

ECUMENISM

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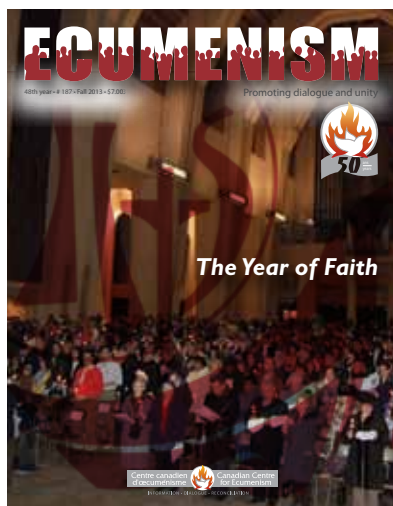
The Year of Faith

Centre canadien
d'œcuménisme



Canadian Centre
for Ecumenism

INFORMATION • DIALOGUE • RECONCILIATION



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ŒCUMÉNISME

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Editorial

How, What and When to Celebrate

David Fines

December is a busy month for churches, with numerous celebrations on the schedule. Here are just a few:

- *Advent is celebrated by most churches; it is the liturgical season that includes the four Sundays before Christmas. In many churches, one candle is lit every Sunday in the Advent wreath, a symbol of the light that will be reborn on Christmas Eve; a fifth candle, a white one representing Jesus, the light of the world, is lit at Midnight Mass or during the Christmas worship service.*
- *The Roman Catholic feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary (December 9).*
- *The Anglican feast of Saint Thomas (December 21).*
- *Christmas Day; we know that December 25 is an arbitrary date that was set fairly late in the Western Empire, around the mid-fourth century, perhaps to compete with the Roman celebration of the Sol Invictus (the unconquered Sun). When third-century Christian communities tried to determine when Jesus was born, several dates were put forward. Before deciding on December 25, other contenders were January 6, March 28 and even November 18. Gift-giving seems to hark back to Roman celebrations of Saturnalia, which took place in December[. Churches tend to refer more and more to the “Feast of the Nativity” to differentiate the Christian commemoration from the commercialized festivities and consumer frenzy.*
- *The Roman Catholic feast of Saint Stephen, the first Christian martyr (December 26).*
- *The feast of the Holy Family, introduced into the Roman Catholic Church by the First Vatican Council (the Sunday after Christmas).*
- *Commemoration of the massacre of the Holy Innocents in the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches (December 28).*
- *The feast of Mary, Mother of God, in the Catholic and Orthodox churches (January 1)*
- *Epiphany (January 6); “Epiphany” is a word of Greek origin that means “manifestation” or “appearance.” Until the end of the fourth century, when the Western churches decided to celebrate Christmas on December 25, Epiphany was the single great Christian feast of the “manifestation of Christ in the world” (a manifestation expressed in different episodes such as the visit of the Magi and the “appearance” of a star, the Nativity itself, the voice of the Father and the presence of a dove when Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan River, the miracle at Cana). Nowadays, Epiphany takes on a specific meaning depending on the denomination. Some churches, like the Armenian Apostolic Church, have maintained the ancient tradition of celebrating both the Nativity and the Epiphany on January 6. In certain countries, the churches celebrate Epiphany on the first Sunday of January. For the Orthodox churches, it is called at the feast of the “Theophany,” a word that means “manifestation of God.”*
- *Orthodox Christmas: the Orthodox churches also celebrate the Nativity on December 25, but following the old liturgical calendar, the Julian calendar, in which it falls the night of January 6 to 7 in the Gregorian (or Western) calendar. It is the second most important feast after Easter and filled with ritual.*
- *The Baptism of Jesus in a number of Christian churches (second Sunday of January).*

We have many opportunities to celebrate our faith in Jesus, the child of Bethlehem... And also to visit our neighbours, find out what they are doing and celebrate along with them!

Nouvelles du Centre canadien d'œcuménisme

ECUMENICAL EVENING 2014

During the week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2014

IS CHRIST DIVIDED? - 1 Corinthians 1:13



Ecumenical worship service at
Christ Church Anglican Cathedral

625 St Catherine St. W

Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 4:00 p.m.

2014's prayer has been composed by Canada and therefore has special interest to Canadians

We are pleased to announce that this ecumenical celebration will be filmed by
CBC and France 2 and broadcast, in Canada and Europe, on the program
"Le Jour du Seigneur".

We are looking forward to seeing you there!

INFORMATION

(514) 937-9176 ext. 33 • www.oikoumene.ca

www.weekofprayer.ca

Congratulations Brian!

On August 28, Dr. Adriana Bara, Bernice Baranowski and M. Paul Paradis of the Centre attended the thesis defense of Brian Cordeiro at Concordia University.

The title of Brian's MA thesis is: *The Doctrine of Justification: A Biblical and Historical Analysis of the Doctrine and its Ecumenical Reception by Lutherans and Catholics in their Joint Declaration in 1999.*

The examiners were: Dr. Paul Allen, Dr. Matthew Anderson and Dr. Lucian Turcescu with Dr. Raymond Lafontaine as the chair.

Brian is a permanent deacon in the Catholic Church and, along with Paul Paradis, a member of the Centre's Board



De gauche à droite, Bernice Baranowski, Dr. Adriana Bara et M. Paul Paradis

of Directors. Some twelve other persons were also present. Brian was in full possession of the material and responded confidently to the questions put to him by the examiners and others. A lively discussion ensued on the meaning of justification, whether it is a process or an event and the role played by man's wounded nature. After a brief consultation



Brian Cordeiro (in the centre) with (from left to right) Dr. Turcescu, Dr. Anderson, Dr. Allen and Dr. Lafontaine

together, the examiners returned with the good news that Brian's MA thesis was accepted. Congratulations Brian!

Good Relations

His Grace, Ioan Casian of Vicina, Vicar Bishop of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas, visited the Centre on August 28th to meet with our general director. His Grace accepted to collaborate with the Centre in future ecumenical projects.

On Wednesday, October 2nd 2013, the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism hosted a discussion with different religious leaders on the proposed Charter of Quebec values. The event was organized by the English-Speaking Catholic Council Montreal.

Prix du 125e anniversaire de la Faculté de Théologie et de sciences des religions

The PhD dissertation of Dr. Adriana Bara, our executive director, has been distinguished with the Prix du 125e anniversaire de la Faculté de Théologie et de sciences des religions for its excellence. The doctoral thesis was entitled "The Political and Artistic Program of Prince Petru

Rares of Moldovia (1527-1538 and 1541-1546) and the Series Fresco Depicting the "Life of the Mother of God" in the Church of Humor Monastery".

The prize of the 125th anniversary of the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies of l'Université de Montréal is awarded annually to honor graduate students of the Faculty who have distinguished themselves by their excellent work.



Dr. Adriana Bara, executive director at CCE

Volunteers Needed

Receptionist

We are seeking an individual with strong interpersonal skills, an openness to world religions and the ability to communicate in English and French. The working schedule is flexible depending on your availability.

Computer Technician

We need someone with the skills needed to maintain our small computer network, perform updates, backup copies, etc.

If you have these or other talents to share, come join our team! Contact us.

Creation Ministry on Mission in the North Ontario, January 19-28, 2013

Norman Lévesque

The author is the Director of Education and of the Green Church Program at the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism.

Last January 19, I put on my heavy winter coat, threw my snow shovel into the back of my Communauto shared car and headed out for the Abitibi region of Quebec, to tell them about the Green Church Program offered by the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism. Because the program is expanding from coast to coast, I left the comfort of the city and made my way to the land of forestry, mines, hunting and fishing, to offer tools to churches of all denominations to assist them in caring for Creation. While my goal was to offer my services, I have to admit that I also got a great deal from witnessing to the dialogue between Christians.

My first surprise occurred in the city of Val d'Or. The Catholics were busy organizing a fund-raising evening and the Evangelicals were renovating their church. The United Church had its own challenges, I was told. So who could I meet with? Finally, I got in touch with a woman who was in charge of "commitment" in her parish. As soon as I sent her the invitation, she passed it on to several others. And so, on Saturday, January 21, six parishioners were gathered to meet

me in a home heated by a wood stove. It was certainly a warm atmosphere, in more ways than one!

We talked for two hours around the kitchen table about the need to adopt habits that respect Creation and to rediscover a spirituality that is closer to nature. They were impressed by what the program had to offer and were eager to get started. But at one point, one of the people raised her hand to ask me what "ecumenism" meant. I told her that this word meant "one house" in which all Christians live, and that the program was available to all the churches. Thrilled, she answered me: "That means we can contact the other churches through your program!" I was equally as thrilled that the idea of protecting Creation would motivate them to work together with their Christian brothers and sisters in Val d'Or.

Next, I went to Sainte-Thérèse-de-Lisieux Cathedral in Amos. The size of the cathedral made me forget the 150 cm of snow in front of all the houses and stores. According to the UN, the city of Amos enjoys the cleanest water in the world, thanks to the eskers (sand formations) which act as a natural water filter. But what a contrast, knowing that the diocese had decided not to let me give a workshop or a shared homily in their cathedral. There were already too many other activities on the agenda. I sensed a certain hesitation concerning the relevance of discussing ecology in church. However, when one door closes, another one opens somewhere else.

When I knocked at the door of the rectory at Christ-Roi Catholic Church in Magog, I met a new community of men, women and couples, all devoted to the Lord. They were sensitive to social issues and to evangelization. This group of Catholics was even working with a young Protestant woman in order to help the light of Christ to shine in Amos. They were excited about the ecumenical scope of the Green Church Program and wanted to explore its possibilities.

On Sunday, January 22, the bells rang to summon the faithful to mass at the beautiful cathedral in Amos. Instead, of going there my path took me to the Centre chrétien d'Amos, a Pentecostal place of worship, where Pastor Gérard invited me to preach. Since it was the Sunday for Christian Unity,



Jane Cox, Norman Lévesque and the Ven. Anne Germond

I even treated them to a little Gregorian chant at the end. There were people of all ages, and they came to see me after the praise time to thank me for the relevance of what I had just preached. They said that they would pray for this mission that brings people together to care for God's creation. Clearly, the environmental message that can be found in the pages of the Bible breaks down barriers between Christian denominations.

In Rouyn-Noranda, I saw a Maison de la Bible (Bible House), a museum completely devoted to the Holy Scriptures. The founder, a curious brother who liked working with his hands, told me with some embarrassment that the schools of Rouyn-Noranda did not visit the museum (because of the ethics course) and that it was not frequently visited by the catechism classes either. Instead, most of the museum's visitors came from Ontario, from schools and churches of all Christian denominations. A case of no man being a prophet in his own country.

In Timmins, I gave two days of training to the staff at the Catholic school board and some church personnel. This Green Church training also included an exploration of the Bible based on the theme of the environment. The feedback was very positive, with recommendations that as many people as possible take this training. In all humility, I just want to say that this praise makes me want to work all the harder on this very relevant mission for the Church.

Out of everything I saw on my trip, it was an initiative in Sudbury that impressed me the most. As I had done elsewhere, I suggested holding a Green Church workshop at an active church, and that other churches be invited to attend. But I did not expect to see 17 people gather at Ascension Anglican Church on a Thursday afternoon (January 26). Even more astonishing than the number of people was their diversity: Anglicans, Catholics, Uniteds, Evangelicals, Presbyterians and Lutherans. They all took notes and were eager to organize joint activities to care for Creation. They thanked me warmly for coming to Sudbury and certainly demonstrated that wonderful renewable energy that can be found in the Green Church Program!

These experiences have shown me two truths. First, Creation care is an ecumenical issue that opens doors in every denomination. I imagine that its Biblical foundation (rather than dogmatic or institutional) is very much the reason why this discourse can be understood by everyone. Second, Creation care is an opportunity for dialogue and Christian unity. I am amazed at the degree of motivation shown by the participants at my workshops.

Back in Montreal, where there was less snow, no snowmobiles and no ice fishing, I reflected on all the fine people I had met in the Abitibi and in Northern Ontario, and then gazed in wonder at the ecumenical and environmental world we are in the process of building. We live in the same house, oikos, and we are taking care of it.

Green Church training in Timmins.



Theme: The Year of Faith

Note with pastoral recommendations for the Year of Faith Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (Extracts)

Introduction

With the Apostolic Letter of 11 October 2011, *Porta fidei*, Pope Benedict XVI declared a Year of Faith. This year [began] on 11 October 2012, on the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Second Ecumenical Vatican Council, and will conclude on 24 November 2013, the Solemnity of our Lord Jesus Christ, Universal King.

This year will be a propitious occasion for the faithful to understand more profoundly that the foundation of Christian faith is “the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.”[1] Founded on the encounter with the Risen Christ, faith can be rediscovered in its wholeness and all its splendor. “In our days too faith is a gift to rediscover, to cultivate and to bear witness to” because the Lord “grants each one of us to live the beauty and joy of being Christians.”[2] (...)

The Council, according to Pope John XXIII, wanted “to transmit doctrine, pure and whole, without attenuations or misrepresentations,” in such a way that “this sure and immutable teaching, which must be respected faithfully, is elaborated and presented in a way which corresponds to the needs of our time.”[3] In this regard, the opening words of the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen gentium* remain of primary importance: “Christ is the Light of nations. Because this is so, this Sacred Synod gathered together in the Holy Spirit eagerly desires, by proclaiming the Gospel to every creature, (cfr. Mk 16:15) to bring the light of Christ to all men, a light brightly visible on the countenance of the Church.”[4] (...)

After the Council the Church – under the sure guidance of the Magisterium and in continuity with the whole Tradition – set about ensuring the reception and application of the teaching of the Council in all its richness. To assist in the correct reception of the Council, the Popes have frequently convoked the Synod of Bishops,[5] first instituted by the Servant of God, Paul VI, in 1965, providing the Church with clear guidance through the various post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortations. The next General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, to be held in October 2012, will have as its theme: The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith.(...)

The Year of Faith is intended to contribute to a renewed conversion to the Lord Jesus and to the rediscovery of faith, so that the members of the Church will be credible and joy-filled witnesses to the Risen Lord in the world of today - capable of leading those many people who are seeking it to the “door of faith.” This “door” opens wide man’s gaze to Jesus Christ, present among us “always, until the end of the age” (Mt 28:20). He shows us how “the art of living” is learned “in an intense relationship with him.”[13] “Through his love, Jesus Christ attracts to himself the people of every generation: in every age he convokes the Church, entrusting her with the proclamation of the Gospel by a mandate that is ever new. Today too, there is a need for stronger ecclesial commitment to new evangelization in order to rediscover the joy of believing and the enthusiasm for communicating the faith.”[14]

At the invitation of Pope Benedict XVI,[15] the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in consultation with the competent Dicasteries of the Holy See and with the contribution of the Committee for the Preparation of the Year of Faith,[16] has drawn up this Note, with some recommendations for living this time of grace, without precluding other initiatives which the Holy Spirit will inspire among Pastors and faithful in various parts of the world.

Recommendations

“I know him in whom I have believed” (2 Tm 1:12). These words of St Paul help us to understand that faith is “first of all a personal adherence of man to God. At the same time, and inseparably, it is a free assent to the whole truth that God has revealed.”[17] Faith which is a personal trust in the Lord and the faith which we profess in the Creed are inseparable; they focus on each other and they require each other. There exists a profound bond between the lived faith and its contents. The faith of the Witnesses and Confessors is also the faith of the Apostles and Doctors of the Church. Thus, the following recommendations for the Year of Faith desire to aid both the encounter with Christ through authentic witnesses to faith, and the ever-greater understanding of its contents. These proposals are intended as examples to encourage a ready response to the invitation

of the Holy Father to live fully this Year as a special “time of grace.”[18] The joyous rediscovery of faith can also contribute to consolidate the unity and communion among the different bodies that make up the wider family of the Church.

I. On the level of the Universal Church

1. The main ecclesial event at the beginning of the Year of Faith will be the XIII General Assembly of the Ordinary Synod of Bishops, convoked by Pope Benedict XVI in October 2012, dedicated to The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith. During this Synod, on 11 October 2012, there will be a solemn celebration of the beginning of the Year of Faith, in remembrance of the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council.

2. In the Year of Faith pilgrimages of the faithful to the See of Peter are to be encouraged, to profess faith in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in unity with him who today is called to confirm his brothers and sisters in the faith (cfr. Lk 22:32). It is also important to promote pilgrimages to the Holy Land, the place which first saw the presence of Jesus, the Savior, and Mary, his Mother.

3. During this Year, it will be helpful to invite the faithful to turn with particular devotion to Mary, model of the Church, who “shines forth to the whole community of the elect as the model of virtues.”[19] (...)

4. The next World Youth Day, in Rio de Janeiro in July 2013, will offer a special occasion for the young to experience the joy which comes from faith in the Lord Jesus and communion with the Holy Father, in the greater family of the Church.

5. It is hoped that many symposia, conferences and large gatherings will be held, even at the international level, to encourage encounters with authentic witness to the faith and to promote understanding of the contents of Catholic doctrine. Noting how, still today, the Word of God continues to grow and spread, it will be important to give witness that “all the anguish and all the longing of the human heart finds fulfilment”[20] in Christ Jesus and that faith “becomes a new criterion of understanding and action that changes the whole of man’s life.”[21] Some conferences should be particularly dedicated to the rediscovery of the teachings of Vatican Council II.

6. The Year of Faith will offer a special opportunity for all believers to deepen their knowledge of the primary documents of the Second Vatican Council and their study of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. (...)

During the Year of Faith, in cooperation with the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, various ecumenical initiatives are to be planned, aimed at “the restoration of unity among all Christians”

7. This Year will provide an auspicious time for a more attentive reception of the homilies, catechesis, addresses and other speeches and documents of the Holy Father. Pastors, consecrated persons and the lay faithful are invited to renew their efforts in effective and heart-felt adherence to the teaching of the Successor of Peter.

8. During the Year of Faith, in cooperation with the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, various ecumenical initiatives are to be planned, aimed at “the restoration of unity among all Christians” which “is one of the principal concerns of the Second Vatican Council.”[22] In particular, there will be a solemn ecumenical celebration in which all of the baptized will reaffirm their faith in Christ.

9. A Secretariat to coordinate all of the different initiatives promoted by various Dicasteries of the Holy See, or other events relevant to the Universal Church, will be established within the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization. This Secretariat should be informed timely of the main events and can also suggest appropriate initiatives. The Secretariat will open a dedicated website with the goal of making available useful information regarding living out the Year of Faith more effectively.

10. At the conclusion of this Year, on the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Universal King, there will be a Eucharist celebrated by the Holy Father, in which a solemn renewal of the profession of faith will take place.

II. On the level of Episcopal Conferences[23]

1. Episcopal Conferences, in light of the specific mission of the Bishops as teachers and “heralds of the faith,”[24] can dedicate a day of study to the topic of faith, its personal witness and its transmission to new generations.

2. The republication in paperback and economical editions of the Documents of Vatican Council II, the Catechism of the Catholic Church and its Compendium is to be promoted, as is the wider distribution of these texts through electronic means and modern technologies.

3. A renewed effort to translate the documents of Vatican Council II and the Catechism of the Catholic Church into languages which lack a translation is desirable. Initiatives of charitable support to enable translations into the local languages of mission countries, where the local Churches cannot afford the expense, are to be encouraged. (...)

It is, therefore, recommended that Episcopal Conferences maximize the catechetical potential – possibly with ecumenical cooperation – of the artistic patrimony of the region entrusted to their pastoral care.

4. Pastors should work to promote television and radio transmissions, films and publications focusing on the faith, its principles and content, as well as on the ecclesial significance of the Second Vatican Council. This should be done using the new styles of communication, especially on the popular level, making these things available to a wider public.

5. The Saints and the Blessed are the authentic witnesses of the faith.[25] It is, therefore, opportune that Episcopal Conferences work toward the dissemination of a knowledge of the local Saints of their territory, also by modern means of social communication.

6. The contemporary world is sensitive to the relationship between faith and art. It is, therefore, recommended that Episcopal Conferences maximize the catechetical potential – possibly with ecumenical cooperation – of the artistic patrimony of the region entrusted to their pastoral care.

7. Educators in centers of theological studies, seminaries and Catholic universities should be encouraged in their teaching to demonstrate the relevance within their various disciplines of the contents of the Catechism of the Catholic Church and of the implications derived from them.

8. It would be useful to arrange for the preparation of pamphlets and leaflets of an apologetic nature (cfr. I Pt 3:15), which should be done with the help of theologians and authors. Every member of the faithful would then be enabled to respond better to the questions which arise in difficult contexts – whether to do with sects, or the problems related to secularism and relativism, or to questions “arising from a changed mentality which, especially today, limits the field of rational certainties to that of scientific and technological discoveries,”[26] or to other specific issues.

9. It is hoped that local catechisms and various catechetical supplements in use in the particular Churches would be examined to ensure their complete conformity with the Catechism of the Catholic Church.[27] (...)

10. The Year of Faith will also be an appropriate time to examine, in collaboration with the Congregation for Catholic Education, the Ratio of formation for future priests, ensuring that the contents of the Catechism for the Catholic Church are present in their theological studies.

III. At the Diocesan level

1. It is hoped that each particular Church would have a celebration of the opening of the Year of Faith and a solemn conclusion to it, in which to “profess our faith in the Risen Lord in our cathedrals and in the churches of the whole world.”[28]

2. It would be desirable that each Diocese in the world organize a study day on the Catechism of the Catholic Church, particularly for its priests, consecrated persons and catechists. On this occasion, for example, the Eastern Catholic Eparchies could hold a meeting with their priests to give witness to their specific experience and liturgical tradition in the one faith in Christ. Also, in this way, young particular Churches in mission territories would be able to give renewed witness to that joy of faith which is so often particular to them.

3. Each Bishop could devote a pastoral letter of his own to the topic of faith, keeping in mind the specific pastoral circumstances of the portion of the faithful entrusted to him, reminding them of the importance of the Second Vatican Council and of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

4. It is hoped that in each Diocese, under the leadership of the Bishop, catechetical events will be organized, especially for the youth and those searching for a sense of life, helping them to discover the beauty of ecclesial faith, promoting encounters with meaningful witnesses to the faith.

5. It would be appropriate for each particular Church to review the reception of Vatican Council II and the Catechism of the Catholic Church in its own life and mission, particularly in the realm of catechesis. This would provide the opportunity for a renewal of commitment on the part of the catechetical offices of the Dioceses which - supported by the Commissions for Catechesis of the Episcopal Conferences – have the duty to care for the theological formation of catechists.

6. The continuing education of the clergy can be focused during this Year of Faith on the documents of Vatican Council II and on the Catechism of the Catholic Church, treating such themes as “the proclamation of the Risen Christ”, “the Church - sacrament of salvation”, “the mission of evangelization in the world today”, “faith and disbelief”, “faith, ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue”, “faith and eternal life”, “the hermeneutic of reform in continuity” and “the Catechism in ordinary pastoral care.”

7. Bishops are invited to organize penitential celebrations, particularly during Lent, in which all can ask for God’s forgiveness, especially for sins against faith. This Year also provides an appropriate occasion in which all can approach the Sacrament of Penance with greater faith and more frequently.

8. It is hoped that there will be a renewed creative dialogue between faith and reason in the academic and artistic communities, through symposia, meetings and days of study, especially at Catholic universities, in order to demonstrate that “there cannot be any conflict between faith and genuine science, because both, albeit via different routes, tend towards the truth.”[29]

9. It is also important to promote encounters with those persons who, “while not claiming to have the gift of faith, are nevertheless sincerely searching for the ultimate meaning and definitive truth of their lives and of the world,”[30] taking as an example the dialogues of the Courtyard of the Gentiles, sponsored by the Pontifical Council for Culture.

10. The Year of Faith can be an opportunity to pay greater attention to Catholic schools, which are a perfect place to offer to students a living witness to the Lord and to nurture their faith. This can be done by making use of good catechetical tools (...).

IV. At the level of the parish/community/association/movement

1. In preparation for the Year of Faith, all of the faithful are invited to read closely and meditate upon Pope Benedict XVI’s Apostolic Letter, *Porta fidei*.

2. The Year of Faith “will also be a good opportunity to intensify the celebration of the faith in the liturgy, especially in the Eucharist.”[31] (...) All of the faithful are invited to participate in the Eucharist actively, fruitfully and with awareness, in order to be authentic witnesses of the Lord.

3. Priests should devote greater attention to the study of the documents of Vatican Council II and the Catechism of the Catholic Church, drawing from them resources for the pastoral care of their parishes – catechesis, preaching, Sacramental preparation. They should also offer cycles of homilies on the faith (...)

4. Catechists should hold more firmly to the doctrinal richness of the Catechism of the Catholic Church and, under the direction of their pastors, offer guidance in reading this precious document to groups of faithful, working toward a deeper common understanding thereof, with the goal of creating small communities of faith, and of giving witness to the Lord Jesus.

5. It is hoped that there will be a renewed commitment in parishes to the distribution of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and of other resources appropriate for families, which are true domestic churches and the primary setting for the transmission of the faith. This might be done, for example, during the blessing of homes, the Baptism of adults, Confirmations and Marriages. (...)

6. The promotion of missions and other popular programs in parishes and in the workplace can help the faithful to rediscover the gift of Baptismal faith and the task of giving witness, knowing that the Christian vocation “by its very nature is also a vocation to the apostolate.”[34]

7. During this time, members of Institutes of Consecrated Life and of Societies of Apostolic Life are asked to work towards the new evangelization with a renewed union to the Lord Jesus, each according to their proper charism, in fidelity to the Holy Father and to sound doctrine.

8. Contemplative communities, during the Year of Faith, should pray specifically for the renewal of the faith among the People of God and for a new impulse for its transmission to the young.

9. Associations and Ecclesial Movements are invited to promote specific initiatives which, through the contribution of their proper charism and in collaboration with their local Pastors, will contribute to the wider experience of the Year of Faith. (...)

10. All of the faithful, called to renew the gift of faith, should try to communicate their own experience of faith and charity[35] to their brothers and sisters of other religions,

with those who do not believe, and with those who are just indifferent. In this way, it is hoped that the entire Christian people will begin a kind of mission toward those with whom they live and work, knowing that they “have welcomed the news of salvation which is meant for every man.”[36]

Conclusion

Faith “is the lifelong companion that makes it possible to perceive, ever anew, the marvels that God works for us. Intent on gathering the signs of the times in the present of history, faith commits every one of us to become a living sign of the presence of the Risen Lord in the world.”[37] Faith is both a personal and a communal act: it is a gift from God that is lived in the communion of the Church and must be communicated to the world. Every initiative for the Year of Faith should be designed to aid in the joyous rediscovery of the faith and its renewed transmission. The recommendations provided here have the goal of inviting all of the members of the Church to work so that this Year may be a special time in which we, as Christians, may share that which is most dear to us: Christ Jesus, the Redeemer of mankind, Universal King, “leader and perfecter of faith” (Hb 12: 2).

All of the faithful, called to renew the gift of faith, should try to communicate their own experience of faith and charity to their brothers and sisters of other religions, with those who do not believe, and with those who are just indifferent.

Given in Rome, at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, on 6 January 2012, the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord. William Cardinal Levada Prefect Luis F. Ladaria, S.J. Secretary

- [1] Benedict XVI, Enc. Letter; *Deus caritas est*, 25 December 2005, n. 1.
 [2] Id., Homily on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, 10 January 2010.
 [3] John XXIII, Address of the solemn opening of the Ecumenical Vatican Council II, 11 October 1962.
 [4] Conc. Ecum. Vat. II, Dogmatic Constitution, *Lumen gentium*, n. 1.
 [5] The Ordinary Assemblies of the Synod of Bishops have treated the following topics: The preservation and strengthening of the Catholic Faith, its integrity, vigor, development, historical and doctrinal coherence (1967), The ministerial priesthood and justice in the world (1971), Evangelization in the modern world (1974), Catechesis in our time (1977), The Christian Family (1980), Penance and reconciliation in the mission of the Church (1983), The vocation and mission of the laity in the Church and in the world (1987), The formation of priests in actual circumstances (1991), Consecrated life and its mission in the Church and in the world (1994), The Bishop: Servant of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the hope of the world (2001), The Eucharist: source and summit of the life and mission of the Church (2005), The Word of God in the life and mission of the Church (2008).
 [13] Id., Address to the participants in the meeting organized by the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, 15 October 2011.
 [14] Id., Apostolic Letter; *Porta fidei*, n. 7.
 [15] Cfr. *ibid.*, n. 12.
 [16] This Committee, formed by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, according to the mandate of the Holy Father, Benedict XVI, includes among its members: Cardinals William Levada, Francis Arinze, Angelo Bagnasco, Ivan Dias, Francis E. George, Zenon Grocholewski, Marc Ouellet, Mauro Piacenza, Jean-Pierre Ricard, Stanisław Ryko and Christoph Schönborn; Archbishops Luis F. Ladaria, and Salvatore Fisichella; Bishops Mario del Valle Moronta Rodríguez, Gerhard Ludwig Müller and Raffaello Martinelli.
 [17] Catechism of the Catholic Church, n. 150.
 [18] Benedict XVI, Apostolic Letter; *Porta fidei*, n. 15.
 [19] Conc. Ecum. Vat. II, Dogmatic Constitution, *Lumen gentium*, n. 65.
 [20] Benedict XVI, Apostolic Letter; *Porta fidei*, n. 13.
 [21] *Ibid.*, n. 6.
 [22] Conc. Ecum. Vat. II, Decree, *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 1.
 [23] The following recommendations made for Episcopal Conferences are also offered, in an analogous way, to the Synods of Bishops of Patriarchal and Major Archepiscopal Churches, as well as to the Assemblies of Hierarchs of the other Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris*.
 [24] Conc. Ecum. Vat. II, Dogmatic Constitution, *Lumen gentium*, n. 25.
 [25] Benedict XVI, Apostolic Letter; *Porta fidei*, n. 13.
 [27] John Paul II, Apostolic Constitution, *Fidei depositum*, n. 4.
 [28] Benedict XVI, Apostolic Letter; *Porta fidei*, n. 8.
 [29] *Ibid.*, n. 12.
 [30] *Ibid.*, n. 10.
 [31] *Ibid.*, n. 9.
 [34] Conc. Ecum. Vat. II, Decree, *Apostolicam actuositatem*, n. 2.
 [35] Cfr. Benedict XVI, Apostolic Letter; *Porta fidei*, n. 14.
 [36] Conc. Ecum. Vat. II, Pastoral Constitution, *Gaudium et spes*, n. 1.
 [37] Benedict XVI, Apostolic Letter; *Porta fidei*, n. 15.

The Year of Faith: 2012-2013

Lorraine Caza, CND Sister Lorraine Caza, a Sister of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame and a Doctor of Theology, was Leader (Superior General) of her Congregation from 1996 to 2006. Before that, she pursued a teaching career at the Dominican College of Philosophy and Theology in Ottawa, where she became the first woman in the world to hold the position of Dean of a faculty of theology of pontifical right.

Introduction

The Year of Faith... But it's always the time for faith; the year, the hour of faith. What prompted this initiative? What does it mean? A year before it began, when it was promulgated by Pope Benedict XVI on October 11, 2011, it was presented as a way to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council on October 11, 1962. Benedict XVI was thereby placing himself in continuity with Paul VI who, not long after the council ended, on February 22, 1967, announced that the 19th centenary of the martyrdom of SS. Peter and Paul would be the Year of Faith. Nineteen hundred years after the martyrdom of Peter and Paul under Nero, between 64 and 68 CE, the entire church was therefore invited to work on "interior progress", "extensive study, profession of faith" and "active witnessing" to the holy faith in a special way from June 29, 1967 to June 29, 1968.

Faith is friendship with Jesus Christ

In *Porta Fidei*, Benedict XVI explained the particular direction he wanted to impart to this Year of Faith, extending from October 11, 2012 to the Solemnity of Christ the King on November 24, 2013. He referred to a passage from the homily at the inaugural mass of his pontificate on April 24, 2005: "The Church as a whole and all her Pastors, like Christ, must set out to lead people out of the desert, towards the place of life, towards friendship with the Son of God, towards the One who gives us life, and life in abundance." In the same inaugural homily, Benedict XVI, referring to our fear that we will have to give something up if we let Christ totally into our lives, vigorously maintained that "only in this friendship:

- *Are the doors of life opened wide;*
- *Is the great potential of human existence truly revealed;*
- *Do we experience beauty and liberation."*

We must not forget that at Christmas that same year, 2005, Benedict XVI promulgated his first encyclical entitled *Deus Caritas est*, thereby taking on a project of John Paul II on



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charity. Quoting from 1 John 4:16 in the first paragraph of this letter "We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us," Benedict comments: "Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction." If I had to identify a key phrase during Benedict's pontificate, this would be the one I would choose. Not only was it textually quoted in the post-Synodal exhortation *Verbum Domini*, in the *Lineamenta* for the Synod on the New Evangelization (07.07.11, para.11), in the *Instrumentum Laboris* for the Synod (2012), para. 18,

but throughout Benedict's pontificate, faith as an intimate, personal and community friendship with Jesus Christ was a constant theme.

Speaking of the fruits of this friendship, Benedict XVI referred to "profound peace and serenity to the soul even in the dark moments and in the most arduous trials." This friendship, he continued, assured us that nothing could separate us from the love of God, even "when Faith meets with dark nights, in which the presence of God is no longer "felt" or "seen." (January 15, 2006) This friendship is expressed with goodness of heart, with humility, meekness and mercy, love for justice and truth, and a sincere and honest commitment to peace and reconciliation (August 26, 2007). Perhaps it is in the homily Benedict XVI gave on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood that he more fully expressed his conviction that faith was essentially a story of friendship with Jesus Christ. Starting from John's Gospel: "I no longer call you servants, but friends," it is as a communion of thinking and willing, of reciprocity and giving one's life that Benedict expressed his vision of that friendship, a vision Thomas Aquinas would recognize as his own. I like to remember the short closing prayer of this homily (June 29, 2011): "Lord, help me to come to know you more and more. Help me to be ever more at one with your will. Help me to live my life not for myself, but in union with you to live it for others. Help me to become ever more your friend."

At the WYD (World Youth Day) in Madrid (2011), Benedict ended his message with these words: "Friendship with Jesus will also lead you to bear witness to the faith wherever you are, even when it meets with rejection or indifference... Share with others the joy of your faith." (August 21, 2011)

This was consistent with the inaugural message of his pontificate when Benedict, in 2012, stated that: "The Christian faith is not simply teachings, wise sayings, a code of morality or a tradition. The Christian faith is a true encounter and relationship with Jesus Christ. Transmitting the faith means to create in every place and time the conditions which lead to this encounter between the person and Jesus Christ." (June 19, 2012) The Holy Father wanted the Year of Faith to be an opportunity for the baptized to "rediscover the faith as a deep personal friendship with the goodness of Jesus Christ." (July 30, 2012) From Castelgondolfo, at the noontime Angelus, in commenting on Jn 6:28s, Benedict proclaimed: "The centre of existence – which is what gives meaning and certain hope in the all too often difficult journey of life – is faith in Jesus, it is the encounter with Christ... Faith is the fundamental thing. It is not a matter here of following an idea or a project, but of encountering Jesus as a living Person, of letting ourselves be totally involved by him and by his Gospel." (August 5, 2012)

A few events during the Year of Faith 2012-2013

Witnesses

On July 31, 2012, Archbishop Rino Fisichella, president of the recently-created Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization, presented the calendar of international events for the Year of Faith. In his words, the Year of Faith was intended to be "a journey that the Christian community offers those who feel nostalgic for God and want to encounter him." He then spoke of the first major event of the year: the canonization of six martyrs and confessors of the faith. One of these, Kateri Tekakwitha, was probably born in 1656. Her mother, a Christian Algonquin, had been captured by the Iroquois in Trois-Rivières and taken as a captive to the Mohawks, the most warlike of the five Iroquois nations. She married one of the chiefs of the village of Ossernenon, present-day Auriesville, in New York State. Kateri was baptized on Easter Sunday, April 5, 1676, and placed under the patronage of Catherine of Siena. On Christmas Day 1677, she was allowed to make her first Communion. At Easter 1677, she was admitted to the Confraternity of the Holy Family. In summer 1678, along with Marie-Thérèse Tegaiaguenta, she went to visit the sick at Hôtel-Dieu hospital in Ville-Marie and there met nuns for the first time. With her friend Marie-Thérèse, she planned to enter religious life, but the missionary would not let them. However, Kateri made a vow of perpetual virginity on March 25, 1679. As of fall 1679, up to 13 women joined her little group. Kateri took ill and died on April 17, 1680.

The Synod on the New Evangelization

It is hard not to see the Roman Synod on the New Evangelization, which took place from October 7 to 28, 2012 as a wonderful preparation for this Year of Faith since at the Synod the focus was on "The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith."

At the time I am writing these lines, the post-Synodal exhortation is expected soon. We have, however, received one communication: the message to the people of God of the 13th ordinary general assembly of the Synod. Based on this text, I have come up with a number of questions. Perhaps they could help us deepen our faith and thereby achieve the goal of the Year of Faith. My hope is that these questions will help us get ready to receive the exhortation, which has been promised by the end of 2013.

Like Jesus at the well of Sychar, am I aware of my duty to sit beside the men and women of our time?

Is it my deepest desire to cultivate and nourish an intimate, personal and community relationship with Jesus Christ? How do I intend to put this desire into practice?

3. Do I recognize myself in the definition of the [Roman] Church, which sees itself as a space that Christ offers in history to meet him (through his Word, the sacraments, fellowship, love towards all)?

4. The church asks us to increase the number of wells to which thirsty men and women can be invited to meet Jesus. Am I one of these wells through my way of being in Christ?

5. What efforts will I make, what action will I take, to translate my determination to conquer fear through faith, discouragement through hope, indifference through love?

6. Am I inspired by the lives of the saints? Which ones? What is it that inspires me in one of these witnesses?

7. As a Christian, I am a woman of thanksgiving. Do I take time to contemplate the wonders of nature, the marvels that occur in human beings, and that wonder of wonders, the coming among us of our Lord Jesus Christ?

8. We live in a world of massive migrations. Are we welcoming to people who come from different cultural horizons?

9. We live in a very secular milieu. Do we share the Church's concern to seek and find how to speak God into this world?

10. Jesus did not present himself to the Samaritan woman simply as the one who gives life, but as the one who gives "eternal life." Through my life and my words, do I proclaim that the ultimate meaning of my life is beyond this world, in full communion with the God we are waiting for?

11. How do I share the Church's concern for love to reign within families? What role do I think I can play so that the gospel enriches the lives of the people I am related to by blood?

12. Do I carry in my heart and my prayers the Christian community in which I live, with its ordained ministers, with all the people who perform all kinds of services there, with various church movements, with institutes that have long traditions and with those more recently founded that contribute to its vitality?

13. Am I converted each day to an attitude of listening, dialogue and courageous offering of myself to future generations? What can I do to avoid diminishing but instead safeguard the powerful enthusiasm of the young?

14. When he opened the Year of Faith, Benedict XVI spoke of a growing "spiritual desertification." He added, however, that in the desert we rediscover the value of what is essential for life. Am I asking to rediscover the joy of believing and the vital importance of faith in this context?

15. Will two attitudes mentioned by the Synod – the gift and experience of contemplation and being close to the poor – be part of my immersion in the New Evangelization?

16. Am I convinced that a credible testimony for the world can emerge from adoration of the mystery of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and from the depths of silence?

17. Am I convinced that walking alongside someone who has been wounded by life is not just an exercise in being sociable, but above all a spiritual act?

18. I belong to a Church that is universal in nature. What can I do to become more aware and more thankful for the contribution of each continent and culture to the life of the Church and to evangelization?



19. What role does Mary have in my life of faith? Do I recognize her as the Star of the new evangelization?

20. In a time of spiritual desertification, do we rely on the water from the well: “the gift of the Spirit, the company of Jesus, the truth of his Word, the Eucharistic bread which nourishes us, the fellowship of ecclesial communion, the impetus of charity”?

The worldwide Eucharistic adoration

On the occasion of the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, on June 2, 2013, all members of the Catholic Church were invited to participate, in every corner of the world, in a synchronized and universal hour of Eucharistic adoration. I think we would all be surprised at the global reach of this initiative. My heart tells me that this is not the last time the entire Church will be given such an opportunity.

Evangelium Vitae celebration day

This is also one of the achievements of the Year of Faith. On June 16, 2013, we were invited to an activity designed to reaffirm the dignity of the human person from conception to natural death. Was enough done to mark the day? Probably, in circles and places that fight for greater respect for human life as it begins and as it reaches a natural end, but perhaps we should consider that a seed has been planted that will grow and come to full development.

Other smaller initiatives marked the Year of Faith which on the whole should also be considered as seeds that will bear fruit for the New Evangelization.

When Benedict XVI launched a Year of Faith, who could have guessed that on February 11, 2013, this great Pope would announce that he was leaving the Petrine ministry? (...) I have read and many times re-read the text of his renunciation and I find it deeply inspiring for any believer's life of obedience.

Surprises during the Year of Faith

The resignation of Benedict XVI

When Benedict XVI launched a Year of Faith, who could have guessed that on February 11, 2013, this great Pope would announce that he was leaving the Petrine ministry? He took us all by surprise, but he moved us and edified us all through

the humility, courage and clear-sightedness of his public declaration of his action. I have read and many times re-read the text of his renunciation and I find it deeply inspiring for any believer's life of obedience.

Yes, I loved how this transition was made so smoothly between two stages of the same ecclesial mission.

It seemed to me that the same importance had to be given to the homily – his last public homily – given two days later, on Ash Wednesday (February 13, 2013). After reflecting on the theme of the desert as a place of conversion, he named some of the witnesses who could lead us to conversion. No surprise to hear Benedict XVI mention Paul and Augustine, but then he went on to name three surprising contemporary choices: Pavel Florenskij, the agnostic who became a Russian Orthodox monk; Etty Hillesum, the young Jewish woman who lived in Holland and died in 1943 at age 29 at the Auschwitz concentration camp, and whose striking text Benedict quoted from: “There is a really deep well inside me. And in it dwells God. Sometimes I am there, too. But more often stones and grit block the well, and God is buried beneath. Then he must be dug out again.” (Diaries, 97); and social activist Dorothy Day, who, Benedict XVI tells us, was able “to oppose the ideological enticements of her time in order to choose the search for truth and to open herself to the discovery of faith.” From her autobiography, Pope Benedict read: “I wanted to be with the protesters, go to jail, write, influence others and leave my dreams to the world. How much ambition and how much searching for myself in all this!” And also this admission: “it is certain that I felt the need to go to church more often, to kneel, to bow my head in prayer. A blind instinct, one might say, because I was not conscious of praying. But I went, I slipped into the atmosphere of prayer...” (1)

The next day brought another surprise. Benedict XVI, making a sort of Semitic inclusion with his address of December 22, 2005, looked back on his experience of the council, which he attended at age 35 as an expert, with joy and enthusiasm. At age 85, he testified to what he had experienced: “We were hoping that all would be renewed, that there would truly be a new Pentecost, a new era of the church... There was a feeling that the church was not moving forward, that it was declining, that it seemed more a thing of the past and not the herald of the future. And at that moment, we were hoping that this relation would be renewed, that it would change; that the Church might once again be a force for tomorrow and a force for today. And we knew that the relationship between the Church and the modern period, right from the outset, had been slightly fraught, beginning with the Church's error

in the case of Galileo Galilei; we were looking to... rediscover the union between the Church and the best forces of the world, so as to open up humanity's future, to open up true progress."

For me, the Benedict XVI of February 11-14, 2013 was a man who was living a life of global dimensions, for whom the issue was not just the present and future of the Roman Catholic Church, but of recognizing God in the world.

2) The election of Pope Francis

It was March 13, 2013 when the white smoke went up: he would be called Francis. From the moment he was elected, he has not ceased to surprise us. The media have given us an everyday glimpse into the humble actions, the humble words of someone we perceived as an exceptional gift to the Church. To illustrate this second surprise of the Year of Faith, I will content myself with quoting the comments of Christian Bobin, in the hours that followed the election: "In spite of his age, in spite of his missing a lung, in spite of the tiredness and the heavy weight placed on his shoulders, I see a new and energetic man who already touches me deeply... I tell myself that he must know Christ's address better than we do... His admirable first speech was permeated with gentleness, clarity and firmness. His first words and closing words ('Good evening,' 'Good night,' 'Take care and have a good sleep') were fatherly. Simple, golden words that you would speak to a friend... The man who was born before our very eyes, since taking another name is like being born, is already being swept along by the choice he has just made. This Pope Francis projects an authority that we will gradually discover. I had to smile, seeing this man succeed in bringing all the television broadcasts in the world to silence with a prayer. There will be resistance. But it feels like a warrior has appeared, with a name written in gold on his helm. We can rejoice and hope that the battles will turn more to the benefit of our souls." (2)

3) A four-handed encyclical: *Lumen Fidei*

No doubt many people regretted that Benedict XVI renounced the papacy before completing what seemed to us to be a marvellous trilogy of encyclicals on the theological virtues. The encyclicals on charity and on hope were particularly rich. How could he have left without giving the Church, especially in this Year of Faith, the encyclical that we believed would complete the other two?

The beginning of July brought some good news in this regard. July 5 was the day designated for the release of the encyclical

Lumen Fidei. Pope Francis had signed it on June 29, 2013, on the solemnity of SS. Peter and Paul, but the introduction was very clear about the important role played by Benedict in the writing of the encyclical. "Benedict XVI proclaimed the present Year of Faith, a time of grace which is helping us to sense the great joy of believing and to renew our wonder at the vast horizons which faith opens up, so as then to profess that faith in its unity and integrity, faithful to the memory of the Lord and sustained by his presence and by the working of the Holy Spirit..."

"The Year of Faith was inaugurated on the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council. This is in itself a clear indication that Vatican II was a Council on faith, inasmuch as it asked us to restore the primacy of God in Christ to the centre of our lives, both as a Church and as individuals... These considerations on faith... are meant to supplement what Benedict XVI had written in his encyclical letters on charity and hope. He himself had almost completed a first draft of an encyclical on faith. For this I am deeply grateful to him, and as his brother in Christ I have taken up his fine work and added a few contributions of my own." (3)

4) Archbishop Rino Fisichella

It is interesting for me that today, July 12, while I am writing these lines, Zenit.org is presenting a message from Jorge Milia, journalist, writer, former student of Pope Francis, in which, in replying to Milia, who had said he was starting to read *Lumen Fidei*, Pope Francis had declined any personal merit, saying that Benedict XVI was a sublime thinker, which most people did not know or understand.

I find it very interesting that Archbishop Rino Fisichella (4) stated that, for him, the entire encyclical can be summed up in the statement, inspired by Jn 11:40: "He who believes, sees." The introduction is a response to those like Nietzsche, who think that faith is an illusory light. Here it is considered a light to be rediscovered.

Each of the four chapters of the encyclical begins with a biblical text. We will allow these inspired texts to penetrate our hearts and then go on to examine the important elements of each chapter.

Chapter 1: "We have believed in love" (1 Jn 4:16). If we want to understand what faith is, we need to follow the route it has taken, the path trodden by believers. *Lumen Fidei* meditates on the faith of Abraham, on the faith of the people of Israel. I was pleasantly surprised at the connection between faith in Jesus, the fullness of Christian faith, and the figure of Abraham,

who rejoiced at the thought that he would see Jesus' day. He saw it and was glad (Jn 8:56). The history of Jesus is presented as "the complete manifestation of God's reliability." The death of Jesus for our sake is "the clearest proof of the reliability of Christ's love." Of Jesus' resurrection, *Lumen Fidei* says: "Had the Father's love not caused Jesus to rise from the dead, had it not been able to restore his body to life, then it would not be a completely reliable love, capable of illuminating also the gloom of death." Another dimension of the fullness which Jesus gives faith is highlighted in the encyclical: "Christ is not simply the one in whom we believe... he is also the one with whom we are united precisely in order to believe." Still in the first chapter, there is a section devoted to the theme of salvation by faith (L.F. 19-21). It contains a reference to Paul's exegesis of Dt 30:11-14. Deuteronomy speaks of the Word of God: where will we find it? Is it too high, too far away? Do we have to go to heaven to find it? Do we have to go beyond the sea? Paul's response in Rm 10:6-7 is that the Word is near to us: Jesus Christ. Through his Incarnation and Resurrection, he embraced the entire journey of mankind and remains in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. The chapter ends with a focus on the ecclesial form of faith.

The image of the body, as we read in L.F. 22, is not intended to reduce the believer to one part of an anonymous whole.

Chapter 2: "Unless you believe, you will not understand" (Is 7:9) In his presentation of the encyclical on July 5, 2013, Cardinal Müller strikes me as having particularly well synthesized the relationship between faith and truth that is at the heart of this chapter 2: "The encyclical forcefully raises the question of truth as one which is 'central to faith.' Because faith has to do with knowledge of reality it is intrinsically linked to truth: 'faith without truth does not save... it remains a beautiful story... or it is reduced to a lofty sentiment.' Faith, which opens us to the love of God, transforms the way we see things because 'love itself brings enlightenment.' ... Love is authentic when it binds us to the truth and truth attracts us to itself with the force of love. 'This discovery of love as a source of knowledge, which is part of the primordial experience of every man and woman' is confirmed for us in the 'biblical understanding of faith' and is one of the most beautiful and important ideas emphasized in this encyclical. Faith helps us to draw out the profound meaning of reality. In this way we can understand how faith is able to 'illuminate the questions of our time about truth,' the great questions which arise in the human heart when faced with the beauty of reality or by its dramas."

Chapter 3: the New Testament text that introduces this chapter is a familiar one: "I delivered to you what I also received." (1 Cor 15:3) The theme of the meditation is the importance of evangelization. In the previous chapter, a

section was devoted to faith as listening and seeing (L.F. 29-31). It says that "the bond between seeing and hearing in faith-knowledge is most clearly evident in John's Gospel." From the first lines of chapter 3, the transmission of faith is said to be done as word (11 Cor 4:13) and as light (11 Cor 3:18; 4:6). The transmission of faith "not only brings light to men and women in every place; it travels through time, passing from one generation to another" (L.F. 38). This is part of its nature, continues the encyclical: "It is impossible to believe on our own. Faith is not simply an individual decision which takes place in the depths of the believer's heart, nor a completely private relationship between the "I" of the believer and the divine "Thou," between an autonomous subject and God. By its very nature, faith is open to the "We" of the Church; it always takes place within her communion. We are reminded of this by the dialogical format of the creed used in the baptismal liturgy." (L.F. 39) The four elements which comprise the storehouse of memory which the church hands down are the profession of faith, the celebration of the sacraments (L.F. 40-45), the path of the 10 Commandments and prayer (L.F. 46).

The last section of chapter 3 on the transmission of the gospel examines the question of the unity and integrity of faith. The words of Pope Leo the Great are quoted: "If the faith is not one, then it is not faith." Then *Lumen Fidei* declares that the unity of the faith founded on:

- *The oneness of the God who is known and confessed. The articles of faith show ways to know God and his works.*
- *The fact that it is directed to the one Lord, to the life of Jesus, the concrete history he shares with us.*
- *The fact that it is shared by the whole Church, which is one Body and one Spirit.*

Unity, yes, but also integrity: *Lumen Fidei* points out that faith "must be professed in all its purity and integrity. Precisely because of the articles of faith are interconnected, to deny one of them, even of those that seem least important, is tantamount to distorting the whole." (1 Tim 6:20)

The last lines of chapter 3 are devoted to the apostolic succession, which is seen as a gift from God to the Church to ensure "the continuity of the Church's memory," in order to gain certain access "to the wellspring from which faith flows." Chapter 4: "God prepares a city for them." (Heb 11:16) It comes as no surprise to see how Hebrews 11 is used in the first section of this chapter, which is entitled: Faith and the common good. The great chapter from the Letter to the Hebrews on faith "is not only presented as a journey, but

also as a process of building, the preparing of a place in which human beings can dwell together with one another.” The figures mentioned include Noah (Heb 11:7) and Abraham (Heb 11:9s). Because of its connection with love (cf. Gal 5:6), the encyclical tells us in its development concerning faith and the common good, “the light of faith is concretely placed at the service of justice, law and peace”... it “is capable of enhancing the richness of human relations, their ability to endure, to be trustworthy, to enrich our life together”... it “makes us appreciate the architecture of human relationships because it grasps the ultimate foundation and definitive destiny in God, in his love.” Pointing once again to two great figures from the Bible, Samuel and David, the encyclical says that faith enabled them to “administer justice.” (Heb 11:33)

Lumen Fidei starts with the descendants of Abraham as presented in Heb 11:20-21 and introduces a reflection on faith and family. “The first setting in which faith enlightens the human city is the family.” Lumen Fidei 52s offers us valuable elements for reflecting on love within the couple: “Grounded in this love (goodness, wisdom and God’s loving plan), a man and a woman can promise each other mutual love in a gesture which engages their entire lives and mirrors many features of faith. Promising love forever is possible when we perceive a plan bigger than our own ideas and undertakings, a plan which sustains us and enables us to surrender our future entirely to the one we love. Faith also helps us to grasp in all its depth and richness the begetting of children, as a sign of the love of the Creator who entrusts us with the mystery of a new person...” (L.F. 52) Note the reference to Sarah (Heb 11:11).

Continuing the reflection on faith in building the city, the

encyclical acknowledges that “faith becomes a light capable of illumining all our relationships in society.” Among the many benefits that the gaze of Christian faith has brought to the human city, Lumen Fidei emphasizes the recognition of the unique dignity of each person, something not clearly seen in antiquity. (L.F. 54) Faith, “by revealing the love of God the Creator,” says Lumen Fidei, causes us to respect nature all the more, by our discerning in it a grammar written by the hand of God and a dwelling place entrusted to our protection and care... When faith is weakened, the foundations of life also risk being weakened...” (L.F. 55)



Faith, the encyclical tells us at last, is “consolation and strength amid suffering.” “In the hour of trial” – and here the encyclical is referring specifically to Paul in his second letter to the Corinthians (II Cor 4:5-12) – “faith brings light, while suffering and weakness make it evident that ‘we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord.’” The encyclical also stresses Heb 11:26,35-38 which refers to “those who suffered for their faith” and especially to “Moses, who suffered abuse for the Christ.” It also points out that “nor does the light of faith make us forget the sufferings of this world” and that “suffering reminds us that faith’s service to the common good is always one of hope – of hope which looks ever ahead in the knowledge that only from God, from the future which comes from the risen Jesus, can our society find solid and lasting foundations.” (L.F. 56s)

The encyclical on faith – not unexpectedly – ends with an acclamation of Mary’s faith: “Blessed is she who believed!” (Lk 1:45) Mary is “the perfect icon of faith,” the Daughter of Zion in whom “is fulfilled the long history of faith of the Old Testament, with its account of so many faithful women, beginning with Sarah...” In her is realized the fact that “the believer is completely taken up into his or her confession of faith.” (L.F. 58s)

This encyclical on faith comes as a wonderful fruit of the Synod on the Word of God. It is woven from many texts from the Old and New Testaments. The modern radical questioning of the faith universe, far from being avoided, is instead addressed with exemplary lucidity, courage and simplicity. The references to our family treasures, to a reflection that spans 20 centuries, strike me as an invitation to take note of the incredible variety of witnesses who make up our spiritual family and whose writings can reinvigorate our faith life.

We need time to absorb the incredible riches of this Year of Faith. We need to learn more and more to see faith as a personal and community friendship with Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

We need time to absorb the incredible riches of this Year of Faith. We need to learn more and more to see faith as a personal and community friendship with Jesus Christ.

We need time to measure the potential impact on our lives of the Synod on the New Evangelization, to look back on Vatican II in depth as well as the other events that punctuated this Year of Faith.

We need time to allow ourselves to be touched by what I have called the “surprises” of the Year of Faith: Benedict XVI’s renunciation, the election of Pope Francis and now, the encyclical on faith.

1 Dorothy Day, a native of New York, died in 1980. She was the founder of the Catholic Worker movement and fought for social justice for more than 50 years.

2 Christian Babin, interview in the newspaper La Croix, March 15, 2013.

3 Francis, Lumen Fidei, 5-7.

4 Zenit.org, July 5, 2013.

Faith and Tradition in Orthodoxy

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Faith is above all a gift of the Holy Spirit, a gift that can be accepted or refused. God wills that all be saved yet he will not force himself on anyone: God seeks the freely offered love of his rational creatures – angels and humans. As St John Chrysostom wrote in the fourth century: God never draws anyone to himself by force and violence. He wishes all to be saved, but he forces no one. [1] God wants sons and daughters, not slaves or robots. Faith can thus be refused or can weaken as a result of the cares of this world, as illustrated by the parable of the sower and the grains of wheat (Mt 13:3-23). Orthodoxy places a great value on freedom as an essential aspect of the divine image in humans and for this reason considers that God does not oblige anyone to believe and to engage himself or herself in a way of life that leads to salvation.

Orthodoxy does not consider the three theological virtues – faith, hope and charity – as a distinct feature of the spiritual life, but sees these virtues within a broader context of prayer, ascetic practice and the Christian life in general. Although faith is thus a free gift of God, it is most often nonetheless conveyed through various agencies. The Orthodox Tradition focuses in particular on the content and the sources of faith, which is closely associated with the idea of Tradition. The basic notion of Tradition is the faith that has been received from the Apostles and transmitted through the Church over the centuries to our times. Tradition is dynamic, not merely the preservation of the past as the twentieth century Orthodox theologian Vladimir Lossky points out: Tradition is the life of the Holy Spirit in the Church, communicating to each member of the Body of Christ the faculty of hearing, of receiving, of knowing the Truth in the Light which belongs to it. [2]

Tradition and traditions

It is in this sense that Orthodox theologians make a crucial distinction between Tradition and traditions: Tradition is the essential content of the Orthodox faith, founded in divine revelation, conveyed in Scripture, especially Christ's teachings in the Gospels, and expressed by the Church, whereas traditions are those customs and practices which reflect and realize Tradition, but which may change over

time, in response to differing circumstances. Not everything received from the past is of equal value, nor is everything necessarily true. The line between Tradition and traditions is not always clear, which leads to differing interpretations concerning what should be considered immutable in Orthodoxy and what can change.

The principal sources of the faith or of tradition in Orthodoxy are often identified as Scripture, the dogmatic pronouncements of the ecumenical councils, the teachings of the Fathers of the Church, the liturgy, icons, lives of the saints and canon law. Clearly not all of these have the same authority and it is necessary to exercise discretion in weighing the significance of the various sources, including Scripture itself. Orthodox see the Bible as within and not above Tradition and the Church. The Bible derives its authority from the Church; it was the Church which originally decided which books form a part of Holy Scripture and it is the Church alone which can interpret Holy Scripture with authority.

Orthodoxy accords more authority to the New Testament than to the Old Testament, and within the New Testament, the Gospels are the most important books, especially Jesus' teachings. Orthodoxy places an especially high value on the Gospel of John because of its theological importance, especially concerning the Holy Trinity. The Orthodox Church accepts the deuterocanonical books of the Old Testament – those books which were included in the Greek versions of the Jewish Bible, but not in the Hebrew versions. In the New Testament, the book of Revelation is accepted but no passages of Revelation are read in liturgical services.

The highest formal level of Tradition is referred to as dogma, which consists of those truths which are essential to Christianity and to salvation. From the time of the early Church, Orthodoxy has been reluctant to express the essential truths of the faith in precise formulas. Nonetheless, even in the early centuries, the rise of teachings which did not correspond with the common understanding of the faith transmitted by the Apostles obliged the Church to elaborate formulas which sought to express the essential aspects of Christianity. These were incorporated into the baptismal

formulas recited by converts to Christianity, which varied slightly from place to place, and it was only in the fourth century that a generally accepted formula of the faith was elaborated by the Councils representing the universal or catholic Church. This statement or symbol of faith is known as the Nicene Creed, or more precisely, the Nicene-Constantinople Creed, named after the First and Second Ecumenical Councils in 325 and 381. The Nicene Creed is recited at every celebration of the Divine Liturgy in the Orthodox Church and during other services. The Nicene Creed expresses in particular faith in God as both Unity and Trinity, in the divinity of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, in Christ's incarnation and his work of salvation, in eternal life and in the Church as the people of God.

To the articles of the Nicene Creed are added a limited number of other dogmatic pronouncements of later Ecumenical Councils. These include in particular the title of Mother of God assigned to the blessed Virgin Mary at the Third Ecumenical Council (Ephesus, 431) and the Christological formulas of the Fourth Ecumenical Council (Chalcedon, 451), which affirm in particular that Christ is the Logos, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, one divine Person in two natures, divine and human. The dogmatic definitions of the fourth and fifth centuries became necessary as a result of erroneous teachings which sought either to deny the divinity of Christ (Arianism), to deny the humanity of Christ (monophysism) or to distinguish in Christ a divine Person, the Son of God and a human person, the son of Mary (Nestorianism). Orthodoxy recognizes as truly ecumenical councils reflecting the entire Church the seven councils up to the council held in 787, which dealt primarily with the veneration of icons. Nonetheless, some Orthodox theologians argue that the proclamations of the Councils of Constantinople held between 1341 and 1351 should also be considered dogmatic pronouncements within the essential deposit of the faith. These Councils ratified the teachings of Saint Gregory Palamas concerning the distinction between the divine essence, unknowable and incomprehensible, and the divine energies, by which God manifests himself in his creation and opens himself to participation by Humans.

Orthodoxy has always placed considerable value on preserving the divine mystery in the faith, which accounts for its reluctance to define the faith except to refute clearly erroneous teachings. Indeed, the notion of negative theology (or apophatic theology) is a recognition that human concepts and human language are inadequate to express divine truths and that the best that we can say about God are perhaps negations: God is not this or that, based on human knowledge and experience, but God in himself is truly beyond our comprehension. Yet God reveals himself in creation and more directly in the revelations of the Old and New Testaments.

Orthodox reluctance to elaborate many aspects of Tradition in precise formulas extends into numerous aspects of Orthodoxy, including for example, sacramental theology. In Greek, a sacrament is a *mysterion*, a mystery, whose exact mode of operation is beyond human knowledge and comprehension. Similarly, the Church is a mystery: while we may have knowledge of some aspects of the Church, we cannot know the boundaries or limits of the Church; modern Orthodox theologians often limit themselves to saying the sacramental or mystical boundaries do not correspond with her canonical boundaries: Christ and the Holy Spirit are active outside what appears to be nominal affiliation with the Church, her canonical boundaries.

The Fathers of the Church

The Orthodox Church reveres the Fathers of the Church, both for the holiness of their lives and for the soundness of their teachings. Although there is a tendency to think that the patristic age terminated many centuries ago, this would be an admission that the Holy Spirit has abandoned the Church: our own age has indeed its Fathers of the Church, although it may be centuries before they are recognised as such. Certainly the Orthodox Church accords special importance to the Fathers of the early centuries, who defended the faith against false teachings and contributed to the formulation of the faith in terms accessible to those of their time and indeed of all time. At the same time, not all of the teachings of the Fathers of the Church or of modern Orthodox theologians are of equal value. The judgment of the Church is selective: individual writers have at times fallen into error; at times various Fathers use different language, or stress different aspects of the faith, or give different interpretations of Scripture and at times even contradict one another. The Church canonizes the persons of the Fathers, not their writings: the teachings of the Fathers are canonical to the extent that they conform to the Tradition of the Church.

While the Fathers of the Church may agree on the essentials of the faith, as expressed especially in the Nicene Creed and the major dogmatic pronouncements of the later Ecumenical Councils, the Church does not assign the same value to their teachings on other matters and in some cases they advanced doctrines which the Church did not subsequently retain. The Orthodox tradition recognizes that theologians, ancient and modern, may advance theological reflections (referred to as *theologoumena*) which are in effect their own thinking, but are not necessarily the formal teaching of the Church. Such insights are nonetheless valuable as expressions of the experience of the faith, the continuity of theology and mysticism, much treasured in Orthodoxy.

The liturgy is another major source of the faith; indeed, for many faithful, participation in the liturgy may be the main

source of the faith, since the Orthodox liturgy is rich not only in the beauty of worship but also in the depth of its theology. In times of persecution, the liturgy has often been the major source for the transmission of the faith – this was notably the case during the long centuries of Turkish and Arab domination of Christian lands in the Middle East, Greece and the Balkans, and during the Communist regimes in Russia and Eastern Europe. The liturgy, in the broad sense of all the services of the Orthodox Church including the sacraments, contains an inner Tradition touching many aspects of the faith which lack formal definition, such as concerning the Eucharist and other sacraments, the life of the next world, the Mother of God, the saints and the faithful departed. Prayer, including liturgical gestures and actions, not formal theological pronouncements, expresses the faith in these areas. Again, discernment among the various parts of the Liturgy is necessary: for example the eucharistic canons of the Liturgies of Saint John Chrysostom and Saint Basil the Great are far more significant than the prayers commemorating particular saints, and the major feasts of Christ and the Mother God are more important than those of individual saints.

Icons

Icons play an important role in the liturgical and spiritual life of Orthodox faithful and as a source of the faith. The faith of the Church is expressed not only through words, not only through the actions and gestures used in worship, but also through art – the lines and colours of icons. An icon is not simply a portrait or a religious picture designed to arouse appropriate emotions in the beholder; it is one of the ways whereby God is revealed to humans. Through icons we receive a vision of the spiritual world. Icons can be considered theology in colours – an icon is a theological statement and must be read as theology. Because the icon is a part of Tradition, an icon painter is not free to adapt or innovate as he or she pleases; for this work must reflect, not one's own personal aesthetic sentiments, but the mind of the Church. Artistic inspiration and skill is valued and encouraged, but it is exercised within certain prescribed rules.

The teaching conveyed by icons must therefore conform to the theology of the Church. Just as a false teaching may be conveyed in words, so it may also be conveyed in images. This is what lay behind the quarrel of the images in the



eighth and ninth centuries (iconoclasm). For the defenders of icons, at stake were more than the images themselves, because the iconoclasts, by wanting to do away with images, especially icons of Christ, were in effect calling into question the reality of the Incarnation, of the human nature of Christ. Christology, the doctrine relating to Christ, underlay the quarrel of the images. The conflict permitted the Church to define clearly the meaning of the veneration of icons: the reverence accorded to icons is to the person or persons represented on the icon, not to the material object itself, which would be idolatry.

The lives of the saints are another source of Tradition, because saints offer living examples of Christian life in a wide variety of circumstances. The Orthodox Church does not have a formal procedure for canonization; instead, each national Orthodox Church, for example the Orthodox Church of Russia, determines its own canonization process. The principal criteria for candidates for canonization are the holiness of a person's life, miracles performed by invoking the intercession of a person or in the presence or contact with relics, martyrdom, incorruption of the body after death and the veneration of the faithful even before canonization. Many Orthodox have a special devotion towards some saints, usually of course one's name saint or a saint assigned at the

time of joining the Orthodox Church, and other saints to whom one may be particularly attracted.

Canon law is another source of Tradition, but it is often difficult to access. Many of the pronouncements of the ecumenical councils and many other the councils of Church dealt with various aspects of Church organization, discipline and practice; clearly many of these decisions served needs at the time that they were made, but become obsolete over time. Orthodox canon law is complex but not particularly coherent there is no single code of canon law. Nevertheless, canon law seeks to apply Church dogma to practical situations in the daily life of the Christian and of the Church.

Last words

Thus faith or Tradition in Orthodoxy is reflected in various ways Scripture and liturgy, the councils and the Fathers, icons and canon law, the lives of the saints. Yet these are not separate compartments, but rather an integrated whole expressing, as Vladimir Lossky says, The life of the Spirit in the Church. Faith and worship are united, theology and mysticism, personal and communal prayer. The fourth century monk Evagrius summed this up in concise formula: If you are a theologian, you will pray truly and if you pray truly, you will be a theologian. [3] The same thought is contained in a prayer of the Orthodox Divine Liturgy: Let us love one another, that with one mind we may confess Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Trinity one in essence and undivided. This sums up the Orthodox conception of the relationship between faith and life. We must love one another in order to love God and to express the true faith as a community of believers.

[1] Sermon on the Words Saul, Saul & PG 51, 144.

En français: « Dieu n'a jamais attiré personne de force, par la violence. Il désire le salut de tous, mais il ne sauve personne malgré lui. » Ille Homélie sur les changements de noms », PG 51, 144.

[2] Vladimir Lossky, Tradition and Traditions, The Meaning of Icons (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1982), p. 15.

En français: « [La tradition] c'est la vie de l'Esprit Saint dans l'Église, communiquant à chaque membre du Corps du Christ la faculté d'entendre, de recevoir, de connaître la Vérité dans la Lumière qui lui est propre. » Vladimir Lossky, « La Tradition et les traditions », À l'Image et à la ressemblance de Dieu, Aubier Montagne, 1967, p. 150.

[3] Evagrius of Ponticus, On Prayer, 61.

En français: « Si tu es théologien, tu prieras vraiment, et si tu pries vraiment, tu es théologien. » Évagre de Pontique, Sur la prière, 61.



ECUMENICAL NEWS

International News

Faith leaders from the U.S., Canada and Mexico attended *NAIN Connect* at the University of Toronto's Multi-Faith Centre from August 11-14 to mark the 25th anniversary of the North American Interfaith Network conferences. Participants represented a wide array of faith traditions, including Christian denominations, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism, Bahá'í and a strong representation from Native spirituality. The program included workshops on interfaith issues, religious and cultural visits, speakers, multi-faith prayers and special activities for young people. For more information on NAIN visit www.nain.org. *The Catholic Register*

The group of Lutheran and Roman Catholic liturgists charged with creating worship materials to help the two Christian traditions to commemorate together the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017, held its first meeting at the end of May in Würzburg, Germany. The members of the working group agreed on a broad structure for ecumenical worship services and also identified some principal readings from the Bible. The worship materials being prepared are intended to offer suggestions for joint commemorations at global and local levels. Co-secretary, Rev. Anne Burghardt remarked, "As the year 2017 does not only mark the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, but also 50 years of Lutheran-Catholic dialogue, there is good reason for holding joint worship services between Lutherans and Catholics." She noted that, "The worship materials being prepared for Lutherans and Catholics to use together in 2017 will express joy over the fruits of decades of ecumenical discussion in the search for Christian unity, as well as recognition that through baptism both Lutherans and Catholics have received Christ's call and are called to common witness in the world." The working group will hold its next meeting in December in Tallin, Estonia. The goal is to have the proposed ecumenical liturgical materials ready by the end of 2014. *Lutheran World Information*

Muslims in central Ohio invited their non-Muslim neighbours to learn more about the Islamic holy month of Ramadan by sharing one of the evening fast-breaking meals (iftar) that mark the observance. A July 27 interfaith

iftar featured a panel of members of various religions who discussed their own fasting traditions. The Council on American-Islamic Relations chapter in Columbus welcomed about 250 people to its interfaith iftar on July 19. This is the sixteenth year the group has sponsored the event. Young people from the Noor Islamic Cultural Center in Dublin, Ohio collected food for the Hilliard Food Pantry as part of a Ramadan project. Muslims believe fasting helps them gain compassion for the needy, self-purification, discipline and a spiritual focus. *The Columbus Dispatch*

Rev. Yohanna Buro, an Evangelical minister in Kaduna, northern Nigeria, paid the fines of some thirty Muslim prisoners so that could return home and spend Ramadan with their families. This gesture caused a sensation in a country prey to frequent bloody interreligious confrontations where the destruction of churches and mosques occurs all too often. "It was a pleasure for us Christians to lend a hand to Muslims in need during the month of Ramadan. I brought my Muslim brothers out of prison so that they could fast and pray to God to bring peace to our country," said Rev. Buro. This action on the part of the pastor and his congregation surprised many of the Muslim religious authorities and faithful of Kaduna. The town's Muslim mass media awarded a medal to the pastor in recognition of this gesture and of his work in promoting dialogue between the two religions. *Radio Ville-Marie*

Roman Catholics and Greek Orthodox in the United States created a new website which enables parents to help youth navigate the online world effectively while avoiding its pitfalls. The site, www.faihandsafety.org, was activated in the middle of Internet Safety Month in June. It is loaded with news about sites that teens use, eyebrow-raising details about children's first exposure to online pornography, suggestions on how to use technology safely at home, and tips on negotiating the mobile-app scene. *Western Catholic Reporter*

The full communion of Canada's Lutheran and Anglican churches was lauded by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) and the Anglican Church of Canada

(ACC) held their first fully integrated national gathering in Ottawa, Canada's capital, 3-7 July. The two churches entered into a relationship of full communion, called the Waterloo Declaration, in 2001. They work closely together in all respects, exchanging clergy and establishing joint congregations, while remaining separate church bodies. The ELCIC has 145,000 members in 600 congregations in Canada. The ACC has 545,000 members in nearly 2,800 congregations across the country. LWF General Secretary Rev. Martin Junge indicated that this Joint Assembly would be talked about at the first meeting of the new Anglican-Lutheran International Coordinating Committee in September. *LWF Newsletter*

Churches in Europe have welcomed pledges by the European Union to make financial help for countries around the world conditional on their protection of religious freedom. The European Union's Foreign Affairs Council adopted "Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief" on June 24. Calls for tougher action to combat anti-religious violence and discrimination have mounted in the 785-seat European Parliament and other institutions. In its guidelines, the EU said it was "impartial and not aligned with any specific religion or belief," but was concerned that religious rights abuses were now widespread and complex "in all parts of the world, including Europe," in violation of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international treaties. *Prairie Messenger*

During a visit of Orthodox leaders to the Vatican, Pope Francis said the Catholic Church can learn from the synodal structure of the Eastern Christian churches. He told the delegation from the Ecumenical Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople that he was referring to "...the meaning of Episcopal collegiality and the tradition of synodality so typical of the Orthodox churches." The leader of the delegation and co-chair of the international Catholic-Orthodox theological dialogue, Metropolitan John of Pergamon, said the pope's "simplicity and Christian humility" are traits that "offer us hope that the difficult and thorny issue of Roman primacy, which has divided Christendom in the past, can be placed in a true spirit of Christian communion and synodality as it was understood and practised in the early, undivided church." The international dialogue is studying collegiality and how the bishop of Rome exercised his primacy and authority before the 1054 Great Schism which divided the Orthodox and Catholic churches. *Prairie Messenger*

The interfaith blog "faithblender.com" features new posts on a regular basis. It is coordinated from Montreal by Rabbi Chaim Steimmetz, Imam Dr. Ziyad Delic and Father John Walsh.

An interfaith event held in San Antonio, Texas on September 13 featured a viewing of the film, *In the Footprints of St. Francis and the Sultan* followed by a discussion with Christian and Muslim panellists. The film tells of a little known peace initiative in the Middle East in 1219 when St. Francis of Assisi met with Sultan Malek Al-Kamil during the Fifth Crusade. Their example is an invitation to join in respectful dialogue with people of different faiths and cultures. The program began in the parish hall of St. Francis of Assisi Catholic church and continued with the sharing of food and ideas at the Muslim Children's Education and Civic Center. *Council on American-Islamic Relations*

The latest session of the international Catholic-Pentecostal dialogue explored the topic of healing. "The dialogue has helped us to focus on how the charism of healing is understood, expressed and celebrated in our churches and faith communities," said Catholic co-chair of the dialogue, Bishop Michael Burbidge of Raleigh, North Carolina. *Western Catholic Reporter*

Anglicans are sharing their church with Muslims in Edinburgh, Scotland, because the local mosque has grown too small. The tensions one hears about all too often are not present here; but rather an atmosphere of welcome and good will from each side prevails. *La Revue Sainte-Anne*

The Moscow Patriarchate wants to join with moderate Muslims to counter fundamentalist movements brought back by young people after a stay abroad which leaves them radicalized and less tolerant of other religions. *La Revue Sainte-Anne*

National

Living Ecological Justice: A Biblical Response to the Environmental Crisis is a new 140-page book published by Citizens for Public Justice in collaboration with Calgary's Father Mishka Lysac. Comprised of reflections, prayers, and workshop/action suggestions for individuals and small groups, the book serves as a useful guide to move Canadian Christian communities forward in their vocation as advocates for change. The first section describes how Christians can re-ignite right relationships with creation. In the second section, authors like Anglican Aboriginal Bishop Mark MacDonald and Ursuline Sister Sheila McKinley make a biblical case for creation advocacy by revealing the sources of Christian inspiration for economic and environmental justice. The final section focuses on worship, community building and action strategies with contributions from Presbyterian, Mennonite and United Church members. To obtain a copy of Living Ecological Justice please see: www.cpj.ca/en/new-resource-living-ecological-justice. *Western Catholic Reporter*

Some good news: More Canadians are giving to charity, and they are giving more as well. At least 79% of Canadians gave to charity in 2012, or 10% more than in 2011. The average total donation to charity rose from \$487 to \$557, according to an online study conducted by BMO Harris Private Banking. Health care remained the leading recipient of Canadians' charitable donations, supported by 60% of donors; it was followed by anti-poverty issues (45%), animal welfare (30%) and education (19%). The University of Calgary's School of Public Policy unveiled a report at the end of 2012 entitled "Changing Landscapes for Charities in Canada: Where Should We Go?" Charities now collect more than \$9 billion annually, more than double the amount 15 or 20 years ago. Religious organizations and healthcare organizations have recorded the smallest increases. Researcher A. Abigail Payne says, "We actually still know very little about why Canadians give." However, there is one blot on this landscape: the very high salaries paid by certain charitable organizations. The well-known charity WorldVision, with an annual payroll of \$41 million in Canada, has raised eyebrows among many observers. *Pastorale-Québec*

Regional

Ontario

Catholic and Protestant churches and local businesses, pitched in this year at Waupoos Farm by each adopting a cottage and "bringing it up to par" through refurbishing, repairing decks, fixing plumbing – whatever was needed. Throughout the year, more than 70 families visit the 80-hectare farm south of Ottawa and stay in one of the fully furnished cottages. Founded in 1980 by Oblate Father Fred Magee and developed with the support of the Cursillo Movement, Waupoos Farm combines relaxation with a ministry of presence to low-income families in the National Capital Region. Cottagers are encouraged to embrace the farm motto of "Pray, Work and Play". Julie Parker, who has been hosting for four years, believes the faith element is what makes Waupoos Farm special. Every morning begins with optional chapel time. "Everyone has a different spiritual journey, but coming here and starting the day with chapel has been instrumental in developing my own personal spirituality," she says. For information, visit www.waupoos.com. *Catholic Register*

The Anglican-Lutheran Women's group in Thunder Bay works to address issues of poverty in the area. Every three months, members of the group prepare a hot meal for 150-200 people at Shelter House, a community-based organization providing daily meals, shelter and programs for those who are homeless or in danger of becoming homeless. The group members also work with local congregations to

support the efforts of the Lutheran Street Reach ministry. This includes providing coffee, sugar, laundry detergent, and more for use at the storefront drop-in centre. The group is looking into possibilities of partnering with other groups in the city which are also addressing issues of poverty. *Canada Lutheran*

Quebec

Those interested in marking the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human rights are invited to join with others from various spiritual horizons for an inter-spiritual observance on December 10th at the Victor Lelièvre Centre on 475 Lelièvre Blvd. in Quebec City. *Sentiers de foi*

Action of Christians for the Abolition of Torture (ACAT) will hold its monthly evening of prayer on the theme of "Marching Together for Human Rights" in honour of the 60th anniversary of the Human Rights Declaration. Thierry Delay, pastor of St-Jean United Church will be the resource person. Musical pieces will be performed by the Chantres musicians and the Filles de l'Île under the direction of Gilbert Patenaude. The event will take place at 7:15 p.m. on December 4th at Notre-Dame-des-Neiges Church, 5366, chemin de la Côte-des-Neiges, Montreal. For information, phone ACAT on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings at 514-890-6169 or visit www.acatcanada.org. *Sentiers de foi*

"On the Way to the Universal Church" is the theme of a series of ecumenical meetings aimed at discovering what it means to be part of the universal church and to have a role to play in God's mission in the world. The resource person for the October 5th meeting on "Christian Unity" was Angelika Piché, pastor and professor at the United Church College at McGill University. On November 9th, Fr. Pierre-Olivier Tremblay, o.m.i., founder of the Tisonnier Christian community in Quebec spoke on: "Called to be Witnesses". The December 7th session at the CCCM addresses "Bringing About God's Justice" with Norman Lévesque, associate director at the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism and director of the Green Church program and Marco Veilleux of the Justice and Faith Centre. On February 8, 2014 at St-Jean Church, Gilles Bourdeau, o.f.m. from the Canadian Commissariat for the Holy Land and Sr. Gisèle Turcot, s.b.c. will talk on "Praying and Working for Peace". On March 15th at the CCCM, Bruno Demers, o.p. of the Pastoral Institute will address "Living with People of Faith of Other Religions". "Transformational Spirituality for Disciples" will be the topic of the April 5th meeting at St-Jean Church with Kristine Greenaway from the French Ministries division of the United Church of Canada. Meetings will be held either at the Christian Cultural Centre of Montreal, 2715, chemin de la Côte St. Catherine or at the

St-Jean United church, 110, St. Catherine St. E. in Montreal. An entry fee of \$10 for each meeting is payable at the door.

Christians from local churches were invited to an evening of worship, teaching and getting to know each other on October 23rd at St. Luke's Catholic Parish in Dollard-des-Ormeaux. This occasion of bringing Christian neighbours together on the theme of "Christian Unity: A Biblical Call to Action" was facilitated by St. Luke permanent deacon, Brian Cordeiro. Dr. Adriana Bara, the Executive Director of the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism, participated in the event. Some 150 members of local Anglican, Catholic, Lutheran,

Orthodox and United Churches enjoyed the charismatic music of the A Eternal Ministries band which interspersed the prayer, scripture readings and fellowship. The event was filmed by a France 2 television crew and will be part of a documentary on ecumenical relations in Canada and Québec to appear on European television networks.

Mussalaha Peace Mission in Syria

The National Mussalaha Initiative in Syria invited a group of people - peacemakers, conciliators and those prominent in the work of peace and conflict resolution - to participate in a group visit to Damascus, Syria in between the 12th and 17th of February 2013.

"Mussalaha", which means "Reconciliation", is a community-based non-violent popular initiative stemming from within civil society. Founded at community level, it has arisen spontaneously from within civil society and includes members of all ethnic and religious communities who are *tired of war*. It stands as a demonstration of hope that a "third way" option to armed conflict is possible and provides an alternative to military intervention from abroad. "Mussalaha" fills a void created by the noise of weapons: it does not side with any of the warring parties. Rather it embraces all. The movement says "No" to the continued loss of life which is *'bleeding the nation white'*. The initiative says "No" to civil war and rejects all forms of sectarian violence and denominational strife. Its founding session was held on 25 January 2012 in the Sahara complex on the Syrian coast. Thanks to the religious and national figures present there, this event has had an historic impact since it showed that a third way was still possible over and beyond the regime-opposition conflict: *the way of civil society*. These meetings have already had an extraordinary and unimaginable outcome, resulting in a public commitment to "building a reconciled and peaceful Syria" in the name of *mutual respect*, through the endorsement of joint declarations, and solemn commitments to reconciliation between groups, families and between the main protagonists in the current conflict – the Alawite and Sunni communities.

Despite the continuing conflict in Syria, the initiative continues to gain ground. It is imperative at this critical time that the "Mussalaha" reconciliation initiative be recognised,

nurtured and supported by all who believe in *peace through dialogue*.

The group visit aimed to show the accomplishments of the National Mussalaha Initiative on the ground, and in the regions where it is active. It is also intended to provide an opportunity to discuss the possibilities to activate the *supreme message of Peace* in Syria, the Middle East and in the world. Irish Nobel Peace Laureate Mairead Maguire has agreed to participate in this visit.

The Concluding Declaration of the Mussalaha Delegation to Syria

Syria exhibits a massive and terrible breakdown of human decency and respect. There are millions of innocent victims and many individual acts of heroism, but amongst the powerful we see an appalling degree of violence, hypocrisy and corruption. Tens of thousands have died, millions have been displaced, and nearly the entire population of 23 million lives in fear. The international community has stated and we confirm that the Syrian tragedy is possibly the worst since World War II.

States, political organisations and combatants are the primary causes of the misery, which they pursue for their own advantage, sowing terror and manipulating the suffering to reflect badly on their opponents while all too often refusing to compromise or even talk to each other.

These are the findings of our delegation, consisting of 16 human rights activists from seven countries. Over the course of nine days we visited refugee camps, affected communities, religious leaders, combatants, government representatives and many others – perpetrators and victims – in Syria and Lebanon.

We were already horrified by what we knew before coming, but what we have learned as a delegation brings shame to almost everyone involved.

We call on the international community to protect the territorial integrity of Syria and to respect the fundamental rights of Syria as a sovereign state. We deplore any intent to breach the integrity of Syria's frontiers or to damage the unity and rich diversity of the Syrian people.

We recognize the legitimacy of the aspirations of the Syrian citizens for change, reforms, the eradication of State corruption and the implementation of a democratic life that respects and protects the fundamental rights of all citizens and minorities but we believe that effective and lasting reforms can only be achieved through non-violent means.



Mussalaha team members at Baalbek preparing to cross into Syria

Our primary appeal is that all countries stop their interference in Syrian affairs – more specifically, that they halt the supply of arms and foreign combatants to both sides of the conflict. If foreign countries agree to eliminate the influx of arms and fighters, we are confident that Syrians can find their own solutions to their problems and achieve reconciliation.

We unequivocally oppose all aggression and foreign intervention against Syria under any justification. At the same time we appeal to all parties, including the government, to show restraint in response to the provocations that aim to escalate the violence and broaden the conflict.

We consider it beyond debate that the Syrian people have the right to determine their own government and their own future. Foreign interference is currently preventing the Syrian people from exercising their right to self-determination. We are concerned that such pernicious intervention is tearing apart the fabric of the country itself, with long-term consequences that can only be imagined.

The cautionary example of Iraq serves to remind us of the dire consequences of such international folly. This humanitarian crisis is already spilling into neighbouring countries. A collapse of Syrian society though will destabilise the entire region. We appeal to the international community to show that it can learn from history and make better choices in the case of Syria, which will spare further tragedy for the courageous Syrian people.

Secondly, we appeal to the international media to stop the flow of misinformation regarding the Syrian conflict. We believe that every Syrian, both in and outside the country, should be given the right to be heard and we do not see this reflected in the international coverage of this crisis.

Thirdly, while we entirely support the embargo on arms, we ask the international community to review and reconsider the crippling sanctions that are taking such a heavy toll on ordinary Syrian people.

Fourthly, we urge the international community to take seriously the vast number of refugees and persons who have been internally displaced by this conflict.

We look towards the cessation of all violence when these people might be allowed to return to their homes. In the meantime, however, humanitarian aid efforts must be expanded to meet the basic needs of such persons.

Our earlier report, the “Declaration of the Mussalaha Delegation to Syria on the Refugee Situation in Lebanon”, outlines the inadequacies of current refugee programmes. We appreciate that various government authorities have attempted to respond to the refugee crisis. We recognise though that the International Committee of the Red Cross



9 May, 2013 - Damascus - the delegation meets with the Minister of Justice and presents a petition for the release of 72 non-violent activists

and its affiliates, as well as other humanitarian agencies, must be allowed to set up centres inside Syria to care for internally displaced persons, so as to prevent these displaced persons from fleeing to foreign countries.

This work requires immediate and significant funding by the international community. While this will be a costly undertaking, we believe that the costs will in fact be only a fraction of the amount currently being spent on destroying Syria.

Finally, we appeal to all parties involved to put an end to all forms of violence and human rights violations – actions that target and terrorise innocent civilians and prisoners, indiscriminate terrorist attacks on the civilian population, the unjustified systematic targeting of vital state infrastructures, civilian installations, industrial zones, factories, communication facilities, agriculture reserves, health centres and hospitals, schools and universities, and religious and cultural landmarks – all of which results in the transformation of the residential areas into war zones, resulting in the flight of the civilian population.

We likewise oppose the use of religious decrees that encourage, trivialise and justify barbarity, rape and terrorism. We appeal to the entire religious community to call the faithful to nonviolence and peacemaking, and to reject all forms of violence and discrimination. We express our admiration and respect for the many Syrian religious leaders who have refused to endorse the use of violence and have dedicated their lives to working for a peaceful solution to this conflict, and we appeal specifically for the immediate release of the two abducted Christian bishops, both of whom were dedicated to the work of peace and reconciliations, as we appeal for the release of all Christian and Muslim clerics and other abducted Syrian citizens.

We conclude by commending the work of Mother Agnes Mariam and the *Musalaha initiative*. We have witnessed their work inside diverse communities across Syria. We offer our unequivocal and ongoing support to these brave people, and we commit ourselves to continue to work alongside them until Syria is truly at peace.

We thank the Patriarch, Gregorios III Laham, for his kind invitation and his ongoing support for *Musalaha*. We likewise thank Mr. Jadallah Kaddour for his generosity that made our visit possible, and we express our gratitude to all those who have facilitated our path, most especially the *Organization Committee* of the delegation's visit and the *Popular Council for the National Reconciliation*.

Signatories from the *Musalaha Delegation to Syria*:
Francesco Candelari (Italy), International Coordinator of the

International Fellowship of Reconciliation; Marinella Corggia (Italy), journalist and writer; Mel Duncan (USA), Director of Advocacy and Outreach, Nonviolent Peaceforce; Tiffany Easthom (Canada) expert in unarmed peacekeeping force; Denning Isles (Australia) youth worker; Franklin Lamb (USA), lawyer; Paul Larudee (USA), U.S. government advisor to Saudi Arabia; Amir Maasoumi (Canada), sociologist, specialist of contemporary Islam; Mairead Maguire (Northern Ireland), Nobel Peace Laureate in 1976; Michael Maloof (USA) senior writer for World Net Daily; Ann Patterson (Ireland), family therapist; Antonio Carlos da Silva Rosa (Brasil), editor of TRANSCEND Media Service-TMS; Father Dave Smith MITH (Australia), Palestinian human rights activist; Susan Anne Day Dirgham (Australia), in charge of accommodation, transport and interviewees; Tim King (USA), Editor of Salem-News; Alan Lonergan (Ireland), Church Liaisons Officer; Alyssar Midani (France) founding Member and member of the Board of trustees of NOSSTIA (Network of Syrian Scientists and innovators in Technology abroad); Gianmarco Pisa (Italy), active in the National Program "Civilian Peace Intervention" and Regional Program "Scuole Aperte" about peace-education; Luke Waters (Australia), senior journalist.



Sari's mother with his body and two of the rebels after they allowed her to take the body

The Greenbelt Festival

Each year, the Greenbelt Festival is held over an August long weekend near Birmingham, England. Founded in 1974, 2013 marked the festival's 40th anniversary.



The Greenbelt Festival, so named because it takes place on the grounds of a racecourse as well as for its environmental orientation, began life as a joyful Christian music festival bringing together some 1,500 people. Groups and musicians as famous as U2, Bruce Cockburn, Jamelia and Iona have performed there. The festival has expanded a great deal over the years, and last summer, different Christian groups and non-governmental organizations, using the theme *Life Begins*, offered more than 20,000 participants an amazing array of activities, workshops, talks, and seminars of all shapes and kinds: visual and performing arts, spirituality and faith, justice and peace, international solidarity and cooperation. Many of the activities were geared to young people and children. Another noteworthy aspect is the degree of audience participation at the Festival: after each event, some time was set aside for questions and reaction from the public.

I had the privilege to be chosen by the United Church of Canada to be part of a 100-person delegation that attended the festival.

Among the some 200 daily activities taking place at around 20 sites listed in the program (more than 50 pages long!) it was not hard to find something to suit every taste, even

though initially the sheer size of the event was overwhelming: a songwriting workshop, a talk on the theology of the Incarnation, a presentation on the catastrophic impact of fishing for large marine mammals, a discussion about children who had got off the street thanks to football (soccer), a session of Gregorian chant with Catholic sisters or the movie "Five Broken Cameras," the first Palestinian film to be nominated for an Oscar; not to mention the many artistic presentations.

In addition, the Big Top was a meeting place for many social action groups, and I was able to enjoy a cup of fair trade tea while admiring the work of Ghanaian former prostitutes using recycled products, and visit the booth run by *Operation Noah*, an ecumenical organization whose primary mission is to protect endangered species.

Among the highlights of the Festival for me was the daily worship (morning, noon and evening) and particularly the Sunday morning worship service, presided by the very dynamic Anglican Bishop John Bell, at which communion was served to more than 20,000 people! Unforgettable!

D. Fines



Book Survey

These brief summaries are made from an examination of the books received at the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism. They are descriptive rather than evaluative. More complete reviews are occasionally published.

Les Psaumes Écologiques, David Fines, 2012, Novalis, 103 pages, C\$14.95.

Reinterpreting some of these poetic texts in light of the present-day environmental crisis, David Fines gives these psalms a contemporary dimension. The author explains in the introduction that the aim of the ecological psalms is to enable Christian communities to discover clues in them, invitations and ways to respond with regard to an unprecedented situation: the urgency and obligation to act according to the fundamentals of our faith in order to protect and restore Creation, to preserve the Earth in its integrity as the cradle of life. Combining prayer and action, this book is an invaluable resource for meditation and reflection. David Fines, a United Church of Canada pastor, was editor-in-chief of the magazine *Aujourd'hui Credo* and in charge of communications related to ecumenical and interfaith relations as well as ecology for the French-speaking sector of the United Church. He is editor-in-chief of *Ecumenism* magazine.

Géopolitique et Religions au Proche-Orient, Under the direction of Joël-Benoît D'Onorio, Éditions Salvator, 2011, 240 pages, €22.

Since 1847, the mission of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem has been to support Christians in the Holy Land. But it has also been to focus attention on the various communities and the difficult and complex environment in which they live. That is why the Order organized two symposia in 2010 and 2011, whose acts are presented here. The contributors sort out the tangled web of the Near East and shine a light on the cultural, religious, social and political issues behind a conflict that has gone on for more than 60 years. Among the themes covered in this volume are: Christians of the East (Rector Joseph Maïla); Religion, secularism and freedom in the Middle East (R.F. Maurice Borrmans); What guarantees are there for Christians in the Holy Land? (Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran); Issues at the Synod of Bishops on the Middle East (Ambassador Stanislas de Laboulaye); and Organizations involved in ecumenical and

interfaith dialogue (Msgr William Shomali). In this region of the world, where religion and politics are so closely related, only a global solution can guarantee a peaceful future for its inhabitants of all faiths. Bearers of a spiritual and moral faith and culture that have a universal vocation, the Christians of the Near East, as much as anyone else, are legitimately entitled to live in this land which is also fully theirs; and their co-religionists around the world have a sacred duty to help them remain in it with all their rights respected and guaranteed, because each may consider the Holy Land his or her spiritual homeland. Joël-Benoît d'Onorio, Professor in the Faculty of Law, Director of the Portalis Institute, Aix-en-Provence.

Magie, divination, envoûtements et paranormal, Jean Vernette, Éditions Salvator, 2011, 354 pages, €9.95.

A whole microculture is developing around the irrational, magic and the paranormal. But what is the reality behind these phenomena? What should we think of them? This informative book is a veritable encyclopedia of the paranormal and the irrational. There are different ways to explain and different "models" for interpreting paranormal occurrences. Each approach has its own criteria for discernment between what is valid and acceptable and what is not. Believers who reference the Biblical and Judeo-Christian tradition will also have their own criteria for discernment. The book considers renewed interest in the irrational as one of the "signs of the times" and it takes the questions people ask today seriously. Can we communicate with the dead? Does Satan exist, and does he have power over us? Is there a hidden, "esoteric" truth in the Gospels that is reserved only for initiates? What should we think of certain people who have "powers", of amazing healings, miracles? What happens to us after we die? The return of the irrational, to the extent that it expresses the return of certain primary forms of religious anxiety, is a challenge for us. This neo-paganism, respectable but occurring in many forms, may tend to become the "religious denomination" of numerous people who are believers without a religious affiliation. It is a challenge for all spiritual seekers at the beginning of a new millennium. Fr. Jean Vernette died in 2002. For 30 years, he was the national secretary of France's Conference of Bishops for the study of cults and new religious movements.

Études thomistes sur les Fins dernières, Philippe-Marie Margelidon, Éditions Artège, 2011, 241 pages, €25.

This work studies questions that are sometimes combined under the heading of eschatology: heaven, purgatory, hell, judgment, the end times, the resurrection of the body. Its intended focus is the creedal statement: "We believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting." The book constitutes a series of seven thematic studies. It offers a speculative solution to certain theological problems in conformity with revealed truth as the Catholic Church receives and interprets it. It is the current state of a meditation that will reach many Catholics and other believers who are deeply concerned about questions relating to the ultimate end of human existence. A doctor of theology, Father Philippe-Marie Margelidon, o.p., teaches at the Dominican Studium in Toulouse, France, at the Faculty of Theology of the Institut Catholique de Toulouse, at the I.S.T.A. and at the seminary in Ars.

The Witness of Bartholomew I, *Ecumenical Patriarch*, William G. Rusch, Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2013, 158 pages, \$22.00 US.

This work examines how Bartholomew I has influenced the contemporary European scene, the various dialogues between Orthodox churches and Reformed and Roman Catholic churches, the ongoing work of the World Council of Churches, and the modern ecumenical movement. It appears on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Bartholomew's enthronement as Ecumenical Patriarch. These essays from eight ecumenical theologians portray the witness, and especially the ecumenical witness, of one of the outstanding Christian leaders of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. They paint a portrait of the Ecumenical Patriarch as a deeply Orthodox leader who wishes to relate Orthodoxy to the modern world and to have it make its contribution to the unity of Christians. Bartholomew's stance on the environment is considered of extreme importance, based on a theological and patristic tradition that has been a part of Orthodoxy for centuries. Contributors include Anna-Marie Aagaard, Peter C. Bouteneff, Günther Gassmann, Dale T. Irvin, Ronald Roberson, William G. Rusch, Joseph D. Small and Mary Tanner. William G. Rusch, a Lutheran pastor is Professor of Lutheran Studies at Yale Divinity School and Professor of Church History at New York Theological Seminary.

Celebrating a Century of Ecumenism, John A. Radano, Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2012, 355 pages, \$40.00 US.

This volume examines what ecumenism has achieved over the 100 years following the birth of the modern ecumenical movement at the 1910 World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh. It updates readers on the evolution of global dialogue between many different church traditions, including Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist, Roman Catholic Pentecostal, Evangelical, Orthodox, Baptist, Disciples of Christ and more. Eighteen essays by authors representing a wide spectrum of denominational interests outline the results of decades of ecumenical contact and dialogue. Part I of this two-part book provides analyses of the evolution and accomplishments of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches as well as of the contributions and limits of the WCC itself. Part II explores the achievements of international bilateral dialogues which are presented in chronological order. Each dialogue is treated according to its own history and dynamics in two essays; one each contributed by an author representing one of the two churches involved in that particular dialogue. John A. Radano served on the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity from 1984 to 2008 and is currently adjunct professor in the School of Theology at Seton Hall University in New Jersey.

Do We Worship the Same God? *Jews, Christians and Muslims in Dialogue*, Miroslav Volf, Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2012, 176 pages, \$20.00 US.

These essays from Jewish, Christian and Muslim philosophers and theologians indicate that the God recognized by all is seen from different and often contrary perspectives. Each contribution uniquely approaches the primary question from a philosophical perspective that is informed by the practice of worship and prayer and offers rare insight into how representatives of each religion view the other monotheistic faiths. Concepts covered here include "sameness" and "oneness", the nature of God, epistemology, and the Trinity. Denys Turner warns that "Muslims should beware of concluding that Christians merely contradict themselves when they say that there are three persons in one God, or that they thereby compromise the divine oneness. ... What Christians claim about the Trinity does not at least contradict what Muslims say about the divine oneness."

Alon Goshen-Gottstein writes considering the question of the legitimacy of a Trinitarian understanding of God from a Jewish perspective: "There is, interestingly enough, some historical precedent for a Jewish recognition of the validity of certain ways of understanding the Christian Trinity." He adds that this is uncharacteristic of Jewish attitudes to Christianity which have been conditioned by historical circumstances that highlight the difference between the religions, enforcing the sense that Christianity is the religion of the other. Miroslav Volf is Director of the Yale Center for Faith and Culture and Professor of Systematic Theology at Yale Divinity School.

Covenant and Hope *Christian and Jewish Reflections*, Robert W. Jenson and Eugene B. Korn, Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2012, 309 pages, \$38.00 US.

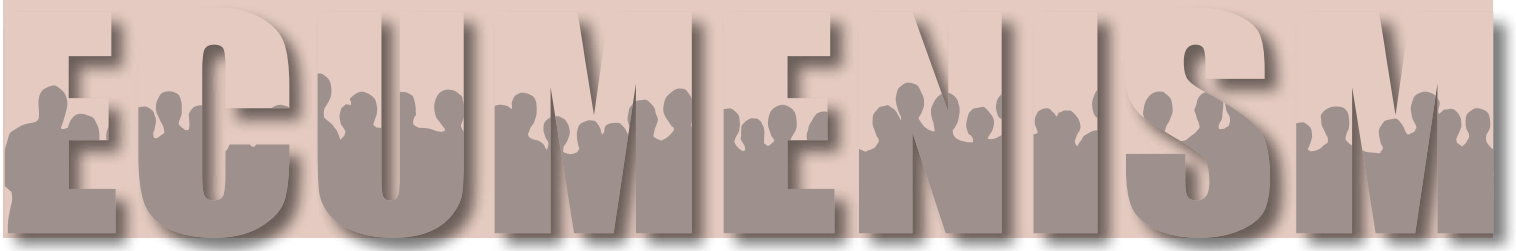
In the first section of this work, scholars from both faiths analyze the idea of covenant, how it determines their religious commitments, behaviour, and theology, and how their covenantal theology shapes their relations with people outside their religious communities. The second section focuses on the possibility of hope and on responsibility for the future. The prophetic vision of a future messianic redemption obligates Jews and Christians to take responsibility for the human future in face of extreme wealth conjoined with extreme poverty, ascending extremism and violence, scarcity of life-sustaining resources and unprecedented proliferation of war and lethal weaponry which discourage a rational belief in human progress. Robert W. Jenson is co-director of the Institute for Theological Inquiry. Eugene B. Korn is co-director of the Institute for Theological Inquiry and the American director of the Center for Jewish-Christian Understanding and Cooperation in Israel.

Atonement, Justice, and Peace, *The Message of the Cross and the Mission of the Church*, Darrin W. Snyder Belousek, Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2012, 668 pages \$55.00 US.

This substantial study presents a comprehensive and critical examination of penal substitution, the most widely accepted evangelical Protestant theory of atonement, and offers a biblically grounded, theologically orthodox alternative. A biblical theory of atonement that centers on restorative – rather than retributive – justice is developed here. The author also shows how Christian thinking on atonement correlates with major global concerns such as economic justice, capital punishment, "the war on terror," and ethnic and religious conflicts. Thorough and clearly structured, this book demonstrates how a return to biblical cruciformity can radically transform Christian mission, social justice, and peacemaking. Darrin W. Snyder Belousek is lecturer in philosophy and religion at Ohio Northern University.

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