



# Niagara Anglican

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## Are you an armchair social justice advocate?

**ANDY KALBFLEISCH**  
MISSION STRATEGY COMMITTEE

A year or two ago I was approached by a member of the Social Justice Committee after worship. She had a stack of postcards and asked that I take one, sign it and pop it in the mail—postage was free as it was going to the Prime Minister. I think it had something to do with stopping tar sands funding or some such issue, however the cause wasn't important, but the process. How easy I thought social justice advocacy was when all I had to do is ask the government to do something by signing a petition or sending a postage free postcard to the Prime Minister.

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## Experiencing your Glee!

**KATE SMYTH**  
MEMBER OF ST. JAMES, DUNDAS AND LONG-TIME DELEGATE AND FIRST YEAR STAFF PERSON

**CHRISTYN PERKONS**  
MINISTRY CONSULTANT

Everyone has a little glee in their lives—that little something from God that makes everything else worthwhile. The Niagara Youth Conference 2010, housed in the beautiful Carolinian forest setting of Canterbury Hills, is five days of stepping away from the outside world to connect with one's truest self and explore one's relationship with the holy. NYC not only provided delegates with the opportunity to reconnect with their glee; the conference itself annually constitutes glee for the young people who participate.

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## Confessions of a tomato farmer

**MARNI NANCEKIVELL**  
DIRECTOR OF TRANSITIONAL MINISTRY

Okay, I am not really a tomato farmer. In truth, I am one of those folks who plants a few tomato plants each year, (at least one "regular" tomato and one cherry tomato plant) with visions of harvesting a late summer bounty. Except for this year. This year, my tomato crop is puny. You see, my tomatoes didn't get the care they need this year. We were away for two crucial (read: hot and dry) weeks in the summer, and failed to arrange for our friendly neighbourhood house-sitter to water the back garden.

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## A profound sense of Thanksgiving

During these wonderful days in Niagara, we experience the beauty of a harvest, almost unmatched anywhere in the world. Our fruit, vegetables and grapes can only engender a sense of awe and inspiration. The creator of this universe is truly magnificent. In days of old we made our turkeys, and ate of the harvest, with the kind of gratitude that thanked God for "blessing us" with all these wonder-

ful things. Today we question a sense of gratitude that is devoid of concern for the unfortunate in our world. Why is it that God blesses us and yet there are so many in the world (and yet even in our local world) who have nothing and for whom the harvest is only a dream? In this issue many of our writers are trying to bridge this gap. Why do we have what we have and others have nothing? We used

to look at the poor or the infirm and say: "There but for the grace of God go I". When one thinks about it, our arrogance aside, what a sad commentary about God's universal goodness! Why would God choose me for good health and prosperity and someone else for illness or poverty? Why do I experience the "grace of God" that someone else is denied. What is our responsibility in the face of this para-

doxical reality? How can we help to live out our church responsibility that we call "Prophetic Social Justice Making". Read this issue carefully and share your ideas with us or with your parish members and together we'll journey toward the answer to this problem.

**CHRISTOPHER GRABIEC**  
EDITOR

## Do people in poverty celebrate Thanksgiving?



**COLLEEN SYM**  
SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATOR

Do people living in poverty celebrate Thanksgiving? Do they celebrate proportionately to their share in the abundance of God's gift of the harvest? Are you more thankful if you have more? Are you more thankful if you have less because it means more?

It can't be a surprise to anyone that we don't all share equally or equitably in the abundance of the wealth and riches of the harvest that is the focus of Thanksgiving. I am sure that in every community and parish within this Diocese there is a food bank. I know that in one of the most affluent areas of the Diocese, indeed in one of the most

affluent areas of the country, more than 5000 people a month are being assisted with food donations and the supply cannot meet the demand. This is likely a problem in every other community too in the wake of increased need arising out of the recession from which we have not fully recovered.

I expect that many of us will be making a donation to our local food bank as we shop for our meal to mark the holiday. This is a good thing to do and makes us feel good to do. Is that enough? It's not enough to make the problem go away.

Is it a sufficient response to the problem? My response is that charity is never a sufficient response. As an act of thankfulness for a more than adequate share in the harvest, surely we can do more than some canned goods and peanut butter. A social safety net that relies on charity to fill a gap caused by inadequate rates of assistance is unjust.

A key piece of the Diocesan vision is prophetic social justice making. The vision requires that we respond not only to those in need amongst us through continuing acts of charity but to also seek justice through the transformation of unjust structures of society.

The approach being taken by both Bishop Bird and Archdeacon Patterson in their social justice ministries has been to work in a cross-community/cross-sector way on initiatives and campaigns related to poverty reduction activities taking place in the Diocese and beyond.

To this end over the past year, the Diocese has been involved in activities related to the Do the Math/Put Food in the Budget Campaign. As well, both the Bishop and the Archdeacon have been involved in the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition social audit.

Now the Archdeacon is taking this to the next level and as a result I know he will be thinking a lot more than usual

about what's for dinner on Thanksgiving. This is because in the week before the holiday he will be participating in Do the Math Challenge and for a period of three days or more has agreed to eat what a person on social assistance typically eats in the last week of the month when their money is gone and food banks fare fills the gap. The goal of the challenge is to demonstrate to the provincial government that there is widespread support for the Put Food in the Budget demands for:

■ An immediate \$100 increase per month for each adult on social assistance in Ontario. Right now a single person receives only \$585 each month, for all their needs.

■ In the longer term, revised social assistance rates based on actual local living costs for social assistance recipients. This must become part of Ontario's poverty reduction strategy.

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# Finding and inhabiting a faithful present



**MICHAEL THOMPSON**  
ARCHDEACON, RECTOR OF ST. JUDE'S  
OAKVILLE

When I was in grade one, the (public) school day began with the singing of the National Anthem ("God Save the Queen"), the reciting of the Lord's Prayer, and the singing of a Christian hymn—most memorably, for some reason, "When He Cometh". On the other side of the ledger, the Union Jack and Red Ensign could be found in most churches, and the national anthem was a commonplace on what was then called Dominion Day. The temple and the court were aligned, shared a common vision of citizenship informed by crossover virtues of thrift, obedience, endeavour, and duty. In the intervening half-century, this tapestry of civic and religious meaning has unraveled so completely that the chaplains planning the Swissair memorial service at Peggy's Cove were instructed by the protocol officers of the Canadian Government to avoid references to God or Jesus in the course of the event. Some people were outraged by that. Others were cheered. Still others simply recognized that something had changed and was unlikely to change back.

In the current reality of what was once the "mainline church", such losses pile up—no crèche in the public square, no prayer in the public school,

no evidence of what so many remember as the glory days, when the pews were full, the Sunday School bursting at the seams. And as the losses mount, we are tempted to respond with despair, anger, and nostalgia. We bemoan a failing church without a future, we blame this leader or that (or God, or a Godless society) for the failure, or we wait in futility for yesterday to arrive.

In the Hebrew Scriptures for Proper 24, October 10, God instructs the people of Judah in their exile through the prophet Jeremiah. "Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you in exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf; for in its welfare you will find your welfare." So far, the people had responded to the exile in the usual ways—despair, anger, and nostalgia. To them, the place of exile is not a real place, but a nightmare from which they long to awaken. In the nightmare, they are radically disinherited—temple gone; Jerusalem gone; status gone; power gone. Now God invites them to treat Babylon as a real place, and as a place in which God is at work for good. And over the course of the exile, they learn to be a people, a people without temple, Jerusalem, or status or power, but a people all the same.

What makes it possible for this disinherited community of despair, anger, and nostalgia to experience a renewed sense of hope for the future and of God's faithfulness? No small part of the answer is that during the exile, this people gathers their story together—the story of creation and original blessing, of how that blessing was distorted and obscured by human

choosing, beginning with that primal choosing in the garden. The story of God's tireless and passionate engagement in the life of the world to renew that blessing and redeem creation. The story of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Esau and Leah and Rachel, Joseph and Benjamin, Moses, Aaron and Miriam, Melchizedek and Hulda, Deborah, Hannah, Samuel, Eli, Saul, Jonathan, and David the great and greatly-flawed warrior-king. The shattered people begins the journey towards renewal by remembering the past.

That past could now become the basis of hope. God has broken the chains of inevitability before and will do so again. God has strengthened the young and vulnerable before and will do so again. God has stared down the mighty before and will do it again. God has chosen the unlikely and equipped them for the impossible before and will do so again. In the dominating unassailable story of Babylon's strength, another story emerges in whispers around cooking fires. People join the story, re-member themselves into it so that the story belongs to them and they belong to the story.

Before the exile, court and temple had fashioned a stable symbiosis in Jerusalem, scratching each other's back, feathering each other's nest. A lot of people were left out or left behind as the court and temple thrived. The prophets (and later Jesus in their wake) were harsh in their critique and stark in their prognosis—"This cannot last." And it did not. Instead came exile—disinheritance, anger, despair and nostalgia.

Before we settle too deeply into any of those three in our own exile, we might remember that exile is the work of God. God initiates exile to destabilize the easy symbiosis of court and temple so that God's people might encounter, in memory and hope, the promises of a faithful God. Exile is God's strategy for renewing the covenant by which we share with him a common purpose in and for the world.

And so God's people must learn once more to inhabit the present, not abandoning it for nostalgia or wishful thinking, but embracing it as the time in which they may serve God's purpose. "Seek the welfare of the city into which I have sent you in exile..."

...because exile does not, after all, disinherit us; it is not the temple or Jerusalem, not status or power that constitutes our inheritance, but the present faithfulness of God. That faithfulness shines in the story of Jesus—how, for example, the healing of the 'other nine' in the gospel for the day is not rescinded in the face of their ingratitude. Healing is God's gift, not leverage for barter in some grotesque religious souk. When in gratitude we re-member ourselves into the story of God's faithfulness, when by that re-membering we become agents ourselves of that faithfulness in and for the world, we have still not somehow earned or deserved that healing, but have had at least the good sense to see and welcome its grace.

We learn still more about that faithfulness as Jesus sets his face towards

Jerusalem. There to confront another wicked tandem of court and temple, there to yield his life to bring it down, there in resurrection to tear open the future that death seems to have closed. There to entrust all to the faithfulness of God, there to take up the new life made possible by that faithful God. There to lay down what seems to be all he has, and to receive all that God has to offer.

In the face of such a story, can our response to our exile in any faithful way be nostalgia, despair, or anger? Perhaps, like our ancestors, we may visit those places, explore their deceptive claims, and then move, like them, to find a faithful present that we may inhabit between memory and hope. And might we inhabit that present—God's present, God's gift—more and more deeply by working for its transformation, seeking its welfare and praying to the Lord on its behalf?

I wonder if these words from Margaret Avison's "The Swimmer's Moment" might help us on our way:

For everyone  
The swimmer's moment at the whirlpool comes,  
But many at that moment will not say  
"This is the whirlpool, then."  
By their refusal they are saved  
From the black pit, and also from contesting  
The deadly rapids, and emerging in  
The mysterious, and more ample, further waters.

From: *Winter Sun*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962.



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# All things new



**ELEANOR JOHNSTON**  
ST. THOMAS; ST CATHARINES

Imagine living in Wittenberg, Germany, in 1517. The Ninety-five Theses of Martin Luther offend the Pope who keeps sending high officials to determine if the German priest should be silenced. You, as a loyal Christian, feel confused because much of what Luther says



The church exists to form people of Christ-like love.

Brian McLaren

makes sense, for instance, that priests should not sell indulgences, that priests should be allowed to marry, and that church services should be conducted in the local language and include hymns for congregations to sing.

Changes in the secular world also bring unsettling changes to the church. Nationalism, for one—people turn from allegiance to the Holy Roman Empire to find their identity in their own tribe, their

own prince. Another German, Johannes Gutenberg, has invented a printing press with movable type that mass-produces books. You can actually buy and read your own Bible, translated by Luther into German! You start taking reading lessons and you are drawn to the new German Lutheran church, away from the church of the distant and apparently corrupt Pope.

Back—forward, that is—to the present. You're an Anglican, priest or lay person, tired of being told that there is something seriously wrong with your church. You suspect that its problem is deeper than theological rivalries and personality conflicts. You have tried to follow Christ's commandment and minister to everyone, both in the church and outside its doors, and especially the poor. You have studied the Bible and books on the Bible. You have used old and new liturgies in your worship. Your efforts are valued by some and seen as inconsequential by others. Outside the church powerful forces such as climate change and nuclear technology threaten your species with imminent disaster. What you miss, what you need, is the understanding, the faith that Jesus is working in you, in your church, in your time.

Enter a book with a rather dull-looking cover and a vague title, *A New Kind of Christianity*. The ideas in it

are neither dull nor vague. The author, Brian McLaren, is the former evangelical pastor who published *Everything Must Change: Jesus, Global Crises and a Revolution of Hope* in 2007, and found that it struck a chord across North America. Little in either book is new to those who have been reading Cox, Borg, Crossan, Kung, Armstrong and Spong for the past two decades, but McLaren's books are easily absorbed by those who find other progressive Christian authors obscure and difficult. McLaren's ideas, because they are so clearly presented, will hopefully have a powerful impact on every dimension of church life in every denomination of Christianity.

*A New Kind of Christianity* is encouraging. McLaren begins with the claim that we are in the midst of positive change as turbulent and all-encompassing as the Protestant Reformation of Luther's time. This massive change, sweeping us out of our old ways, this theological tsunami too big to resist, this Reformation, is the work of our Creator God.

McLaren begins with the phenomenon that everyone sees: the young in every denomination have left their home churches, tried out other churches and left them as well. They do not leave because of the style of music or liturgy. They leave because, since Constantine required that all his people become Christians or die as heretics,

there has been a discrepancy, at the core of Christianity that has only now been articulated: the followers of the Christ of peace, love, healing and teaching used violence to enforce allegiance. Dogma defined most denominations—not including the Anglican—for almost two millennia, and now our society, especially our young, reject all Christian churches, including the Anglican.

Also undermining our creeds are developments outside the church: the scientific discoveries of Galileo, Darwin and Einstein, and the social justice issues of pacifism, sexual politics and racial equality. Christians, sensing that these great forces of the modern world could sweep churches away altogether, have split into two camps: those who resist change and those who embrace the Holy Spirit calling us to sing a new song.

McLaren calls the latter group "irenic." This word, first used in the 19th century and derived from the Greek word for peace, means "aiming at peace." The noun, "irenic," is "the movement in Christian theology concerned with reconciling different denominations and sects." Love of God and neighbour—these commandments replacing exclusion, crusades and triumphalism—are the new face of Christianity.

McLaren's book contains Biblical analysis answering questions about God, Jesus, the Bible and the King-

dom of God. The second half deals directly with "What do we do about the Church?" "Can we find a way to address human sexuality without fighting about it?" "Can we find a better way of viewing the future?" and "How should followers of Jesus relate to people of other religions?" The dialogues that these questions engender are what we in the Church are already talking about: some people with eager enthusiasm and others with angry resistance.

McLaren concludes with an encouraging picture of "A New Kind of Christianity" that respects and nurtures all of us. He insists, "The formation of Christlike people of love naturally becomes the grand unifying preoccupation and mission of our churches. Churches come to be communities that form Christlike people who embody and communicate, in word and deed, the good news of the kingdom of God."

Instead of struggling to survive, our churches will refocus on the mission of modeling and nurturing Christ-like love in our congregations and on the mission of sharing the good news of the kingdom of God. For years many church leaders and scholars have said this and worked towards it. McLaren articulates a new hope for our Church in a book that we can all understand, accept and use.

# Are you an armchair social justice advocate?

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Last month we were in Kingston filming a segment for a prison ministry video and while we were waiting for Mike to be released from the Joyceville Correction Institution we chatted with one of the deputy wardens. She had recently been transferred to Joyceville from a women's correctional facility. It turns out that it was not unusual when a woman was released after serving her "time" that she would end up back at the front gate the next morning wanting "back in" since she had no where to go, no home to welcome her and no

community to love her. The prison had become her community!

I thought of all those postcards and petitions and wondered if our first reaction to this tragic story would be to petition the government to 'do something compassionate'. Then I wondered if we have become too complacent, relying more and more on others in some distant place or some bureaucratic jungle to do what we are called to do.

Every summer there is always a lot of talk about the hundred-kilometer diet. We are encouraged to shop local, eat local and think local. In other words, we are encouraged to engage with our

local communities. If we viewed all aspects of social justice as local, then we could eschew our petitions and postcards and roll up our sleeves and get on with it—whether we engage in feeding the hungry, providing shelter for the homeless or helping a released prisoner restore dignity to his or her life by providing a loving and nurturing environment to enable their productive re-entry into society.

Every Sunday we place our envelope on the offering plate knowing that some of the money will find its way through the Diocesan assessment to support a number of outreach minis-

tries. It's almost the same as paying our taxes—we put our money in the pot for the greater good that in fact mostly remains faceless to us. The system decides how the funds get distributed and many desperate situations often slip between the cracks. As is so frequently the case, the squeaky wheel usually gets the oil—funding in this case, but what about those wheels that are so seized up they can't even squeak anymore?

If we took the local approach then we could take back that responsibility from the government (in this case the Diocese) and directly fund and support

through our own parishes those in need in our local communities. During the summer we talk about supporting our local farmers by buying local, so why not get just as close and personal with those in our local communities who are in the most need of help instead of 'contracting out'? Of course it will be harder, but then nobody ever said it would be easy to be a follower of Jesus.

And one more thing; you don't need your Bishop's or Rector's consent to personally offer loving service to those on the margins of our society in our local parish communities.

"Every church mission shaped."

# Contemplative Fire Niagara first gathering



**STUART PIKE**  
ARCHDEACON, RECTOR OF ST. LUKE'S  
BURLINGTON

The members of the Contemplative Fire Niagara Core Team have been meeting faithfully for half a year, experiencing its rhythm and what it has to offer. We have found it to be a community of support which helps to connect spirit (being) and action (doing)

with understanding (knowing).

Contemplative Fire in Niagara will offer several ways for individuals who are searching for more depth in their lives to connect with a community which supports their holistic growth in the faith. This will include a monthly "Contemplative Fire Gathering" on the third Sunday of the month starting with November 21st at St. Luke's Great Hall, 1382 Ontario St. in Burlington. We will find other venues for the monthly gatherings around the diocese. These gatherings include an experiential way of connecting with the weekly scripture, some stillness, and a Eucharist. Each gathering will be

a unique experience designed to allow a deep recognition of the scripture.

Contemplative Fire will also offer other ways to grow including smaller groups such as a chance to get together with a few people over a meal and story sharing, or a pilgrimage walk, or attending a study, one-on-one or group spiritual direction, plans on putting your spirituality into action, guidance on how to practice Contemplative prayer and more.

Contemplative Fire is for anyone, from the regular Church member to those who have no affiliation with a Church but might be exploring how Jesus can make a difference to their

lives. Probably the best way of giving you a glimpse of what Contemplative Fire is about is to quote from the Contemplative Fire Canadian website:

"Contemplative Fire is a dispersed monastic community that follows a rhythm of life of 'Travelling Light—Dwelling Deep' that is rooted in prayer, study and action. Drawing from the broad Christian contemplative tradition, we seek to be fully present to the kingdom of God right here and right now. As our name implies we enjoy the mystery and paradoxes of life, of being both contemplative and on fire. We welcome you to join us on this journey."

I would encourage you to explore the website at [contemplativefire.ca](http://contemplativefire.ca) to get a better idea of what we are about. Please join us on November 21st, let parishioners know about it and please invite others who might not be connected with a Church, but who are searching for more.

The members of the Contemplative Fire Niagara Core Team are Stuart Pike, Jean Archbell, Suzanne Craven, Max Woolaver and Dorothy Hewlitt. You may speak further with one of us and we would welcome new people, especially lay people, who might be interested in being on our planning team.



■ Sarah Noiseux (St. Thomas, St. Catharines) smashes through her barriers to joy with support from her coach, NYC staff member, The Reverend Kathy Morgan (St. John's, York and St. John the Divine, Cayuga).



## Experiencing your Glee!

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The 2010 Niagara Youth Conference was all about discovering glee, finding joy, and learning to overcome some of the barriers that block the joy experience. The conference offered many opportunities for God to touch the lives of the delegates and the staff—through discussions in small groups known as base groups, activities with cabin groups, workshops that allowed delegates to explore new ways to express their glee, morning tunes with the NYC Band, walking meditations and a variety of worship experiences

that created a space in which delegates and staff might encounter the divine.

Particularly powerful was the work on barriers to joy—identifying all the many things we allow to get in the way of living in the present running the gamut from the technology with which we surround ourselves to fear which included living for a day without any of those electronic devices. This work culminated with every delegate writing or drawing their barriers on a pine board which they then broke with their hand during worship. The joy on the face of each delegate as they smashed through their barriers

was profoundly moving for all the cheering delegates and staff.

Year after year, NYC takes the stuff of daily life and shakes it up; invites all who are part of the experience to think outside the box, to stretch as they hear God's call on their lives in a different way. All this happens in an environment that's safe and welcoming; where youth can leave behind the masks and pretences of their every day lives to explore their deepest reality without fear of judgement, mockery or isolation. The community experience is so engaging, all so powerfully transformative that many delegates return for all six years they are

age-eligible. They take away a clearer sense of who they are, a deeper connection to God, more confidence in their ability to tackle the challenges of their daily lives, and a sense of resiliency—a faith that God and their community will see them through. Friends made at NYC are friends for life!

Kudos to the NYC staff who begin conference planning in January and spend the next eight months developing daily plenaries, base group activities, large group events, workshops, music, worship, and socials; all with the goal of creating spaces where God can get some traction in the lives

of the delegates (and the staff). On site in the last week of August, the nineteen adults (ranging in age from 19 to mid-sixties) staff cabins, lead base groups, workshops and conference-wide activities as well as socials and daily worship. Their reward—knowing that they have made a difference in the lives of our young people; hearing delegates share how their NYC experiences have transformed their lives; listening to parents say that their adolescents come home changed; and recognizing that they, too, have been transformed—that their God stories are deeper and richer!

## Cirrus 11: Adele at the wheel



FRANCEAN CAMPBELL-RICH  
CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

Adele and JR were used to attracting attention wherever they sailed. Trimarans were still very rare in northern waters. *Cirrus* had been built at Bronte, on Lake Ontario, by an Air Canada pilot, to JR's order, on a design by Piver, himself a multihull innovator on the west coast. Looking down on her from a height like a bridge, her mast down, her three hulls presented a flat, squarish aspect. Under sail at sea, she appeared to rest light, like a gull about to take flight—hence her name, the high flying cirrus clouds.

"There was the time on Lake Oswego, on our way down the canal route to the Hudson River. A small craft had set out from shore, headed straight for us. On board, six men in suits and hats. They circled round us several times—no sign of greeting. Something sinister about them. After a while they simply turned and went back to shore. We never did learn what that had been about."

Far more often, in ports and yacht clubs, and always when entering and exiting the eighteen locks, people lined the way to observe how the little yacht rose and tossed as Adele and JR struggled with the lines and the great gates slowly opened and allowed them to pass on. There was welcome everywhere, and help when and where it was needed. Thereby hangs many a story told to this day. But none like that time in Long Island Sound.

It had been a disappointing day to start with: no wind, heavy fog, low visibility—they would need to use the twin Mercury engines and follow a radio beam if they were to make Mystic on the north shore that day. There was not even much wildlife to liven things up. It had been JR's birthday the day before; Adele had resolved to do all the work on board that she could, as a little gesture to the occasion (the log in later years tells a different story). At the very least now, she could take the wheel, and let JR go below and putter round or read a book. Adele really liked to take her turn at the wheel. For one thing, her eyesight was good: she could often spot a marker way ahead, long before JR did. But JR was a wizard at navigation. Charts, tides and currents were his thing. There was the

time when they had left Grand Manan in a fog, set a course for Cape St. Mary on the Nova Scotia coast—13 miles away—no visibility (like Long Island Sound) Adele at the wheel. After a while JR had spoken: On our portside, he said, we should just be picking up a marker. And they did. But that was years ago.

Now, here in the Sound, JR had gone below; Adele at the wheel. It was hot. Time dragged. At first she thought what she saw was some kind of cloud formation, but it took shape: a vessel, very large, grey, coming from aft, looming on our portside. A US Navy cruiser, bristling with guns. It must have seen us. But why so close? Men were lined up on the deck—way above Adele at the wheel—so many of them—and more of them arriving as Adele watched. They were pointing and waving. Were we in trouble? What was going on? Adele called JR. "Come up, show yourself... I'm alone here..." as if she needed to say so. JR took his time.

JR took one look. "What can you expect? You're sitting there stark naked!" End of story.

.....  
Adele was me, JR my late husband, John Rich. The year was 1970. Allow for possible errors of memory.

## Do people in poverty celebrate Thanksgiving?

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The Archdeacon's involvement in the Do the Math Challenge is an extension of his participation in the earlier related initiatives and marks a willingness not only to learn through listening to the stories of those with lived experience of poverty but to act in solidarity with them through sharing, for a brief time, their experience in order to enhance his capacity to be an advocate for social change seeking an end to hunger caused by an inability of far too many of our neighbours to afford a healthy and nutritious diet.

The Archdeacon puts it this way: "I have had my awareness raised through 'Do the Math' that social assistance is an oxymoron; government support for those that are in need of support is just not enough. I have heard their stories as a rapporteur during the social audit, but listening is still not enough. I must walk in their shoes and live that life, if just for a short time, for it to mean something profound. In that moment, transformation and change may begin."

In Toronto, Archbishop Johnson will be participating in the Challenge and says: "I'm not looking forward to subsisting on a plain, bare-bones diet for three days. But the fact is, I can choose to do this or not. That is not the case for thousands of people across Ontario. Throughout his life and witness, Jesus Christ made abundantly clear his sense of compassion and caring for those on the margins of society. We need to follow his example today, and the Do the Math Challenge is one way that we can be, however briefly, in the situation of people who are truly on the margins of our affluent society."

This is an act of solidarity with them, one that we feel will strengthen our advocacy with government. We hope to persuade government to do more to help the poorest members of our society through increases in social assistance rates."

Personal transformation and social transformation must take place together. That is what the challenge is about. This Thanksgiving, one of things I'll be thankful for is the leadership of the church in this initiative.



## Confessions of a tomato farmer

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The result has been predictable. Our tomato crop is measly. I look out my kitchen window and rarely see the promise of red, ripe, juicy tomatoes. I see long, scraggly green plants, and only once in awhile catch the glimpse of a luscious tomato on them. The truth is, this year at least, I am an absolute failure as a tomato farmer.

So, what can I learn from this? Along with learning to ask our house-sitter to water the plants next year, there is a larger "Life Lesson" in this experience for me. I need to be a more intentional steward, not only of tomatoes, but of life itself. Although I have been grateful for the few tomatoes that we have been able to eat, we could have been enjoying more. If only I'd taken the time to do more "forward planning".

In truth, I suspect that I'm not alone in the "juggle struggle" of all of those things that make up my world. I am a priest, employee, wife, mother, daughter, friend, and neighbour. Too frequently, it seems that there aren't enough hours in the day for me to fulfill all of those roles. Yet I have learned that I am happiest when there I am accomplishing something in all of those areas of my life. Not only do I live in better balance, but I find that I am a better steward of my life when I am "making a difference".

It is so easy to become lulled by the inertia of those few "un-busy" moments of the day. For example, recently on the CBC, I heard that there was a need for tents to be donated to the Pakistani flood relief effort. When I heard that plea, I thought of the 4 person tent that we have in our basement, a four person tent—largely unused. Well, the truth is that I have no idea where to send that tent if I could find it. The moment has passed, and I am unable to find the address to send it to. But what I can do is to make a contribution through the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund ([www.pwrdf.org](http://www.pwrdf.org)) or World Vision ([www.worldvision.ca](http://www.worldvision.ca)). The Canadian Government has promised to match dollar amounts raised by Canadian relief agencies. So my donation will count twice.

Life is full of these opportunities to "think globally and act locally". As people of faith, people of a generous heart, who are steeped in a generous culture of stewardship, some may suffer from some "compassion fatigue". What did Jesus say in Matthew 26: 11? Something about "the poor" always being with us? I understand that not as an excuse to stop giving when each flood or hurricane hits, but rather as a reminder that yes, there will always be those in need in our midst, so I'd better get used to doing something about

that. Although my bank balance might contest this fact, the truth is that I am a wealthy woman in comparison to many in the world. You are wealthy too. So why in God's name would we squander an opportunity to give to others? Why on earth would we fail to take every opportunity to manifest a consciousness of justice when it comes to our sisters and brothers with whom we share this planet?

It is so very easy for acedia (or sloth) to take over our lives. We've all heard the excuses. And many of us have made them. The reality is, the excuses just aren't good enough. As people of faith, you and I are called to glimpse The Bigger Picture. We are to see our sisters and brothers with God's eyes—and we are called to act accordingly. Whether that sister is the querulous person in the local congregation, or some stranger in Pakistan, it makes no difference. We are all one, in the eyes of God. And as the pop song goes, "We're all in this together".

Be an intentional steward of life. Not a bad lesson from my tomato plants, eh?

Canon Marni Nancekivell is the Director of Transitional Ministry for the Diocese of Niagara. She can be reached at 905-527-1316 (ext 390).



## Honouring our soldiers

JEAN MCEVOY  
CHRIST CHURCH WOODBURN

On June 6th, 2010, Christ Church Anglican in Woodburn was filled with family and friends who came to a special service honouring three young people who are a great part of the parish, namely Wayne Brunt, Julie Terence and Sean Kent, all of whom have served or are serving in Afghanistan.

The trees along the driveway of

the church at 1307 Woodburn Road were decorated with yellow ribbons. Julie Terence's father, John Terence played the bagpipes and following the service, we gathered in the lane for the dedication of the yellow ribbons. A lovely reception took place following the church service and dedication with a beautiful cake that was made by Georgina Peters, a member of Christ Church who decorated it to suit the theme 'Honouring our Troops'.

## A compassionate parish, strong in faith and active in ministry



CHARLES STIRLING  
RETIRED CANON, DIOCESE OF NIAGARA

There seems to be plenty of time these days to be reading some new theological ideas, or new and vibrant understandings and directions of faith. I am a strong believer that we must seek change and find new ways to do liturgy, or face the terminal passage of our faith. It is more than just an idle passage of time, for I have a strong sense of what could be done in

terms of faith and witness, and lending assistance. I am always anxious to read what our bishop, Michael Bird, writes. Here is a man looking to advance our thinking as well as our actions in new ways of witness. I am reminded of his encouragement to step forward and lend a real hand to help a brother or sister, in a challenge of life. Considering all of this led me to remember an incident in which I was involved.

Looking over my nearly twenty one years as parish priest, it was a time early on in my ministry when we, as the parish in my care, took on a major challenge. I was filling in at St John the Evangelist, Hamilton. Like most city parishes they had their challenges, but also possessed a good core of people

who were keen on vision and worked in and for the parish. Some time before my arrival the parish hall, not then connected to the church, as it is today with residences, but was down the block a little. It was a former school that the parish had owned for a number of years and newly renovated. It burned. It was to be replaced as it stands today. A critical time indeed, but not the only crisis, at that moment in time that was to challenge the parish.

There was in the parish, at that time, a family who had come from Jamaica. He was a specialist in tennis court construction and she worked in a bank. There were two children enrolled in the local elementary school. They were an ideal parish family, involved

in parish life and very popular. Their problem was they were forward thinking and politically active people in Jamaica, and this brought forms of persecution from those in charge in Jamaica at the time and unfortunately the family felt it had no option but to enter Canada, as it turned out illegally.

The parish enjoyed strong lay leadership in John Lidgley and David Little, subsequently members of the Order of Niagara and now both deceased. They took the lead and together we held many meetings and sought legal advice. Money was quickly raised and promised. We worked very hard and diligently to keep this family in Canada. Very sadly, we were not successful, but there was

a measure of some satisfaction that we had tried very hard. It was both an exciting and exhausting experience, but it was the people of the parish itself had the final satisfaction of raising enough money to pay for the family's air trip back to Jamaica. They went with dignity and effectively denied the government's intention to deport them. It was a small victory, perhaps, but a meaningful one that taught us a lesson in service to and for others.

I certainly believe that this action very much falls into one of the categories of the Bishop's vision for our personal witness in diocese. Who knows when any one of us might face a similar need, and this time we could win it!

# Your Cathedral | Who we are and where we are going



**PETER WALL**  
DEAN, RECTOR OF CHRIST'S CHURCH  
CATHEDRAL

2010 marks the 175th anniversary of Christ's Church, Hamilton which has, for the 135 year history of our Diocese, been our Cathedral; our 'mother church', and the seat of our Bishops.

As Rector of the Cathedral and Dean of the Diocese, I need to say what a thrilling year this is—lots of special events and service, multitudes of guests to welcome, thousands of friends to bring into their Cathedral. As we have celebrated our past – and a rich and glorious one it is, we have also been concentrating on our future, and we believe that it is an equally glorious one!

Last spring, I had the privilege of preaching on a Sunday morning at the First Hamilton Unitarian Church, a thriving congregation which happens to meet in the neighbourhood in which I live and amongst which I found friends and neighbours. It was a good experience for me to be able to tell members of this particular congregation about the wonderful life and history of the Cathedral, and about the influence of the Cathedral and its congregation on life in downtown Hamilton today. Even I am somewhat

overwhelmed by the sheer number of people served by the Cathedral and the eclectic mixture of ministries and activities with which we are involved. I chose as my text for that morning the last part of the 25th Chapter of Matthew's gospel, where Jesus reminds his hearers that just as they ministered to the least around them so they ministered to him. It is an appropriate way to mark what we do at the Cathedral.

Members of the diocesan family in Niagara will know that the Cathedral is a relatively small parish, operating in a large and busy building, a building which is the hub of many things and is the home to our Synod office and staff. 175 years have also changed the neighbourhood from what it once was. Jamesville, the name of the area in which the Cathedral is located, is now home to a rich kaleidoscope of Portuguese, Italian, Vietnamese influences, along with many other ethnic diversities, and the site of an amazing renaissance of galleries, bistros, restaurants and bars.

For all of its history, Christ's Church (the added apostrophe is distinctive in the Anglican world—added by John Gamble Geddes, first Rector and first Dean of Niagara, in response to his own popularity in the mid-19th century which led to locals calling it "Geddes' Church"; he quickly and firmly repudiated such egocentrism and reminded all in Hamilton that it is Christ's Church!) has reached out to the poor and needy. For much of its long and storied life, the Cathedral

has teetered on the brink of financial catastrophe and yet has always managed to survive and to continue to be an important force for good in the downtown part of the city.

Cathedral parishioners continue to be exceedingly generous stewards and support the work and ministry of the Cathedral in remarkable ways. So, too, does the Diocese. For 15 years now, the bold experiment we call Cathedral Place, started by the vision of Bishop Asbil and others, has grown and deepened and flourished. A single place which houses a large and hard-working staff, as well as home to several community service groups, a large and important not-for-profit childcare centre (begun by the Cathedral congregation as a community outreach over 25 years ago), the offices and principal rehearsal space for the Hamilton Children's Choir (also a Cathedral outreach many years ago), and the home of the administrative offices of our latest and amongst our proudest achievements—the Hamilton Association for Recreational and Residential Re-Development Programmes (HARRRP)—Cathedral Place is an important part of all of our ministries in Niagara, and takes pride in being the home, not only to the Diocesan family, but also to such significant work.

It is only through the generosity of the Diocese and its leadership that we are able to do all of these things. The Diocesan budget supports much of our ministry (impressive, to say the least) and a group of volunteers from

both the Cathedral congregation and the Diocesan family meet regularly to set policy and review operations. The vision of Bishops Asbil and Spence is being carried on by Bishop Bird as we continue to see the Cathedral and the work of Cathedral Place as foundational to our diocesan vision and work.

Whether it is the monthly Jamesville Art Crawl (the second Friday night of each month), the Makers' Market bi-weekly markets in Bishopsgate, the weekly summer organic food markets on Friday afternoons, or the twice (sometimes thrice) annual graduation ceremonies of the Hamilton and District Public School Board Adult Day School (an event which started with 12 graduates five years ago and has now grown to well over 100 each time), the building is a warm and friendly home to many thousands of visitors. From Synod Council to many and various committee meetings, Cathedral Place enlivens our Diocesan business, and many hundreds come for Ordinations, Order of Niagara services, the All Souls' Requiem and so many other diocesan worship events.

During the summer months, volunteers welcome tourists and other visitors to see our magnificent Cathedral church with its beautiful art and architecture. What has been described by others in the country as Canada's most attractive Cathedral is also the home to what architectural experts have described as unique and impossible to replace creations in stone and

wood. A designated heritage building, the Cathedral requires careful and sensitive management and we do our very best to maintain what we have and honour our rich past.

Marking an anniversary means not only looking back but also casting one's eye to the future. We are trying our best to do that this year as well. Like many other communities, we have felt the economic pinch and have responded in what we think are responsible ways: we have reduced the salaried staff by a full clergy position and have reduced the organist's position to half-time. We know how important it is to be responsible stewards ourselves, and I am overwhelmed by the ways in which members of the Cathedral congregation have responded to our financial situation; indeed, so generous have they been that our future looks much more positive now than it did only a year ago. Reduced staff means that we have had to learn to work 'better,' and not just 'more'; to examine carefully all aspects of who we are and what we do.

We look forward to continuing the excellent work begun by our forebears and to reaching out in always new and creative ways to the community around us. As the Diocesan Cathedral, we are committed to providing excellence in liturgy, in music, in outreach, and in leadership to the Diocese and beyond. 175 years is really just a moment in time; imagine what the next 175 will bring!

## Refugees need your prayers and your voice

**RODERICK MCDOWELL**  
DEACON, ST. PAUL'S FORT ERIE, REFUGEE  
LAWYER

Since the mid 1980s, the Niagara Peninsula and Ft. Erie, in particular, has been the largest single entry point for refugees arriving at a Canadian land border. In 2010, Ft. Erie was specifically recognized by the United Nations for our efforts.

The entire movement began in 1985 when five families, united in their Christian faith, formed a refugee committee to welcome refugees arriving at the border in Ft. Erie. They came to this area in particular because several orders of Roman Catholic Nuns in Buffalo had founded a refugee shelter called Vive La Casa to assist refugees wanting to flee to Canada. The United States, at that time, was refusing 95% of the Central American refugees fleeing the horrible civil wars in that region and Canada was their only possibility. The word literally spread around the world that Buffalo/Ft Erie and/or the Peace Bridge was the road to safety. Somalia's, Sri Lankans, Colombians, Mexicans, Sudanese, Congolese, Burundians—I could go on—discovered a welcoming presence.

Until the early 1990s, the work in Ft. Erie was entirely volunteer. As one

of the few lawyers in Niagara with any immigration experience, my role was to organize, train and prepare local lawyers to meet the need. On one weekend alone our little group, which had expanded, welcomed over 300 refugees. Finally in 1990 Casa El Norte, a refugee shelter opened in Ft. Erie with financial help from the Sisters of St. Joseph, the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches. A second shelter, Matthew House opened in 2000 and another shelter, Chez Marie in St. Catharine's. Shelters also expanded in Hamilton. The Fort Erie Multicultural Centre provided assistance with housing, English language and cultural instruction and assisted with a myriad number of problems. Finally Canadian Border Services agency opened the world's only refugee reception centre. The facility includes offices for select officers to process refugees and a part run by the Fort Erie Multicultural Centre, to provide information, referral, refreshment and a place to rest while refugees are being processed.

Today, when a refugee arrives in Buffalo, they go to Vive La Casa in Buffalo. Vive provides information about the Canadian process and helps to determine if a refugee can enter Canada to claim refugee status. Refu-

gees coming from the U.S. can only enter Canada to claim if they have a close relative in Canada, are unaccompanied and under 18, or have a visa or wouldn't require a visa to enter Canada. Vive then makes arrangements for the refugees to get appointments at the Refugee Reception Centre in Ft. Erie so that for instance, all Spanish speaking claimants are done on one day, etc.

While the refugee is being processed by the CBSA officers to determine if they are eligible to claim refugee status (about 90% qualify), the staff of the Ft. Erie Multicultural Centre helps the refugee to insure they have accommodation, learn how to find a lawyer, and try to find their basic needs.

Often then refugees end up in one of our shelters either in Ft. Erie, St. Catharine's, Hamilton, Toronto, etc. They will then have 28 days to file their refugee claim with the Refugee Protection Division of the Immigration and Refugee Board, usually in Toronto. The shelters and local multicultural centres must provide temporary accommodation, help the refugees apply for legal aid and help them find a lawyer, deal with health emergencies, help get them to their Immigration Medicals, etc. Lan-

guage and customs can be significant barriers.

Eventually the refugees will file their initial documents with the Refugee Board. There then begins the process of finding them more permanent accommodation and helping them apply for work permits, insure the children are in school (refugee children can attend elementary or high school without any problem) etc. In about 18 months, the refugee will finally have a hearing and a decision will be made as to whether or not their claims can be accepted. While less than 50% of claims are accepted overall, the rate vary widely, depending on the country.

The scope of the refugee process and the reforms passed in Bill C-11, this spring are beyond the scope of this article. However the question arises, what can parishes do?

Parishes need to connect with the multicultural centres in your communities. They always need volunteers and practical assistance such as donations of clothing, furniture etc. So many refugees arrive only with the suitcases they can carry and so many have never seen snow. Your parish might consider sponsoring a family of refugee claimants. This is not a major financial commitment because

refugee claimants receive welfare and once they receive work permits, can work. However they do need friendship, guidance and love. Many are torture victims and are terrified of their eventual fate. They need rides to doctors, lawyers, or therapists. Many have no experience of a supermarket, have no idea what a double-double is at Tim Hortons etc.

Several years ago I issued a challenge to the parishes in this diocese to call the Fort Erie Multicultural Centre 905-871-3461 to sponsor refugee claimants. With the exception of St. Paul's in Ft. Erie, no one answered. I issue the challenge again.

Refugees need your prayers but they also need your voice. Frankly, the opposition parties made the refugee reforms passed this spring at least palatable because the original government bill was awful. We need to demand and insist on a just and fair adjudication process, in line with the Charter of Rights and international law, to determine refugee claims.

Most importantly, we need to remember that refugees are part of the Judea, Christian and Moslem heritage. The children of Israel, Jesus and the holy family, and the prophet Mohammad were all refugees. We are indeed called to act.

## The Niagara Anglican

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## The Diocese of Niagara

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

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# Evil can only exist if good people do nothing



**GRAHAME STAP**  
RECTOR ST. SIMONS, TEMAGAMI

It is said that evil can only exist if good people do nothing. I believe that in Ontario at this time good people are allowing evil to exist and doing nothing to stop it.

Do you know that the Ontario government has licensed ultimate fighting? These is where two men climb into a cage and do whatever they can to beat their opponent to a bloody pulp while an audience cheer each spurt of blood.

They are also on the verge of

allowing on line gambling, which means you do not even have to get out of your pajamas to lose the mortgage payment. Gambling is a weakness in many people but mostly among the poor who see as see it as a way out of the desperate situation they find themselves.

Last week, I heard, that there is a possibility of user fees for doctor visits. The amount I heard was \$23.00. Obviously this is not a problem if you have insurance or are financially independent but what about the poor, those living on a fixed income, single parents with three children whose spouse just walked out. They will not go to the doctor probably until it is too late.

Have we come to that place where if it does not affect 'me' we sit back in our comfortable chairs feeling very satisfied with the way life has unfolded without

giving a thought to the rest of the world.

In A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens there is a terrible story of two men who visit Ebenezer Scrooge at the time of Christmas to collect for the poor. Scrooge asks, "Are there no work-houses, no prisons?" The answer is "Yes there are but many would rather die than go there." Scrooge replies in a manner that seems to be echoed in today's society "so let them and therefore decrease the surplus population"

Scrooge as we know learned his lesson and became a champion of the poor. But what about us, the good people? Will we stand, as Scrooge did, and say enough is enough?

Of course all social programs must be paid for but please not paid for by the licenses for ultimate fighting, a percentage of the loses of on line

gambling or taking from those that are least able to afford the user fees.

I am not sure why the good people do not stand and protest. It does not take much to send an email, write a letter, or even make a phone call to our member of parliament. If we all stand together we can stop the downward progress of society. Yes, the possibility is, if we do this, that our taxes will rise but surely this is a small price to pay if we truly come to a gentler kinder society where all people reap the benefits of this wonderful province and the poor do not suffer for the sake of the rich.

In this time of economic uncertainty each one of us may find ourselves unemployed, our pensions cut or a sickness that out lives our insurance. Today it is them tomorrow it could be us!

As always it is only my opinion.

## Recovering the mission of your parish



**JIM NEWMAN**  
STEWARDSHIP CONSULTANT

Sometimes the mission of a parish gets lost in traditional financial reports and line item budgets. But adding a parallel narrative budget to your reporting system helps your congregation understand what your parish is doing about outreach, evangelism, social justice, pastoral care, and much more. A well composed and up to date narrative budget educates and inspires everyone!

Here is a checklist to assist your narrative budget development for 2011. Do you:

- Tell your parish story emphasizing provision, mission, community, compassion and hope?
- Present what's being accomplished, and how donations are used to support mission and ministry locally, in the wider community, and around the world?
- Utilize both narrative and graphical formats?
- Encourage giving from a theology of abundance, not scarcity?
- Show that when people make a donation, they are not just giving to the church; they are giving through the church to make a genuine difference in the lives and hopes of others?
- Include strategies for the future, newcomer information, marketing and communication plans, and lists of committees and contact persons?
- Promote proportional giving (in

proportion to your income), and pre-authorized giving (giving 'off-the-top', and deducted like your phone or utility bill)?

■ Encourage gift planning (contributing to the church from your accumulated assets)?

■ Include parish information such as address and directions, telephone and fax numbers, web site address, and service times?

The goal is to keep stewardship of all kinds 'simmering' all year long. A low key but consistent focus on mission and ministry is the best approach. Here are seven simple and effective initiatives that are sure to make an impact:

- Bulletins: use pages of your narrative budget as bulletin inserts
- Ministry Minutes: encourage brief parishioner presentations about

specific ministries

■ Hospitality: create an atmosphere of welcoming, involve newcomers quickly

■ Homilies: regularly reinforce the theology of giving and abundance

■ Education: develop seasonal resources and hold seminars such as planned giving

■ Presentations: use the line item budget for reviewing the previous year and the narrative budget for outlining next year's plans

■ Repeat this cycle of initiatives: two or three times per year

For assistance with your narrative budget or other stewardship matters contact Jim Newman, Diocesan Stewardship Consultant at 905-527-1316 (ext 360).

## 2010/11 WINTER SEASON

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# What is Orthodoxy?



**MICHAEL BURSLEM**  
ST GEORGE'S GUELPH

Since reading Philip Jenkins' *Jesus Wars—How Four Patriarchs, Three Queens and Two Emperors Decided What Christians Would Believe for the Next 1500 Years*, I have asked myself, What is Orthodoxy, and why is it so highly prized throughout the church?

*Jesus Wars* is a record of a polemical and bloody dispute, fought, quite literally, between bitter rivals in both the church and the state. In the process, there were well over 10,000 innocent victims; many tortured before they died; all in the name of God. This was over the simple question Jesus asked his disciples; Who do you say that I am? If he could only have known it would lead to so much bloodshed, would he have asked it?

By the 5th Century no one doubted that Jesus was God. The questionable doctrines of the Incarnation and the Trinity had taken firm root after the Council of Nicea in 325 CE, and the First Council of Constantinople in 381 CE. That was the condition of Christianity's gaining full membership in the Roman Empire, to become Christendom. What was at stake here, though, was whether he was ever a man, and, if he were, what kind of man, and when he became one. Was his mother, Mary, the *Theotokos*, the bearer, or Mother, of God? That was the burning church issue

from the fourth to the seventh centuries, and even in my second home, Egypt, today it's still a burning issue, the reason for which I shall explain later.

There were two extreme views, both of which were excluded. The first, that of the 4th. Century bishop, Apollinarius. He so stressed Jesus' divinity, that he denied him the presence of any rational human soul. Christ had only one nature, divine. This was condemned as heretical by the First Council of Constantinople in 381. However, variations of his viewpoint persisted long afterward. One Nature thinkers were called Monophysites. A variation of this is what is termed Miaphysitism, associated with Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, and his successors. In their view Christ had one nature, made up of a divine and human nature, comprising all the features of both. Christ is *from* two natures, not *of* two natures. This view became orthodox after the Council of Ephesus in 431.

The other extreme view was that of Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople. He was accused of teaching that two natures coexisted in Christ, but in a conjunction that fell short of a true union. Mary was the mother of Christ, but not the mother of God. His leading opponent was Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, who carried the day at the Council of Ephesus in 431 CE. He had strong support from the Roman pope, Leo I, who wasn't present, but sent a letter, the *Tome of Leo*. Nestorius was deposed, and his followers migrated eastward to what is now Iraq.

After the departure of the Nestorians, the church in Constantinople remained deeply divided, with a strong One Nature party, led by Eutyches, a monk.

He saw Christ as a fusion of divine and human elements, but left little room for the human. The bishop, Flavian, condemned this as too extreme and heretical. Under pressure from Dioscurus, Cyril's successor at Alexandria, a council met to investigate and condemn Flavian, and to support One Nature teachings. Dioscurus arrived with some marauding monks as bodyguard. This council, the Second Council of Ephesus in 449 CE, quickly degenerated into a mob scene. Flavian was kidnapped, and died from his wounds three days later. It was designated the "Gangster Synod" by the Western church, who canonized Flavian as a martyr; it was later declared not a true council. Dioscurus, who certainly had won that day, did count it a true council, and his followers and successors still do today.

Two years later in 451 CE, to placate the grieved party, the emperor called yet another council, this time closer to Constantinople, at Chalcedon, where he could better control the meeting before it got out of hand. This council reversed the decision of the Gangster Synod, condemning the actions of Dioscurus and his allies, humiliating him in the process. After intense debate it formulated a definition of Christ's being, based upon the *Tome of Leo* that presented Christ as both fully divine and fully human. It held that Two Natures are united in the one person of Christ, "without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person."

This became the orthodoxy of the mainstream church of the Empire, but not of the churches in Egypt and Syria. They broke away to form their own churches; in Egypt the Coptic Church. Monophysites are found today from Armenia to Ethiopia, and they still accuse the others of splitting the person of Christ. Since the 6th. century there have been two patriarchs of Alexandria, one Egyptian or Coptic, Monophysite; the other European, or Melchite, meaning 'of the Emperor's party,' Chalcedonian. They're still barely on speaking terms.

Why were these differences in opinion so important? Jenkins suggests that it was because they thought that it affected salvation. One's eternal salvation depended on right belief. Some earlier church teachers and leaders, Origen of Alexandria and Theodore, bishop of Mopsuestia, had suggested that Christ had introduced a universal salvation, but their ideas were considered just too heretical by both parties, since it would have nullified any reason for dispute. In 553 the Emperor Justinian, and wife Theodora, called a Second Council of Constantinople to try to draw together Chalcedonian, Two Natures, and Monophysites, One Nature, prelates. The council anathematized posthumously Origen and Theodore for their Universalist teaching, but failed to bring union. What if they were right and the anathematizers wrong? Robert Farrar Capon suggests that Christ, Saint Paul and the first Christians were all Universalist, and the church took a wrong course when Christendom condemned Universalism.

Neither the Council of Chalcedon, nor any council that followed, brought

peace. One Nature and Two Nature theology became orthodox, and then unorthodox, depending on the whims of the emperor, and/or his wife. Battles raged until the 7th century. Severus, bishop of Antioch, was an arch One Nature man, who encouraged his monks to murder those he still considered Nestorian. He was deposed in 518, and went to Egypt where he died in Sakha, a town in the Delta. He is revered today as a Coptic saint. When we visited the church in Sakha in 2004 we were permitted by the priest to hold his supposed relics to obtain *Baraka*, or blessing.

Who won this war? Certainly, it would appear that European Christianity, which included both the Orthodox Churches and the Roman Catholic Church, with the Protestant churches, did. Leo received much praise for his tome, which added to the prestige of the Roman papacy. The non-European churches appeared to have lost. However, the true winners in the Jesus Wars were the Muslims, who when they invaded Syria and Egypt, were welcomed as liberators, and the Eastern part of the empire was lost forever.

Who was right, and who was wrong? I would suggest that in the Jesus Wars, all were dead wrong. But for the grace of God, no one, least of all these contestants, could be saved. Jenkins quotes William Warburton, an English bishop, who facetiously said that orthodoxy means my *doxy*, and heterodoxy, another man's *doxy*. Perhaps in this post Christendom age, to ensure we fight our religious wars less polemically, we should follow, not Christian, but Jesus Christ's *doxy*.

## Our Responsibility | To love and help our neighbours!

**ANNETTE GRAYDON**  
TERRA COTTA, ONTARIO

In May of 2010 I attended a Community Justice Camp in Hamilton, Ontario, sponsored by the Anglican Church of Canada and hosted by the Diocese of Niagara. There were nearly 100 people involved in this venture. It was an international event and the fifth one held so far. People attended from across Canada with guests from Cuba and Burundi.

The theme of this years camp was "Live the change you want to see".

Part of our experience was a three day immersion into a number of specific areas of interest. Mine was Poverty. I spent 3 days touring shelters, helping in soup kitchens and food banks as well as meeting and interacting with street youth at a drop in and helping start a community garden; all in the Hamilton and St. Catharines area.

I have lived in southern Ontario all of my life. I have volunteered for many charities, both local and international. I have visited the townships in South Africa and I saw conditions in

both these communities that rival what I have seen overseas. I was ashamed.

The recent Ontario budget cuts to the 'special diet allowance' for people receiving OW (Ontario Works) or ODSP (Ontario Disability) are causing much hardship and additional need for people already struggling with multiple challenges. One example of this struggle is Melissa. She told her own story in a letter to the editor of the Toronto Star published Saturday, August 7, 2010.

Melissa is a quadriplegic, the result of a spinal cord injury in 2000. She has been receiving CPP (Canada Pension Plan) and, once her personal insurance was no longer available, ODSP (Ontario Disability Support Program). Her monthly income: \$930.00.

Melissa wrote that the McGuinty government's 'poverty reduction plan' (begun in the second term of office) initially gave hope to the many groups and individuals who were consulted at the onset. She describes how the Special Diet Allowance significantly improved her standard of living in 2004. With the added \$230 she was able to purchase

previously unaffordable health food and nutritional supplements.

Then, in 2005, the government adjusted the application forms for the special diet allowance and suddenly Melissa's portion dropped to \$67 monthly. "Complaints against the changes were launched through the Ontario Human Rights Commission. This year, the commission found the Liberal government's changes to the diet allowance were discriminatory." The result of an auditor general's 2009 report, however, has been to eliminate the special diet allowance completely and to replace it with a yet-to-be-released new plan.

The Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, The Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, Health Providers Against Poverty, many other groups and thousands of Ontarians have asked the government to re-examine this issue. We have just completed an extensive Social Audit here in Halton, the results of which were reported in many area newspapers in July. Many individuals came forward at that time to tell their own stories to the audit council.

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