web page at www.niagara.anglican.ca/green. There you'll find all of the Green Parish accreditation documents, along with a wealth of other resources.

Caring for God's creation is an integral part of our faith, an important sign of God's mission for our world, and a hallmark of our pursuit of excellence in ministry. I hope your parish will give serious consideration to participating in the Green Parish accreditation program as tangible way of making a prophetic statement to our world; one that says a sustainable, just and harmonious existence with all of creation is not simply a dream, but a hope in which we as a church are actively working towards making a reality.

Oprah and Sarah

An epiphany dream



FRANCEAN CAMPBELL-RICH
CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

Oprah and Sarah bump into each other at a garage sale. Sarah is trying on shoes; Oprah is trying on a bra over her clothing. They both wear scarves and dark glasses.

OPRAH: Sarah? Oh my goodness. You too?

SARAH: Yes, me. I didn't recognize you at first. What are you doing here?

OPRAH: Same as you, probably.

SARAH: My feet are killing me. Those bloody high heels. I need something else. Right now.

OPRAH: And I'm trying to find my size in this thing. I've been suffering all day.

They burst out laughing and fall on each other's neck. Sarah goes off with a pair of flats; Oprah looks over a few items on the table. Sarah comes back wearing the flats, with her high heels in a paper bag.

SARAH: I thought I wouldn't be seeing you again in a million years—except on TV.

OPRAH: And you might not see me much more on TV. There might be changes. Let's go and have a coffee.

They go to the nearest Tim Horton's. They head for a corner, find a table for two, still wearing their disguises, and rearrange the chairs. Oprah goes for the coffee, Sarah fusses with her hair and scarf.

OPRAH: I've been gaining weight again. Like Elizabeth Taylor. Drat it. (Takes off her scarf)

SARAH: Does it matter? You look gorgeous. (Takes off her scarf too)

OPRAH: Thanks. But I could never wear high heels like that. And your legs! Wow!

SARAH: And look where it all gets me. Nowhere.

OPRAH: Where do you want to go?

SARAH: The White House, I guess. If I just had your brains and my legs.

OPRAH: Isadora Duncan said something like that to George Bernard Shaw.

SARAH: Who?

OPRAH: But Shaw turned it around: What if she had his body and her brains?

SARAH: Who? Said what?

OPRAH: Never mind. It doesn't matter. Why do you want the White House?

SARAH: Just because it's there. Didn't somebody say that about climbing a mountain?

OPRAH: Sir Edmond Hillary. About Mount Everest.

SARAH: Yes, of course. Guess I can

keep up with you sometimes. But one thing's sure, for certain: I don't seem to be getting any closer to the presidency. And it's all the fault of the darn media. They hound me like you wouldn't believe. My legs, you know: there was that picture of me in one of the Canadian newspapers, the *Gloppenmile*, or something like that, it was just my legs, walking, probably to the washroom. I have to go, you know, quite often; it's all those pregnancies. Have you got any kids?

OPRAH: Sarah, Sarah! The media, you say; the media means everything: TV, newspapers, magazines, billboards, talk shows—and even me. I'm the media; you didn't mind being interviewed by me, did you?

SARAH: Oh no, Oprah, I didn't mean you.

OPRAH: You have to learn to use the media, turn them to your advantage, make friends of them.

SARAH: The way you draw things out of people, it's amazing, like sitting close together, the way we are right now. How do you do it?

OPRAH: It's a gift, perhaps. It's certainly not from anything I was taught—except from what I learned from experience. And you have gifts too, you know. You attract people by your personality. And that's an asset to a politician. Do you think of yourself as a politician, Sarah?

SARAH: No, not really. But I like people. I want people to like me. And I cry if they don't. I cry easily. I guess you could say I'm thin skinned.

OPRAH: Sensitive, maybe. So am I, but in a different way. I came up from nothing. Tough childhood; something I still can't talk about easily. But you know something? It toughened me for life. I can see it in other people: I can tell when they have had a shitty life. They don't even have to say so. I just listen. Listening is what I do a lot of, in my work. I'm a listener. And I'll tell you something else: Like you I thought I wanted something—but I'm not so sure now.

SARAH: Really? I'm surprised. I would have thought you're at the top. Some of the media (there I go again) say you're the biggest TV star in the whole world. You've got everything: fame, success, money. Funny about this place, these people coming and going; if they only knew who we are, you and me. The great Oprah! I've heard that when you so much as mention the name of a book on your show it's good for thousands of sales. You've probably boosted that silly book of mine out of sight—and I didn't even write it myself. Sometimes I wish I'd never let it happen: the people, the press (there I go again) say awful things about it. I had thought it was going to help.

OPRAH: And it did! It's making money for you. Same for me. I put some dough into that film they call *Pre-cious*. Have you seen it? No, of course you haven't; it's not your bag. It's not

mine either really. But there's something about it...

SARAH: What's it about?

OPRAH: It's about an overweight teenager, black, abused by her father, nothing going for her. I guess it touched something in me. A couple of do-gooders heard about the girl and actually hired her to play the part. It didn't cost all that much to make, and it's doing some good.

SARAH: Is that why you're giving up on your TV show, the past catching up with you? Oh forgive me, Oprah, I don't mean that the way it sounds.

OPRAH: It's okay, it's okay. Not to worry. But in a certain way you've touched on something. You've heard I'm starting up my own cable network, OWN? I'm not even sure yet what I want to do with it. But it's beginning to take shape in my mind.

The two women fall silent. They watch the traffic, the passersby, for some minutes. Then, as one, the words tumble out.

OPRAH AND SARAH: We could do something about the wrongs in the world. We could make films!

The two are so excited they begin to attract attention. Two guys at the next table edge toward them and join in. They're out of jobs. Their company went bankrupt and fired them. Their bosses gave themselves bonuses in the millions. Two elderly women overhear the talk and describe how they have been mistreated. Others join in add their voices. Finally a blind man approaches the group and speaks. His voice is gentle.

BLIND MAN: I can't see you, but I can hear you. The world needs change. There are many problems; too wide a gap between rich and poor, and it's getting wider. But hear me: you need faith; faith in something, faith in yourselves. With faith you can accomplish anything, beginning with what you have, starting small, or starting big. What do you believe in? What do you believe you can do? Help each other, seek justice, believe in each other, believe in love.

Oprah and Sarah have slipped away from the others and out the door. Standing under a street lamp, they face each other.

OPRAH: I know now what I want to do, what I need to do. What about you?

SARAH: It's goodbye White House. Hello world. I don't know what I'm going to do, but it's going to make a difference. You know, that columnist on the *Gloppenmile* called us 'soul sisters'. Did you know that?

OPRAH: No, but she could be right, for the wrong reasons. We're friends, for the right reasons.

The two women link arms and go on their way.

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A painful journey

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For those who enter the intensive pursuit of both the immanent and transcendent God, they will find times in their lives when there is simply no response. For some of the great spiritual writers, this was a time of testing and for others it was a time when the one who was journeying was called to the most profound growth. It has never occurred to me that God tests us, but I do believe that God guides us and call us to an ever growing understanding of our relationship. If this means a "dark night of the soul" then this creator surely knows what he/she is doing.

The end of the last millennium and the beginning of this millennium seems to be a dark night for the church. Our numbers are down, our buildings are closing and our purses seem empty. In the spiritual journey many people wander away from the guidance of God during the difficult times and others persist only to experience God's glory again. In the church's journey it is the same thing.

As I look around at what is happening in the Diocese of Niagara, I see a number of people who are persisting. Look at the last synod. Look at the hopeful people who attended the "Living our Vision" day. Young and old joined a rather un-Anglican event, sharing in the festivities, the alternative forms of prayer and dance and music... and most importantly witnessing to the fact that in these difficult times they are not going to give up.

A couple of years ago Michael Bird, bishop of our church, said it's time to vision the future and more importantly to live that vision in every possible way. He has opened doors through which many of us are afraid to enter. The same-sex blessing continues to be a fearful door for many. On my own publisher's advisory board two of us have great difficulty with the blessing of same gender unions. Three of us cannot move ahead quickly enough. The hurt that exists on both sides is unimaginable, but we forge ahead.

Our vision has led us to consider

a new reform in five areas: Liturgy, Innovation, Justice, Stewardship and Leadership. The reform must happen in a climate of spirituality, diversity, honesty, integrity, passion and hard work. Ultimately it's about growing in our ability to follow Christ and to live our lives as his followers. So you say—what's new? We have always been called to these areas. That's true, but now the prophetic call says to us as a community, that in this dark night for the church, we must individually and together examine ourselves and change to meet the needs of a world that is different than the world was some twenty years ago.

What will our church look like in 10 more years? There is absolutely no answer to this question except to say that if we are faithful to both listening to the Spirit of God and to concretely living out the call to change and grow, the church will look exactly like God wants it to look! There will be no winners and losers, but there will be people who live with diversity of opinion and in trust that we are all struggling to grow in Christ. By the way, none of us "needs" to be a member of any church. That's quite clear in the world around us. We have no choice but to trust that those who choose to be members choose to grow in a spirit of good will and love.

It's time to hang up our past prejudices and our insistence on things being the way they were. Christ, born among us, entered a world that was smug and sure of itself and its religious systems. He turned over their tables. Who is to say that our systems, our creeds, our beliefs as we understand them, are for all time? Our chosen bishop and spiritual leader has asked us to look at everything and to grow in Christ, pursuing excellence as a community and as ministers of Christ in the world.

Yes, it's a dark night, but I'm one who believes that we shall soon see the Glory of God alive in our church again. I don't know what that will look like—none of us do. We can only trust that God's will be done!

Poverty is a Sin

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Those present had gathered from across the province, from Hamilton, Halton, Windsor, Kingston, North Bay, Toronto, Belleville, Kitchener and elsewhere to mark the anniversary of the Poverty Reduction Strategy and to share the results of the cross community, cross sectoral campaign advocating for a healthy food supplement for those on social assistance.

The Put Food in the Budget Campaign coordinated by The Stop Community Food Centre in Toronto and the Social Planning Network of Ontario promoted an on-line survey tool known as "Do the Math" to educate the public about the huge shortfall in monthly income that prevents people on social assistance from being able to eat healthily and live with dignity.

Archdeacon Patterson did the math. "My Experience of 'Doing the Math' was profoundly eye opening. Naively I believed I would be able to come very close to tightening my belt enough to be able to live at the provincial assistance level of a single person on Ontario Works - I was over \$700 off the mark! How is it possible for an individual to live in this province on \$572.00 if on Ontario Works or as a person with a disability on \$1020. It is not!"

The Put Food in the Budget campaign also worked with teams in local

communities to take Do the Math to their Members of Provincial Parliament. In the Diocese, as part of the visits, one of the local community legal clinics hosted a meeting with MPP Ted Arnott (Conservative) and three local Anglican clergy, The Reverend Canon Terry DeForest, St. John's Stewarttown; The Reverend Canon Margaret Murray, St. Steven's Hornby; and The Reverend Aaron Orear, St. Alban's Glen Williams.

Canon DeForest did the math. He told Mr. Arnott when he did the Do the Math survey in preparation for the meeting, that despite his attempts to be "responsible", given the high cost of rents, his budget for a month was over twice what a single person on Ontario Works receives.

It is morally unacceptable that inadequate social assistance rates mean that for the most vulnerable among us, those on social assistance, healthy food, a nutritious diet and living with dignity is not an option. And food banks are not a solution.

Through acts of charity, so many of us work at trying to meet the needs of those individuals, at the local community level, through the operation of community centres, daycares, breakfast programs, thrift shops, food banks, overnight shelters, hospitality programs and other social services. We know that we cannot do enough.

Because charity is not enough!

We know from the work we do (and the research shows) that poverty can and does lead to poor health, low levels of literacy, vulnerability and discrimination. We also know that women, Ontarians from racialized communities, Aboriginal communities and people with disabilities are disproportionately poor.

In a message sent to those at the December 4 gathering, Bishop Michael Bird spoke to the mission of the church. "We are reminded... that our mission as Church calls us to both loving service of our neighbours and to action to transform our lives and to alter the structures of society that diminish the gift of hope and leave people living in poverty."

The Bishop confirmed that The Anglican Diocese of Niagara continues to explore new ways that we can partner with and expand on the Poverty Reduction initiative in order to restore and uphold the lives of people who suffer under the weight of profound economic hardship.

He concluded his message by saying "It is our hope and prayer that as a next step on this journey, government officials will implement the \$100 healthy food benefit that is so desperately needed".

You can Do the Math by going to www.dothemath.thestop.org. You will find that it doesn't add up.

My new ministry | Being an interim



HOLLIS HISCOCK
RETIRED PRIEST, BURLINGTON

In January 2007, shortly before my retirement, I wrote in the Toronto Anglican that although my work prospects were uncertain, I would, in the words of song writer Maybelle Carter, 'be somewhere working for my Lord'.

The 'somewhere' has been the parishes of St. John's Weston and St. George's Guelph, working as an Interim.

The Interim provides a bridge between the former and incoming Incumbents. One Diocese describes this period as 'a relatively short term placement between more "settled" ministers.' I guess that would make Interims "unsettled" ministers, and so we may be.

An Interim's time in a parish spans three stages of development, namely, change (when the old Rector leaves), transition (the tenure of the Interim) and transformation (when the new Rector arrives).

The Interim can help people cope with the change, by helping them grieve their loss, listening and honouring their past, and reassuring them of God's presence and guidance in the days ahead.

"Transformation" begins when the new Incumbent is appointed. Then the Interim takes on a 'John the Baptist'

role, who said to his followers when Jesus arrived on the scene, "I must decrease and HE must increase".

During the "transition" period, usually 16-24 months, the Interim's ministry becomes the sowing fields for parish renewal.

The Interim can introduce new and modified worship services without any long term commitment; encourage the laity to explore different leadership styles; question past practices and traditions; break the notion that 'we have always done it this way'; keep reassuring people that God and the Bishop have not abandoned them; give people permission to think and operate 'outside the box', and, enjoy the experience.

The parishioners know that the transition phase will eventually end, since longevity is not a hallmark of Interims.

Interims can adopt varying attitudes. Some may view themselves as house sitters, who are just passing through; others may take on the mantle, the duties and responsibilities of a full-time Incumbent. I fall somewhere in between. I am the Interim Incumbent and I am passing through, but as my father instilled in me, 'you can make a place better or worse, but never the same as when you found it', so I strive to make it better.

My first priority is worship, and then, the care for God's people through teaching, writing, counselling, organizing, administering, pastoral care, encouraging, etc., providing as many

options and opportunities as possible.

I enjoy having fewer meetings, working part time, knowing my tenure is limited, trying new approaches, watching a parish develop future mission goals through the development of their parish profile, and celebrating the laity as they grow into enhanced roles and responsibilities of ministries.

Interims cannot be considered for the Incumbent's position, and can only return officially to the parish with the Incumbent's permission.

Trying to restrict my work hours to my contractual arrangements with the parish and diocese is always a struggle, because ministry matters tend to occupy our total attention.

Each of my placements required driving approximately fifty minutes. I valued that time alone as an opportunity to think, plan, pray, practice my sermon, and listen to the radio and favourite music.

We become friends with parishioners quickly and it is always sad when we have to sever these relationships.

I view my Interim ministry as an incredible odyssey, enabling the parish and myself to explore new horizons, not only in worship, but also in how the structures and practices of the Church can be tested, experimented with and rejuvenated in preparation for the next chapter in their journey with God.

Hollis Hiscock is a retired priest living in Burlington. This article also appeared in the *Toronto Anglican*.

A letter to our Bishop

ROB FEAD
RECTOR OF ST. GEORGE'S IN ST. CATHARINES

Dear Bishop Bird,

I am writing to you as a follow-up concerning the failure of the proposed diocesan budget at this year's Synod. It is apparent that the budget failed to gain majority support due to proposed reductions to special outreach ministries within the diocese and university chaplaincies. At St. George's in St. Catharines we take our obligation to support numerous outreach ministries in our community very seriously. We believe that this responsibility belongs to us and not to the administrative arm of the diocese. We believe that the diocese exists to support us in our ministry and not to do it for us!

Therefore, I would like to propose that the good people of St. George's take on the responsibility of supporting Bethlehem Place, which is in our community, on behalf of the diocese. In 2009 the administrative arm

of the Diocese of Niagara committed \$2,500.00 to the ministry at Bethlehem Place. I am willing to personally oversee a fundraising project in my parish and throughout the Lincoln Deanery (there are 19 parishes in the Region of Lincoln, this would translate to approximately \$131.57 per congregation) that will take this financial commitment from the administrative arm of the diocese and place it where it belongs—among the people who are called by our Diocesan Vision to prophetic social justice making.

I propose that for the next three years I will take on the responsibility of sending Bethlehem Place a cheque for no less than \$2,500.00 on behalf of the Diocese of Niagara. I would like to challenge the other parishes and deaneries in our diocese to innovatively support their community outreach programs in a similar manner.

May God continue to bless you in your Episcopal ministry.

The Niagara Anglican

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The Diocese of Niagara

The Diocese lies at the western end of Lake Ontario, and is defined roughly by the Niagara Escarpment from the Niagara River in the east to the Dundas Valley in the West and north to Shelburne, Mt. Forest and Orangeville.

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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

■ Bishop Ralph Spence was appointed honorary assistant at Christ's Church Cathedral, Hamilton, effective December 1.
■ The Reverend Canon Nissa Basbaum transferred to the Diocese of Kootenay effective December 1.
■ The Reverend Laura Marie Piotrowicz will transfer to the Diocese of Brandon, effective February 1.

■ Our thoughts and prayers are with Catherine Leckey, and family, on the death of her mother, Jean Nesbitt. Funeral service was held on December 5 at St. Paul's Church in Brighton.
■ Bishop Bird appointed two new

Canons of Christ's Church Cathedral: David Linn and Susan Wells. Congratulations to both David and Susan.
■ The Reverend Robert Conway, Priest-in-Charge at All Saints Church, Ridgeway (beginning November 1), died on Friday, November 20. A ser-

vice was held at St. Matthias, Toronto, on Saturday, November 28, and a Requiem Eucharist was held on Saturday, December 5, at All Saints Church, Ridgeway.
■ Susan Olmstead issued a lay reader's license at St. Paul's Church, Jarvis, effective December 1.

What has Saint Mungo to say to us today?

MICHAEL BURSLEM
ST GEORGE'S GUELPH

I remember before embarking to Canada in September, 1951, that I went into St. Mungo's church in Glasgow for prayer and a time of quiet solitude with God. I had said Good Bye to my family the day before, and was feeling really alone. Because of that, St. Mungo, or Kentigern, has always been one of my favourite saints. I didn't know then who he was, but only discovered years later, thanks to the internet.

Although Mungo lived in the 6th century C.E., he was a man of our day, being the son of a single mother, St. Enoch. She was a Scottish princess, but as a teenager found herself pregnant. Her family was so ashamed of her state that they pushed her over a cliff in Lothian, a few miles east of Edinburgh. She survived that ordeal, but then they put her in an open boat and towed her out into the North Sea. However, the tides brought her ashore at Culross on the Firth of Forth, where she promptly gave birth. A local hermit priest, Serf, sheltered her and her son. When he first saw him as a new born, he nick-named him "my dear-

est one," or Mungo, and that name stuck throughout his life. However, he baptized him by the name, Kentigern, meaning the Lord's Chieftain.

Enoch and Mungo lived with Serf, who was both father and teacher to him, until he was fifteen. Then he headed west to the Clyde. He settled with some friends on the bank of the river. Their little community became known as Glesgu, "the dear friends" which later became Glasgow. He was a born leader, so the local King, Roderick, urged him to be his bishop. He was reluctantly made bishop of Strathclyde at the age of twenty five. As bishop he went on several missionary journeys to England and to Wales, and even to Rome to persuade the pope to send a delegation to southern England to help in the evangelizing of the British Isles. Gregory was supposed to go, but later, when he became pope, he sent Augustine. However, Mungo preferred to stay close to home on the Clyde side, and died there, aged 85, January 13, 601.

Nobody wrote Mungo's biography till about 600 years later, and it's full of legend, much of which may be taken with a pinch of salt. However, it makes

interesting reading. What stands out clearly is that he was a Godly man, truly the Lord's Chieftain. In naming him Kentigern, Serf was prophetic. He well deserved to be called a saint, though not a typical stained glass window saint. His sainthood had a small 's.' A near relative called him the bastard bishop, reminding him of his questionable origin. If it were me, I might well have lost my halo in a second flat. He didn't retaliate though, as far as the record shows, which perhaps is a whitewash. Nevertheless, like the saints of the Bible, who are all too human, he's an example to us all.

Two of his recorded sayings are still relevant today. The first, "Let Glasgow flourish by the preaching of the word." This was abbreviated in the mid 19th century to *Let Glasgow Prosper*, when it was made the motto on the city's coat of arms. When I visited the city I thought it anything but flourishing or prosperous. All the city buildings, including the monuments in St. Mungo's churchyard, were blackened by grimy soot. Glasgow has certainly cleaned itself up since then. We all forget that our prosperity is only from the Lord, a lesson we need

to remember, or else it may become somewhat illusionary. It's the preaching of the word that is the source of our prosperity.

The other relevant 'word' was his last to his followers, just moments before he died. They were, "My children, love one another; be hospitable; keep the laws of the church." We may not all agree today on what are, and are not, the laws of the church that we should obey. But we can all love one another and be hospitable. If we were merely to obey the laws of the church without first loving one another (which we can still do, even though we do not agree with one another) we would become Pharisees. Mungo, however, as did the Lord, and Saint Paul, put loving one another first.

In St. Mungo's Church I was tempted to turn back and not to come to Canada. As he did, I left home very young. I now have no regrets I came. Looking back over the years I'm even more certain now than ever of the communion of saints' as I have been watched over, and guided, by none other than the Lord's faithful servant, and chieftain, Saint Mungo.

Reality shows

» CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

What can we do about this? Our society is increasingly anti-Christian partly because we are not effectively Christian. It's as if we have never taken Jesus seriously. If we had, we would have put his concepts into practice by now and Western society would be functionally Christian. Our society would not be characterized by an unjust imbalance of wealth, wars would have become obsolete, and all people would treat each other as fellow children of God. It's been two thousand years, after all.

Instead, our highly popular entertainment is the "survival show" that celebrates the survival of the fittest (read: most aggressive) as the essential social dynamic and measure of achievement. It is impossible to picture Jesus having anything to do with survivor shows. He would not have any interest in hurting others in order to be proclaimed sole winner of any prize. Is winning a prize our most typical day-dream and greed our dominant desire?

Charles Darwin gave us many important ideas but the notion of the survival of the fittest is questionable; more recent scientists think that survival of the most co-operative is the key to the

success of any species. If we emulated Jesus and longed to build his kingdom here and now, we as a church would be more focused on co-operation. A workable metaphor for communal success is the body whose every organ must co-operate for the whole organism to thrive. If the individual organs start rejecting each other, the body is doomed. Isn't co-operation a necessary ideal for "this fragile earth, our island home" as well as for our church? Didn't Jesus say something about love being "the great and first commandment"?

What does our society do with concepts such as "the last shall be first"? Well, in political terms perhaps we have made some progress since Jesus' time when the system was hierarchical and feudal, when the last had no hope of anything but coming last. I like to think that our democracy and our health care system embody the "last shall be first" value. And watch everyone in a Timmies; politeness is our country's basic mode when we're enjoying coffee and donuts.

But our economy, sadly, is still based on looking out for number one, on using our environment as resource. We are reluctant to tackle environmental issues for many reasons, most of them

economic. We seem to lack the ability to consider long-range options in order to make wise decisions and we seem unable to conceptualize the interconnection of all living things. Surely from the first moment anyone saw pictures of the earth taken from a space craft we should have known that all life on this planet is interdependent, that to survive as a species humans must adopt feelings of empathy, attitudes of stewardship and habits of sustainability. Still we put off dealing with climate change.

Compare the world of the Bible to ours in terms of wildlife species. Starting with the serpent in Eden, the Old Testament tells stories involving Noah and the creatures of his ark, Elijah fed in the wilderness by ravens, Elisha helped by a she-bear, Daniel's lions and Jonah's whale. In the New Testament, Jesus used farm animals in his parables, for what we now call the Middle East had become agrarian. Europe came under human control much later. Even a few hundred years ago, the setting of Grimm's Fairy Tales was a dense forest that is now "developed" into farms, parks, towns and cities. The threatening wolves and beautiful swans are now decimated. Now, even in the Americas, few such animals exist in the wild. In our densely populated

world there is no frontier. Where does a doe in downtown TO go? Where does Huck Finn light out for? Fading too is the human sense of wonder. How have we followers of Christ failed?

Church-goers have not fully acknowledged the church's situation as it is grasped by people outside it: our present mode is not functional. But the problem of churches surviving pales beside our big problem; the crisis shared by all humans is the possible destruction of all life forms by human greed. When we contemplate this too-possible scenario, we turn in horror and find hope in God. As Bishop Michael repeats: we can do Christ, lead life-changing worship, foster a continuous culture of innovation, initiate and sustain outreach, make justice, and encourage outstanding leadership in ministry and generous stewardship. God doesn't wait for us to be perfect to work through us.

The world was not ready when Jesus began his ministry. And still Incarnation happens, even after Christmas. If instead of New Year's Resolutions we write a list of priorities, the top one is to worship God by following his great commandment. As we do this, all the rest, including saving our environment, our species and our church, can occur.

LIVING THE VISION DAY



Oberammergau-Experience the Passion of our Lord

A 15-day tour (June 2 – 16, 2010) entitled **European Splendour** will take us to Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic. The tour has been carefully designed to be relaxing with a fair amount of free time.

The centerpiece of the tour will be the **Passion Play at Oberammergau**. Every ten years since 1634 the people of the town of Oberammergau have performed this passion play. The play is immensely popular and the tickets sell out months in advance.

Other highlights of this tour will include **WINE TASTING** on the Weinstrasse; a **MUSICAL & FOLKLORE SHOW** in Prague; **TOUR, DINNER & CONCERT** at Schonbrunn; **HUNGARIAN DINNER & FOLKLORE PERFORMANCE**.

Contact: Canon Gordon Kinkley 905 934-1020 OR kinkley@sympatico.ca OR ROSTAD TOURS 1-800-361-8687



Schonbrunn Palace, Vienna



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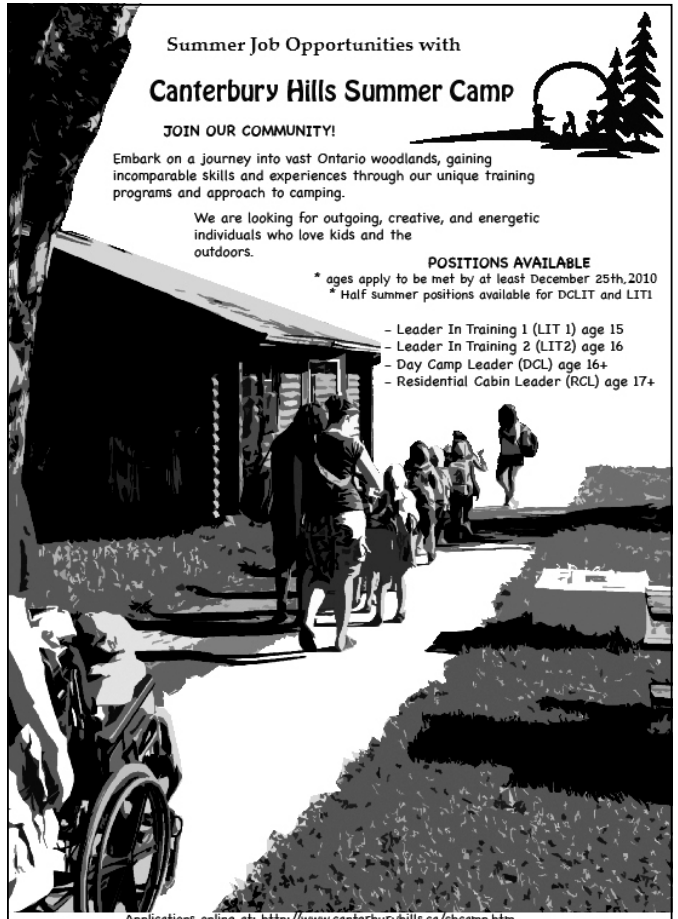
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POSITIONS AVAILABLE

* ages apply to be met by at least December 25th, 2010
* Half summer positions available for DCLIT and LITI

- Leader In Training 1 (LIT 1) age 15
- Leader In Training 2 (LIT2) age 16
- Day Camp Leader (DCL) age 16+
- Residential Cabin Leader (RCL) age 17+



Applications online at: <http://www.canterburyhills.ca/chcamp.htm>
Application Deadline: February 12, 2010 New Staff Hiring Day: March 6, 2010 9:30-3:00pm