



Sisters of Providence
of St. Vincent de Paul
www.providence.ca

PROVIDENCE PAGES

Spring 2016

A Kingston motion is paving the way towards a more equal Canada

Just before Christmas, Kingston's city council became Canada's first elected body to put its stamp of approval on the need for a guaranteed income for all.

We need a basic, livable income to address poverty, inequality and the fast-changing world of work. Computers are replacing people in most every occupation. A guaranteed income would keep everyone stable, regardless of what happens to jobs. It is expected to eventually reduce the costs of healthcare and even corrections.

The JPIC office's Tara Kainer, a member of the Kingston Action Group for a Basic Income Guarantee (KAGBIG), was part of the delegation supporting the motion at city

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Canada's minister of families, children and social development, Jean-Yves Duclos, with provincial counterparts discussing policy. A Laval University economics professor, Duclos has studied basic income -- and is responsible for a Canada Poverty Reduction Strategy. Photo courtesy of HRSDC.

In this issue:



Extending mercy to all the Earth



Every place has a story



Associate autonomy

Vision Statement

A world where the vulnerable experience compassion, justice and peace.

Mission Statement

The Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul are a congregation of vowed women religious called to be channels of God's Providence.

Rooted in the mission of Jesus, we empower the vulnerable through compassionate service, advocacy and networking. Sharing our spiritual, human and financial resources, we promote justice and peace for all creation.



Sisters of Providence
of St. Vincent de Paul

Dear readers,

Please contact us with your e-mail address if you prefer to receive an electronic version of Providence Pages and discontinue receiving it by mail.

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Making plans to transition our seeds to another home

Providence Village is a heart-felt idea that is moving forward at 1200 Princess St, the Motherhouse of the Sisters of Providence. We don't know yet exactly what it will be like, but it will certainly change the look of the wide-open spaces currently occupied by the lawn, meadow and gardens of this property. Some gardens may not survive, others may need to move or be repurposed. For that reason, a transition plan for the Heirloom Seed Sanctuary seeds has been developed by staff and approved by Leadership. It will be evaluated and "finessed" each winter, over five years, until it is completed. During that time we will learn how the gardens and grounds at Heathfield will be developed into Providence Village, and whether seed gardens and community gardens will still be possible.

We know that the Heirloom Seed Sanctuary is truly a visionary ministry that transcends time – but is very rooted in space. The food-plant varieties included in this unique seed collection have been grown out in this area for many decades: before 1997 (the year they were first grown here at Heathfield), they were grown at FoxFire Farm near Napanee by Carol and Robert Mouck. No other community or region in Ontario has a well-known, documented seed collection that is so comprehensive (from Adzuki beans to Watermelon) and so well adapted to produce food. None! This excellent regional seed collection transcends time in that it is a collection of heirloom-varieties that have already been passed down through generations,

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A comprehensive seed collection that is well-known, well-documented and well-adapted

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and should continue. The Moucks passed it down to the Sisters for safekeeping and, in turn, the Sisters must pass it down to the next generation. And just as the Moucks made plans for this transition to the Sisters' stewardship, so we carefully plan the next steps.

A seed collection is not like other collections in that it is composed of living beings: the seeds must be kept alive. One cannot simply wrap each item in bubble wrap and tuck it away in storage

until it is convenient for the next people to come along. Each variety has its' own storage requirements and longevity. The number of seeds required to grow an adequate population size for reproduction also varies, along with the instructions of how best to grow each one. All of this must be factored in. There were definitely bumps along the path of transition from the Moucks to myself as the steward chosen by the Sisters for this wonderful ministry. No doubt there will

be bumps along the path in the next transition as well. All the more reason to be mindful and move slowly and conscientiously as one of the Sisters' most publicly-known ministries. As our staff mission statement points out: "We treasure the high esteem the Kingston community has for the Sisters and their ministries and we commit ourselves to maintain this reputation with pride."

■ *Gardener Cate Henderson*



Record-breaking: Every year Seedy Saturday gets bigger but this March, it got huge. More than 600 took part in the one-day seedfest that is sponsored in part by

the Sisters of Providence — and held at the perfect time, as winter is still hanging on and the hunger for spring is at its peak.



Taking a wide view of the works of mercy

Last March Pope Francis declared an extraordinary Jubilee, a Holy Year of Mercy. No question that the world needs compassion, forgiveness, and mercy! But I found myself a bit concerned: wouldn't highlighting mercy lead to the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy — all 14 of which focus on people? Might this not reinforce a tendency to the anthropocentrism that the pope would later lament in his encyclical *Laudato Si'*? Further, the Works of Mercy have traditionally been more concerned with charity than with addressing the *causes of the need* for charity. Whether or not the pope was thinking of those 14 works of mercy, how do we interpret them in light of this newly-understood interconnection of all creation and the need for global justice?

If we believe that the name of God is Mercy, it follows that Mercy (aka God) lives and acts in all creation, with no exclusions. We cannot care for people without caring for our common home. Deepening our awareness of the loving forgiveness and mercy of God/Mercy propels us to make connections: humans with the rest of creation, mercy with justice.

The least of these

In Matthew 25, Jesus lists the ultimate tests for being accepted into the kingdom: "Then he shall say to them ... Come, you who are blessed by my Father ... for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink ... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me."

The Church eventually listed seven essential Spiritual Works of Mercy, and seven Corporal Works.

Seen originally as person-to-person relationships, we now realize that "Everything is related, and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful

pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each of his [sic] creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river and mother earth." *Laudato Si'*, par. 92

Making connections

Seen in the light of redressing causes, working for justice, and interconnecting with all of creation, these works take on even

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'Feed the hungry' using good soil, clean water

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greater relevance. Feeding the hungry and giving drink to the thirsty, for example, are impossible when soil and water are seriously polluted and/or when climate change results in droughts or floods or salination or species extinction. Justice is also a factor, for food quality and availability are often endangered by laws that benefit corporations at the expense of soil and farmers and the hungry who need healthful food.

The saying goes that if you teach someone to fish, you feed that person for a lifetime — but not if the fish stock is depleted by overfishing or climate disruption, if their access is usurped by big industry, the water is polluted, etc. And what about job availability and just wages to allow the workers and the hungry to purchase food?

Of course Christians want to welcome the stranger. Whatever we do to the least, we do to Christ. What are we doing to stop the causes — climate change, wars, persecution — that drive millions to leave their homes and flee to an uncertain future?

Integral Ecology

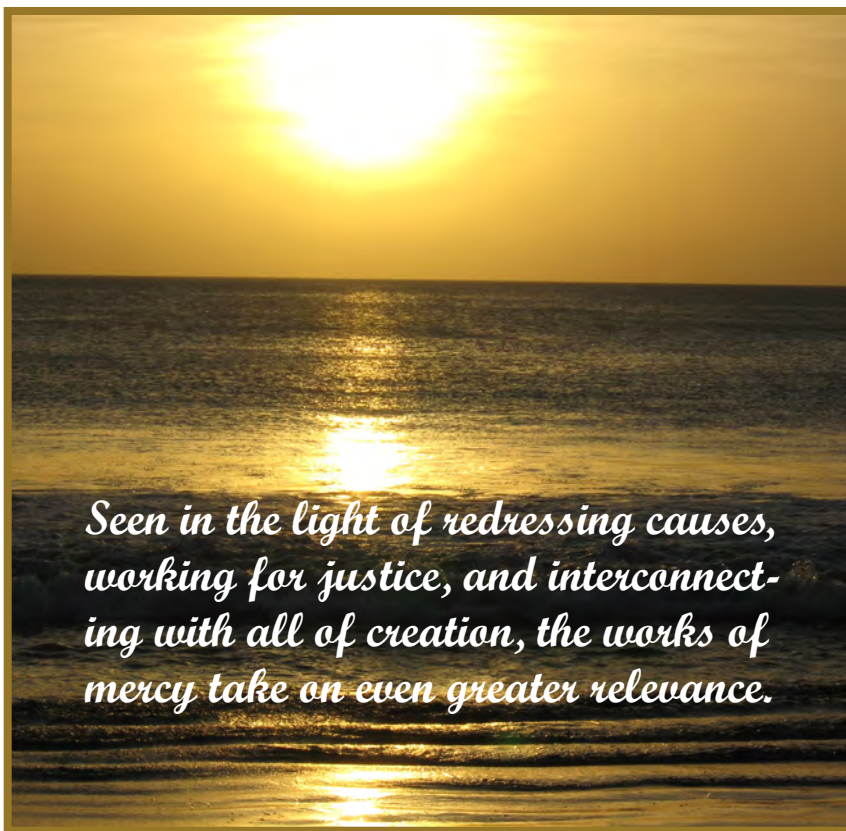
In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis devotes one of his five chapters to "Integral Ecology." Try substituting "the works of mercy" for "the analysis of environmental problems" in this quote from par. 141: "Today, [the analysis of

environmental problems] cannot be separated from the analysis of human, family, work-related and urban contexts, nor from how individuals relate to themselves, which leads in turn to how they relate to others and to the environment."

The first sentence of Pope Francis' declaration of the Year of Mercy provides the key to unlocking

connections: "The call of Jesus pushes each of us never to stop at the surface of things, especially when we are dealing with a person." Let's look below and beyond and all around the Works of Mercy to see how they interconnect with everything else — and what we can do about it.

■ *Courtesy of Sister Terri MacKenzie, SHCJ from her blog EcoSpiritualityResources.com*



Seen in the light of redressing causes, working for justice, and interconnecting with all of creation, the works of mercy take on even greater relevance.

Photo: Sister Jeannette Filthaut



The 'mission history' of Apple Hill, Pincher Creek, San Cristobal, Edmonton, Moose Jaw...

Did you know the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul served in La Loche and Ile-a-la-Crosse, Saskatchewan? In Lancaster, Ontario? In Pincher Creek, Alberta? In Entebbe, Uganda? Over the course of their history, Sisters have served in six Canadian provinces and five countries.

The Archives is currently in the process of researching and writing histories of the Sisters' service in the various locations where the Congregation had institutions and where individual Sisters served. These histories and accompanying photographs are being slowly added to the website. It is a large ongoing project. What has been completed so far couldn't have been done without the assistance of Sr. Una Byrne. Sr. Una volunteered in the Archives every afternoon for a month from mid-February to mid-March. She very thoroughly researched and wrote the histories of nine mission locations. It was a joy to have her enthusiastic presence in the archives.

The list of locations where the Sisters have served is not as interesting as what they did

there and the relationships they built with the local communities. In some locations, the Sisters opened and ran institutions and, in others, the Sisters served as teachers and engaged in parish ministry and catechetical work. In many of these locations they became integral to the Catholic community, be it through teaching music, parish work, teaching in the local Catholic school, nursing, etc. Since the 1980s, several Sisters have represented the Congregation through individual ministry in places such as Northern Manitoba, Uganda, and many others. The Congregation currently has a presence in Ontario, Alberta and Peru.

Here's a taste of some of the stories and places that you will find online:

† The Sisters ran the Kermaria Retreat Centre and House of Prayer in Pincher Creek, Alberta from 1979 to 1991. According to Sr. Mary Alberta, their ministry in Pincher Creek started before the centre officially opened: "Pincher Creek is in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains – only 55 kilometres from

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Outdoor Mass in Batawa, Ontario. (SPSVPA 014-202.3.4-S-4)



Telling the story of each mission and what happened there

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Waterton National Park. That is 'bear country' and our first ministry was two days after our arrival – a young woman whose husband had just been killed by a grizzly bear came for some quiet time in our chapel.”

† In 1946 three sisters were sent to Batawa, Ontario to teach at the newly-founded Catholic school. For the first month the Sisters lived at the convent in Trenton and Father Dostol of Batawa picked them up each morning to drive to Batawa. This proved to be a bit dangerous as one snowy morning the car ended up on the frozen canal, though luckily no one was hurt! The Sisters moved into the rectory in Batawa in October when Father Dostol moved to the basement of the church. They lived in the rectory until 1950, when a convent was built. The Sisters taught at the school and one Sister taught music, an important source of income for the mission. They

served in Batawa until 1975.

† Sister Angelica Dunn, accompanied by Sister Marie Dumont, served as interim administrator of two Northern Saskatchewan hospitals from April to September 1977 when the Catholic Health Council of Saskatchewan took over sponsorship of the hospitals. The Sisters lived at Ile-a-la-Crosse, where St. Joseph's Hospital was located, and visited St. Martin's Hospital in La Loche regularly. They enjoyed getting to know the Chipewyan (Anishinabeg), Cree and Métis in the area and considered it a joy to serve the church in the North.

† The Sisters taught at St. Mary's School in Chesterville, Ontario from 1907 to 1972. During the flu epidemic in 1918, the Sisters took on more than teaching and went to the homes of the sick to take care of both the patients and the family. In one case one of the Sisters had to return to the convent as she herself caught the flu.



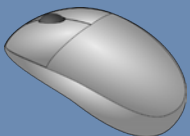
Sisters Mary Andrea and Mary Borgia with pupils at St. Mary's School, Chesterville, Ontario. (SPSVPA 014-203.1.2-1)



St. Martin's Hospital, La Loche, Saskatchewan, ca. 1977 (SPSVPA 014-220.4.1-1)

More histories will gradually be added to the Missions section over the next few months.

■ *Archivist*
Veronica Stienburg



www.providence.ca/missions



Widespread support for basic income

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hall. It passed unanimously – remarkable for politicians normally divided on any issue you'd care to name.

"The progress exceeds our hopes ... and our imaginations," said KAGBIG co-founder Toni Pickard. "We expected maybe 20 years before any political take-up."

Within weeks the basic income idea was back in the news. In his life before politics, the new federal government's minister responsible for social development was an economist who studied the Basic Income Guarantee.

The headline read: *Minister eyes guaranteed minimum income to tackle poverty.* "I'm personally pleased that people are interested in the idea," said Jean-Yves Duclos.

Kingston's new Member of Parliament, Mark Gerretsen, has expressed similar sentiments.

Politicians, however, only respond to steady public pressure. So there's still a lot of work to do before the dream of a poverty-free life becomes a right of citizenship. And that's what KAGBIG is all about.

Ms. Pickard, a retired Queen's law professor, is the group's sparkplug. She is backed by an

energetic band that includes other retired academics, a retired nurse, a retired dentist, a retired civil servant and a retired physician. These socially-engaged people show that retirement is, well, a relative notion.

Along with Tara, KAGBIG also includes a letter carrier, a writer (yours truly) and a couple of professors who have not yet stopped professing.

One of the latter is Elaine Power, a long-time JPIC ally who specializes in food security issues at the Queen's School of Kinesiology and Health. For the passionate Cape Breton native, providing all Canadians with a liveable income would have benefits far beyond people who received a basic income.

"A successful BIG would mean closing all the food banks. And would probably save about 20 per cent of our healthcare budget."



"A BIG would provide a huge impetus for local economies," says Elaine Power. "Low income people spend money locally. They don't put it into Swiss bank accounts."

But putting food bank administrators out of work will be a big job. Some social justice activists oppose BIG. They fear governments would use such a program as an excuse to slash other forms of public provision. And some politicians keen on cutting such benefits support BIG for just that reason. There are real worries that setting a basic income well below the poverty line would be a step backward. The devil, as they say, is in the details.

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A year ago,

while the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul were at Chapter, the Providence Associates gathered to talk about their future. The Sisters were looking at the decisions they had to make and the Providence Associates knew that they had to be proactive and consider their future as well. At the spring gathering, they challenged themselves to become more autonomous in the relationship with the Sisters and to be more responsible for their structure and finances.

It was an exciting and uncertain time but the Associates were determined to become more mutual in their relationships with the Sisters. They created a directional statement to guide their decisions over the next four years.

From this directional statement, the co-directors created a long-range plan that called them to become “prophetic leaders in church and society.” The Associates understood that it would entail more education and support to respond to this call, so they created a leadership training committee to envision and implement workshops and educational events to prepare the Providence Associates for their new roles. The committee is made up of co-directors Sister Irene Wilson and Providence Associate Barbara Baker, with the addition of Providence Associates Maureen MacDonald and Susan Kennedy.

Plans underway

Part of the plan is to identify the skills the Providence Associates need going forward, and to make sure they have those skills. In March, a day of workshops was held to begin this process, which Sister Marilyn Kearns led



Providence Associate co-director Barbara Baker

expertly and professionally. It began with a workshop on good business practices, led by Sister Gayle Desarmia and Providence Associate Marie McCartney, teaching how to take minutes, chair a meeting and meeting do's and don'ts.

Sister Irene Wilson and Associate Shirley Kindellan led a session on prayer and the spirituality of the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul. Their focus was how to lead communal prayer in a way that emphasizes participation and draws people in. To complement their personal prayer, Associates have learned the principle devotions on the Congregation: devotion to Mary, Mother of



Compassion and Trust in Providence. These various modes and kinds of prayer give the Associates options to use in their local group meetings. Indeed, a package of 17 set prayers was handed out to the Associate contacts to be used as needed.

Skills for meetings, elections, leading groups, leading prayer

Sister Frances O'Brien and Associate co-director Barbara Baker illustrated for the group of 32 Associates and 10 Sisters a process of communal discernment for elections to determine who is called to office. In September, the Associates will elect two members to serve on the Providence Associate Committee (PAC).

That election is another step on the road to autonomy. From the outset of the Associates 30 years ago, a Sister of Providence has sat on this advisory committee. At the annual general meeting in September, an Associate will be elected to replace the Sister whose term is up.

Up next is a spring retreat on the theme of mutual collaboration using the biblical Emmaus story as the backdrop. The fall education meeting will focus on process facilitation skills.

Most recently, the Leadership Training Committee has been expanded to include Providence Associates Carol Groten, Karen Holtz and Wen Bagues. This new group is mandated to create a vision for the future that



In March 2016, Providence Associates gathered in Kingston to begin their formal leadership training. Co-director Sister Irene Wilson is already preparing for the next meeting on mutual collaboration.

is in keeping with the charism, spirituality and mission of the Sisters. This committee has planned a day with facilitator Dolores Hall of the Providence Spirituality Centre to make a more concrete vision for their structure and work through how they might continue to embrace their directional statement.

Albertan Associates

The Vincentian Companions in Camrose, Alberta are taking a different path towards autonomy. They have less exposure to Sisters of Providence. They have opted to

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How we're moving towards AUTONOMY



Gaining the skills to lead ourselves

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keep in close relationship with their Sister contact, Jeannette Filthaut. This past fall, the co-directors visited to introduce the new directional statement and long-range plan, with the hopes that the Camrose group would be able to join in the process of implementing the Associates' shared vision.

The Albertans have been invited to send two representatives to the 2016 fall education meeting to learn more about facilitation skills and participate in the communal discernment to elect the next Associates to sit on the PAC committee.

Associates in Peru

The hope is that our Providence Associates in Peru will also look at ways of visioning their future.

Two of our Peruvian members, Fernanda Ruiz and Carmen Alomía Guía, were able to join us for the strategic assembly and help create the directional statement. It was so exciting to have representatives of our Peruvian Associates at the meetings. The Peruvians

continue to work towards creating a vision for their future, and we continue to stay connected through our Council Liaison, Sister Gayle Desarmia.

■ Associates co-director Barbara Baker

Called to become
PROPHETIC LEADERS
in church and society

IN MEMORIAM

Rita Gould, Providence Associate

Rita Gould, a Providence Associate of Camrose, Alberta, went home to God on November 20, 2015 at the age of 91.

With her husband Stan, Rita raised eight children on a farm in Rosalind, Alberta, who extended to 11 grandchildren and six great grandchildren. After her retirement from the family farm and a move to Camrose, she joined the Associates in 2000, and made her commitment in 2003. When she was no longer able to be an active member, Rita was a pray-er for the Vincentian Companions in Camrose.

Our sincere sympathy goes out to Rita's family as well as the Providence Associates. May she rest in peace!



Sister Jean Higgins

Margaret Jean Higgins was born on August 21, 1943 in Belleville, Ontario, the third oldest of 13 children of Edith Dempsey and John Higgins. She trained as a registered nursing assistant at St. Vincent de Paul Hospital in Brockville, graduating in 1960.

On September 8, 1961 she entered the novitiate of the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul in Kingston. From 1964 until 1978 she worked as a nursing assistant at St. Mary's of the Lake Hospital and Providence Manor in Kingston; and then the Father Dowd Home in Montreal. In 1978 she became certified as an occupational therapy assistant and went to Providence Hospital in Moose Jaw for a short while. Later that year, she joined the mission at Momostenango, Guatemala, where she remained until 1984. In 1985 she worked with Hispanic people in Worcester, MA. The following year she went to El Progreso, Peru, and introduced the Associate Program. In 1988 she returned to Canada and worked in crafts at Providence Manor in Kingston. In 1991 she graduated as

a registered massage therapist and provided massage therapy at Providence Spirituality Centre until 2000. In 2005, Sister Jean had a heart transplant and following her recovery she became involved with the Transplant Advocate Association in Kingston.



During these later years, Sister Jean was faithful to being present to the dying Sisters. Sister Jean, who deeply trusted in God's loving providence, touched the lives of many people, especially her family and those in the Transplant Advocate Association.

Sister Jean was called home peacefully to her loving God on November 24, 2015.

The Mass of Christian Burial, held in the Chapel of Mary, Mother of Compassion, Providence Motherhouse on November 30, 2015, was presided over by Most Rev. Brendan M. O'Brien, Archbishop of Kingston. Deacon Philip Carney delivered the homily. The Rite of Committal was at St. Mary's Cemetery, Kingston.

■ *Sister Barbara Thiffault, General Secretary*



Sister Mary Fidelis

Sister Mary Fidelis (Mary Elizabeth Cunningham) was born on May 11, 1920 to Elizabeth Black and Bernard Cunningham in Kingston Mills, Ontario, the second of two children.

She entered the novitiate of the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul in Kingston on February 2, 1957. Following her First Profession, she took the registered nursing assistant course at St. Vincent de Paul Hospital in Brockville. From 1961 to 1967 she nursed at Providence Manor and in the Motherhouse Infirmary. She then moved to St. Anthony's Home in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, where she nursed until 1985 and then was assigned as a pastoral care worker. She was a member of the Governing Board of St. Anthony's until 1990; the Medical Management Committee until 1995, as well as head of the Central Supply



Department. From 1995 until 2005 she continued working in pastoral care at the new Moose Jaw facility, Providence Place for Holistic Care. She served on the Board of Trustees of Providence Place from 1995 – 2002.

In 2005 she returned to the Motherhouse due to failing health. Gifted with a calm, nurturing, quiet and gentle nature, Sister was deeply loved and highly respected by both patients and administrative staff.

The Mass of Christian Burial, held in the Chapel of Mary, Mother of Compassion, Providence Motherhouse on December 11, 2015 was presided over by Most Rev. Brendan M. O'Brien, Archbishop of Kingston. Rev. John Brennan delivered the homily. The Rite of Committal was at St. Mary's Cemetery, Kingston.

■ *Sister Barbara Thiffault, General Secretary*

Gaining the skills to lead ourselves

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Still, the basic income is an imaginative, visionary idea that speaks to our common future. As I was writing this, a letter from a Thunder Bay man appeared in the *Globe and Mail*:

The job of business management is to manage,

reduce and eliminate business expense... Wages and salaries are business expenses.

Conclusion: Management must manage, reduce and eliminate jobs. The minute technology is cheaper than people to perform a task, technology must displace people. As this happens globally and we pivot to a non-work society, the real

conversation should be about how we will organize society in a way that will generate the maximum benefits for everyone.

Truly, an idea whose time has come.

■ *Jamie Swift, Director of the Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation Office*



Art retreat, seniors spirituality, adult church

ART RETREAT:

The Heart of Creativity: Contemplation, Art and Mystery

Mon May 2, 4PM – Sat May 7, 1PM
Register by Mon Apr 18
Br. Michael Moran, C.P.
Cost \$400

This retreat makes a connection between the creative, artistic process and the meditative process. During our time together we will explore the place of correct looking in prayer and making art; the place of surrender in art, prayer and the Christian life. The focus around meditation discussed in the talks is experienced in the painting process. Hopefully the participants will begin to see with the eyes of an artist. There will also be opportunities for meditation and discussion. This retreat is open to all participants; no art experience is necessary.

Brother Michael Moran, a native of West Springfield, MA, and a member of the Eastern Province of the Passionist community in 1974, received a Master's Degree in theology from St. John's University in New York City in 1977. Though largely self-taught, he studied art with August Mosca, a noted Long Island artist, from 1984 to 1989.

He attended the Art Students League in Manhattan from 1989 to 1990. A specialty is painting icons: www.angelstudiostore.com. Brother Michael has also served as the chaplain of the Supportive Care Program of St. Vincent's Hospital in New York City. He conducts painting classes for senior citizens in New York. A large part of Brother Michael's ministry is conducting creativity workshops, retreats which focus on meditation and the artistic process, as well as parish mission-retreats.

Those who prefer a directed retreat are also invited to register.
PSC Team

SPRING SENIORS CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY SERIES: **Radical Discipleship**

Thu May 12 & 26 9:45AM – 1PM
Register 2 weeks in advance for meal count.
Senior or not – if you'd like to come you're welcome!
Lucy Bethel, SP
Cost \$20/session (includes lunch)

"The last years of our lives are meant to mellow the soul and most everything in our biology conspires together to ensure

that this happens." ~Father Ron Rolheiser, omi, Sacred Fire

We will reflect together on two questions asked by Father Rolheiser: (i) What lies beyond generativity as we normally define this? (ii) What is the final stage of our lives meant to look like?

WORKSHOP: **What Would an Adult Inclusive Church Look Like?**

Thu Jul 7, 7PM – Sat Jul 9, 4PM
Call to pre-register with deposit ASAP
Full payment by Jun 10
Diarmuid O'Murchu
Cost \$135 (includes lunches)
Accommodation & Thu Supper add \$100

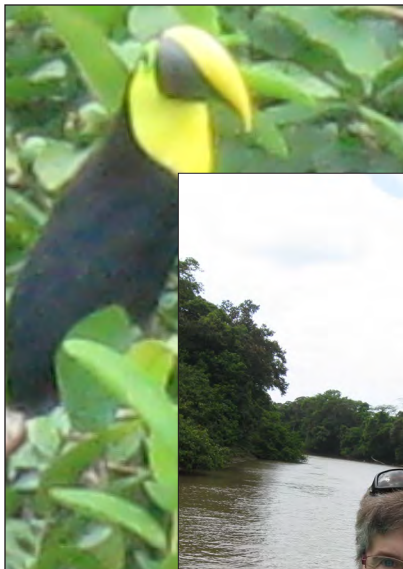
In this workshop, based on his recent book, *Inclusivity: A Gospel Mandate* (2015), Diarmuid will explore the challenges facing Christian churches today, to embrace in a more loving and empowering way, those who feel marginalized and excluded, along with the challenges for all of us in the Church, to bring our adult selves to this undertaking.

Diarmuid O'Murchu is a priest, social psychologist and workshop leader, with a specific interest in Adult Faith Development.



An environmental tour many years in the making

This year, my dream came true when my brother and his wife decided to take their family of three children, their spouses and their eight grandchildren to Costa Rica to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. My sister-in-law's sister, brother and I were also invited to be guests for this occasion. Even though I broke the fibula in my right ankle just before Christmas, my cast was off and I managed to travel to Costa Rica with the family in February. This Central American country is absolutely beautiful and is very focused on sustainability and education, so it was a real education for all of us. The resorts where the family stayed were very committed to environmental sustainability, serving local fruits, vegetables, meat and fish.



how some of our Canadian companies are trying to bring change to this country, taking some of the riches of the land for themselves. With my camera I tried to capture some of the



beauty of this country that has over 200 volcanoes. There were countless numbers of wind turbines on the hills utilizing the strong wind currents that came off the two oceans.

I never got to the wedding of my brother and his wife 50 years ago in 1966, but I have beautiful memories of their 50th wedding anniversary celebration in Costa Rica this year.

■ *Sister Jeannette Filthaut*

Typically, tourguides in Costa Rica must pass exams in order to serve as guides for environmental tours. My tour took me to Rio Frio – a full day of driving and boating through the agricultural areas, observing much of the wildlife of this country. We passed fields of pineapple, papaya, oranges and sugar cane, observing the factory where sugarcane was processed and the additional pulp saved for cattle – thus the sweeter milk.

Driving on the bus through the lush rainforest areas made me ever so much more aware of

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