

## A MESSAGE FROM ARCHBISHOP DONALD BOLEN

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Grace and peace to you as you celebrate our Lord's birth.

With Christians throughout the world, we gather with profound joy to ponder what God has done for us in the coming of Jesus.

Christians have always understood the birth of Jesus in relation to God's initial work of creation. Today pondering creation is an immersion into mystery, as science has come to an understanding that the universe came into being over 14 billion years ago, and our earth was created in the neighbourhood of 5 billion years ago. That vastness, both in terms of time and space, leaves us scratching our heads in wonder.

Equally beyond our imagining is how God, Master of the Universe, should become a part of that creation. When God created human beings, and the human condition, our faith tells us that God created us in God's own image and likeness. I find it helpful to think of this as God creating what was most personal, offering to that creation what was most generous, fashioning what was most beautiful.

The human condition has been a messy business from the outset. God's response was not rejection, but love beyond all telling. For God to then take the extraordinary decision to

become one of us, for the creative Word in whom all things were created to become part of that creation in, in order to redeem it - this is the incomprehensible mystery that we ponder today. What more could God do, what could be more loving, more extravagantly generous, more lavish in mercy, than that?

The Easter season provides the full answer to that question. For now, we are invited to come quietly, in awe and reverence, imaginatively placing ourselves before the Eternal Word, author of all that is. Not only has God taken flesh, but has come in powerlessness, in vulnerability, loving us into life, granting us hope, teaching us what it is to be human.

As St. Paul wrote, "O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!... For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen" (Rom. 11: 33, 36).

Dear brothers and sisters, let us rejoice before this great mystery. And let us seek to follow Him with all our heart and soul and mind and strength.

May God pour down abundant blessings on all of you, your loved ones, all those in need, and all you carry in your hearts!

**+ Donald Bolen, Archbishop of Regina**



# JUSTICE, AND ONLY JUSTICE, YOU SHALL PURSUE:

## Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2019

by Nicholas Jesson, with content  
from the Churches of Indonesia

Divisions between churches, disagreements between believers, failure to “love one another” as Christ has loved us. Christians throughout our history have failed to live up to Christ’s prayer “that all may be one.” Even Jesus’ own disciples had disagreements over big things and little things. In the early years of the Christian mission, a fundamental dispute arose over the very identity of Christians. Must gentile converts to Christianity be circumcised and live according to the laws of Moses? Even in this fundamental dispute over the core of the Christian mission to the world, the apostles did not stop praying together. In their prayer, they found unity, which allowed them to accept other ideas and different ways of being faithful to Christ.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is a discipline of the churches of Christ. Each year, we stop to pray for the unity that Christ wills. At the core of many Christian prayers through the ages, we find the prayer for unity.

Within the great prayer of thanksgiving, the Eucharistic prayer, we pray for our leaders, our churches, and for the needs of the world. Next, we pray that the Holy Spirit may come down upon the gifts to make them the body and blood of Christ, and to make us Christ’s body in the world. We pray that together with Christians in all times and places, we may faithfully proclaim the gospel to all nations. Our prayer transcends all divisions over doctrine, wealth, power, sex, age, culture, or educational achievement. We pray, in communion with Christ and with one another, that we may be salt and light to the world so that we might witness to Christ’s love in all places and to all peoples.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity has its roots in the Evangelical Alliance of 1743. This gathering of Evangelical pastors in England invited prayer for a gradual outpouring of the Spirit of unity upon the churches.

By 1892 the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury established an octave of prayer for unity between Ascension and Pentecost. In 1896, Pope Leo XIII instituted the annual observance in perpetuity, also from Ascension to Pentecost. Then in 1908, a small group of monks in Garrison, New York proposed that the prayer be moved to January between the feasts of the Confession of Peter and the Conversion of Paul, that is between January 18 and 25.

Every year Christians across the world gather in prayer for growth in unity. We do this in a world where corruption, greed, and injustice bring about inequality and division. Ours is a united prayer in a fractured world. As individual Christians and communities, we are called together to form a unified witness for justice and to be a means of Christ’s healing grace in a broken world.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2019 has been



prepared by Christians from Indonesia. With a population of 265 million, Indonesia has the largest Muslim population of any country. About 10% of Indonesians are Christian from various traditions.

Across the diversity of ethnicity, language, and religion, Indonesians have lived by the principle of *gotong*

*royong* which is to live in solidarity and by collaboration. This means sharing in all aspects of life, work, grief, and festivities, and regarding all Indonesians as brothers and sisters.

Today this fragile harmony is threatened in new ways. Much of the economic growth that Indonesia has experienced in recent decades has been built on an economic system that has competition at its heart. This is in stark contrast to the collaboration of *gotong royong*.

Corruption is widespread. It infects politics and business, often with devastating consequences for the environment. Corruption undermines justice and the legal system. Too often those who are supposed to promote justice and protect the weak do the opposite. As a consequence, the gap between the rich and the poor has widened; and so a country that is rich in resources has the scandal of widespread poverty. As a traditional Indonesian saying goes, “A mouse dies of hunger in the barn full of rice.”

Christian communities in such an environment are reminded of their unity as they join together in response to injustice. At the same time, confronted by these injustices, Christians are obliged to examine the ways in which they are complicit. It is through our unity in Christ that we can combat injustice and serve the needs of its victims.

Moved by these concerns, the words of Deuteronomy, “Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue” spoke powerfully to the Christians of Indonesia. This reading from Deuteronomy comes in a chapter whose central theme is the festivities to be celebrated by the Covenant people. After each festival the people are instructed, “Rejoice during your festival, you and your sons and your daughters, your male and female slaves, as well as the Levites, the strangers, the orphans, and the widows resident in your towns” (Deut. 16:14, see also 16:11). Indonesian Christians look to recover this same spirit of inclusive festivities across communities, which they previously enjoyed.

Christ’s Church is called to be a foretaste of this kingdom. However, in our disunity, we fall short. We fail to be the sign of God’s love for his people. Just as injustice has widened the divisions that have riven Indonesian society, so injustice has also fed the divisions of the Church. We repent of the injustice that causes division, but as Christians, we also believe in the power of Christ to forgive us and heal. And so, we find ourselves united under the cross of Christ, calling both for his grace to end injustice and for his mercy for the sins which have caused our division.

## ECUMENICAL ACTIVITY INCREASING

*By Frank Flegel*

"It is incumbent on us to seek to restore the unity of the church given to us by Christ. That's our principle, that's our task," says Nicholas Jesson, Regina Archdiocesan Ecumenical Officer.

Jesson began employment with the Regina Archdiocese in August 2017, and since then has been engaged in building relationships - primarily, but not exclusively - with other Christian denominations.

Much of the inspiration and energy for the current ecumenical activity comes from the covenant between the Regina Roman Catholic Archdiocese and the Anglican Diocese of Qu'Appelle. Signed January 23, 2011, by Anglican Bishop Gregory Kerr-Wilson and late Roman Catholic Archbishop Daniel Bohan, "it commits both to hold joint prayer services in each other's Cathedral with the bishops alternating as homilists. It encourages churches to work together, visit each other, and look at what we hold in common, rather than what divides us," said Jesson.

"We have a real though, imperfect communion with other Christians," he said and pointed out that according to Vatican II some of the gifts of the Spirit given to the Church have been preserved in other traditions. "We need to be in a relationship with other Christians and learn of their Christian experience, their history, and understanding."

To that end, he has conducted workshops with Catholic communities to provide an understanding of the Church's teaching on ecumenism and, together with Anglican partners, delivers joint workshops to other Christian denominations. "We are looking for opportunities to dialogue."

The annual week-long Archdiocesan Clergy Study Days this year also included an ecumenical component during one full day devoted to preaching. In partnership with the Regina Council of Churches, preachers from all denominations took part in discussing Preaching Reconciliation for Healing among Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, as another



step in ecumenical activity.

Since the signing of the covenant, the diocesan staff of both churches participated in a joint retreat last year, and discussions are underway to hold another retreat. There have also been dialogue evenings on the role of Mary in each Church and another on the Eucharist.

Saskatchewan's bishops, Anglican, Evangelical Lutheran, Ukrainian, and Roman Catholic, meet four times a year. Lately, they have discussed the possibility of including the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and Ukrainian Eparchy in the 2011 covenant. The original Covenant signatories had expressed the hope that the covenant would be expanded.

At present, Anglicans and Evangelical Lutherans are in full communion with each other in Canada, and Ukrainian

Rite Catholics are in full communion with Rome. "So, a natural next step would be to include Evangelical Lutherans and the Ukrainian eparchy in the present covenant," said Archbishop Donald Bolen. The bishops have already discussed a draft covenant prepared by Jesson. "The bishops are in agreement to explore it, but there is nothing definitive," said Bolen. "Each now has to do some consulting of their own jurisdictions to see if they want to be a part of this."

The four bishops are scheduled to discuss Jesson's draft again when they meet in Saskatoon this November. Both the Ukrainian Eparchy of Saskatoon and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod include congregations across Saskatchewan, so the new covenant, if agreed to, would cover the entire province.



## IN THE MIDST OF DESTRUCTION, MARY CONTINUES TO INTERCEDE

*By Deacon Eric Gurash*

Sacred Heart of Mary Parish in Marieval, SK was lost due to fire during the early hours of Wednesday, November 14, 2018. All that remained were a few charred portions of the church's foundation and a lone statue of Mary, seemingly untouched by the flames and destruction surrounding it.

Even while the community struggled to come to terms with the loss of the building, which had been their spiritual home since 1936, the image of our Blessed Mother, standing it seemed in prayerful supplication over the ruins, captivated the hearts and imaginations of scores of online viewers. The initial, brief story, published through the Archdiocese of Regina's own news feed and shared via Facebook reached more than 38,000 individuals and was shared by more than 500 individuals and media outlets.

Images of Marian statues and other sacred objects surviving fires, floods, and other disasters are not uncommon. An article from 2017 on the catholiccompany.com website, "Your Stories of Holy Objects Surviving Storms, Fires, and Floods" lists dozens of reader tales of similar survivals.

The images are similarly striking; a lone statue of Mary stands among the charred remains of a military base in Spain in 2015, a newspaper clipping from 1965 shows another Marian statue standing untouched amid the destruction left by a tornado that struck Lenawee County in Michigan, US. Other stories include images of Christ untouched by bombing raids in WW2, and a statue of St. Patrick, the only surviving object in a fire that devastated a Hampton Beach neighbourhood.

Most famous of stories like these might be the survival of the Our Lady of Guadalupe tilma of Juan Diego in a 1920 attack. As the story goes, an unidentified man, under the pretext of placing flowers before the tilma on display at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, hid a bomb among the flowers and other offerings. The detonation caused severe damage to the surrounding area destroying,



among other things, the solid marble steps leading to the image, brass candle stands, and twisting and charring the heavy crucifix that stood in front of the image of the Blessed Mother. As the story remarks, the tilma itself, only a few feet from the blast, was left entirely unscathed. Even the glass case itself was unmarked, uncracked, untouched.

Sacramentals, which include everything from Holy water, blessed salt, rosaries and indeed, sacred images of Christ, Mary, and the saints, are ongoing reminders of the presence of the sacred among us. The Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us that "Sacramentals are sacred signs instituted by the Church (to)...sanctify different circumstances of life" (CCC 1677). Sacramentals both point us to the Sacraments themselves, which are sure signs and concrete encounters with the saving activity of Jesus Christ, and serve as reminders that, even in the darkest of circumstances; whether natural disasters or the reality of human woundedness, brokenness and sin, that faith, hope, and love remain.

One reason our own diocesan encounter with the phenomena of untouched sacred images in the midst of disaster may have captivated the imagination

of so many may be a result of the extremely difficult year 2018 has been for our Church. Rocked by scandals of grand jury reports, abuse cover-ups and very public divisions within the upper offices of our global Church, it has seemed to many Catholics that we are indeed being assaulted, in many cases deservedly so from many sides. In many ways, the powerful symbol of Mother Mary standing in supplication over the burned-out ruin of a beloved church echoes with the deepest needs of a wounded, confused and angry church.

Images like the one the one from the Sacred Heart of Mary Parish remind all of us that sin, division, and brokenness do not have the final say. While we may find ourselves in moments of seemingly random and incomprehensible destruction and hurt, we are never without an intercessor. We are never without hope.

Sacred Heart of Mary Parish at Marieval had its humble beginnings between 1874-1885 as a lone log cabin that served as both priest residence, church, and schoolhouse. The first Sacred Heart of Mary Church was built in 1889. This church was demolished in the early 1930s, and a new building was constructed on the same site in 1936.

## AS A NEW YEAR BEGINS, NEW DEACONS ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

*By Dr. Brett Salkeld*

Eight Months ago, on June 15, 2018, Archbishop Donald Bolen ordained nine men to the permanent diaconate upon their completion of our first Archdiocesan diaconate formation program. Since their ordination, our new deacons have been very busy. As per diocesan policy, each of our new deacons has been assigned to a parish (or group of parishes in the case of some rural deacons) as well as to a specific, ministry of service.

In their parishes, the new deacons have been assisting at Mass and preaching (most deacons usually preach one Sunday each month and, in addition, some preach at weekday Masses) as well as baptizing babies, marrying couples and conducting vigil and funeral liturgies. Apart from their liturgical role, deacons may also serve the parish in other ways, such as assisting with things like catechesis, sacramental prep, RCIA, or Alpha programs.

Several deacons have been assigned in health care contexts as part or all of their service ministry. Deacon Dave Hudy serves primarily at St. Peter's Hospital in Melville, but also visits other facilities nearby, especially when members of the St. Henry's parish community find themselves away from Melville. Deacon Lamont Dyck, who works as the pastoral assistant at St. Joseph's in Moose Jaw, serves weekly at Providence Place. Deacon David Hagel visits many health facilities in Cabri, Swift Current, and Gull Lake. Deacon Norbert Gaudet ministers at the special care home in Raymore, and Deacon Kevin Harty serves at the Wascana Rehab center in Regina.

Also related to health care, Deacon Harper Boucher, in addition to serving on the board of Catholic Family Services, is working with a group to bring the "Dying Healed" ministry to our Archdiocese. Dying Healed is a ministry to those facing the end of life. It is part of the Church's strategy to provide real care and real options to people in an age of assisted suicide.

Deacon Eric Gurash, who serves



the Archdiocese as director of Communications and Evangelization (which includes directing the Archdiocesan Lay Formation Program), has recently started a peer support group for families facing mental health issues that meets at Holy Rosary Cathedral. He is also working towards building a more comprehensive strategy for ministering to those struggling with mental health issues and their caregivers in our Archdiocese.

Deacon Dennis Ziegler is part of the team directing a two-year formation program for spiritual directors and has begun to work with our Archdiocesan camps on a plan for renewing camp infrastructure. Deacon Dennis has a background as a project manager at SaskTel, and both he and his wife Karen have family backgrounds in construction. This experience fits wonderfully with some of the current needs of our camps.

First Nations ministry is another place where our new deacons are serving. Deacon Norbert, a retired school teacher, is building relationships with communities on several reserves near Raymore where many of his former students live. Moreover, Deacon Arron Polk is serving the parish of Our Lady of Sorrows and its associated missions, including several reserves in the Qu'Appelle valley. He is also serving in Friends on the Outside (FOTO) and working with the Aboriginal, Non-Aboriginal Relations Committee (ANARC).

This list is not exhaustive. Our new deacons are busy in many other ways, helping with youth ministry, preaching retreats, visiting those who need a listening ear or serving

on Archdiocesan commissions and committees. Deacon Lamont Dyck, for instance, is chairing a committee to review our diaconate formation program.

As director of our Archdiocesan diaconate formation program, seeing how the gifts and experiences that these men have brought into their ministry have been put to use in the service of God and God's people has been very gratifying for me, and I am eager to work with others whom God is calling to this ministry.

The Archdiocese is currently accepting applications for our next cohort of deacon candidates. We will be working with the Diocese of Saskatoon for this cohort, who have recently accepted three men from their diocese into formation.

If you are interested in learning more about diaconal ministry and formation, please do not hesitate to contact me at 306-352-1651, ext. 214. After an initial conversation, I can e-mail you an application. Once that has been submitted, the applicant becomes part of our Archdiocesan discernment process. This process takes several months and includes a series of interviews as well as prayerful reflection and consultation. We plan to announce the results of that process by May of 2019 and formation will formally begin in the fall.

Ours is a four-year formation program which involves ten weekends of class time each year for a total of 40 weekends, a very biblical number!





## ARCHDIOCESE CELEBRATES ORDINATION OF REV. RICARDO ESCALANTE

There was much joy and excitement on November 30, 2018, as the Archdiocese of Regina celebrated the ordination to the Priesthood of Rev. Ricardo Escalante.

Fr. Escalante's road to the Priesthood was by no means a direct route. Admitting an attraction to the inherent goodness and desire for goodness within the human person, especially in those family members and friends around him that seemed to "radiate goodness," Escalante relates that those in his immediate family "were not particularly religious. My parents went to Mass on a Sunday, but not every Sunday."

Escalante was born and raised in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in a small suburb roughly ten minutes from the nation's capital, Port of Spain. He credits his parents with encouraging an interest in the world outside of Trinidad and Tobago and recalls fondly many international trips including a rather lengthy bus tour taking their young family from New York, through the United States, to Vancouver, across to Toronto, and back again to New York.

Growing up in Trinidad's multicultural, cosmopolitan atmosphere, Escalante held a deep appreciation for his mother's sense of social justice, which illuminated much of her approach to life. Her passion for justice provided him with insight into the universal call to keep at the forefront the needs of the poor. This, among all other blessings, remains one of his most treasured gifts.

After studying French, Spanish and English literature in high school, Escalante went on to study and later practice Law something that, admittedly did not speak to his heart. Says Escalante, "It was clear I did not have much interest," adding however that "I have no regrets that I did it since it provided me the means of fulfilling my obligations toward my family after the sudden death my mother when I was 17." At the same time, his legal study and work provided valuable tools that would lead him to this new phase of his life. "In hindsight, my love of literature, and my training in law lay the foundation for my love of Philosophy," which would eventually bear fruit in a calling to the Priesthood.

It was during his time practicing law that his relationship with Christ began to deepen. At this point, he had left Trinidad and Tobago. Seeking some form of familial and community connection outside of his homeland moved him to become more involved in Church. This gradually grew to include



regular week-long retreats in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius as well as visits with a Spiritual Director.

It was in the silence of his local church, sitting alone and in prayer that Escalante first heard the invitation to the Priesthood. This calling would later be confirmed during the course of a 30-day Ignatian retreat, in Guelph, Canada. It was in answer to this call that he found himself studying philosophy in Rome, where he met the late Archbishop Daniel Bohan.

A mix-up in Bishop Bohan's reservations forced him to stay in residence at the College where Escalante was residing. It was there that the two first got to know each other. They remained in contact over the years, with Bishop Bohan, eventually extending an invitation to study as a Seminarian for the Archdiocese of Regina. Given that he had already started his theological studies and was now residing at the Seminary of the Czech Republic in Rome, it was decided that he would remain in Rome to complete his Seminary formation in the Czech College, the Pontificio Collegio Nepomuceno. And the rest, as they say, is history.

For Escalante, the real justification of this life of faith can be found most particularly in the models provided by the lives of the saints. Referring to the wisdom of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI he points to the examples of the "splendor of holiness" of the men and women of our faith "who despite the Crosses they had to bear...despite the suffering they may have received at the hands of the very Church which they loved, refused to let themselves be separated from the guiding hand of Jesus."

Apart from English, Fr. Ricardo is also fluent in Italian and French, and currently serves as priest moderator at Paroisse Saint Jean-Baptiste in Regina.



# REFLECTION ON THE HONDURAN CARAVAN



*By: Tashia Toupin*

Reading about the Honduran caravan making their way in hope for a new beginning in a new country seems in many ways to be absurd, devastating, and disheartening. Being a Canadian having always lived in a safe, free, and democratic country, it is almost inconceivable that over 1500 people of all ages and walks of life would set out on this perilous journey, based on little less than a hope and a prayer. These people are traveling on makeshift rafts across parts of the open ocean. They are journeying with young children and babies. They are walking miles and miles every day, in the rain, the heat, and carrying everything they need on their backs. Sleeping on the streets and in church buildings, these people are fleeing their homes, their livelihoods, their families, neighbours, and everything that is familiar to them.

Why?

It is heartbreaking to think that the places they come from are that terrible. Migrants are risking everything they have, even their lives to leave their homes. They know that the USA is hostile to their arrival and yet they march on. Take a moment to think about what it would take for you to make the same decision to pack up everything, and take with you only what you can carry on your back. To leave everything and everyone you have ever known in hope for something better. How can parts of the world today exist where many feel this is their best or only option? The UN reports that 258 million people are living in a country other than their birth in 2017 (UN International Migration report).

What can we do for these people? How can one individual in Saskatchewan do anything worthwhile to help others facing this kind of persecution? We offer up our prayers for these and all the millions of others in the world who find themselves in similar situations. We as Catholics, believe in the power of prayer but we might ask ourselves what other actions can we take in conjunction with our prayer? Can we change the world around us in a meaningful way so that people do not

have to flee their homes?

Though not a comprehensive list, here are some suggestions that I hope you find helpful and thought-provoking.

- 1) Be thankful for the many blessings that you have in your life, like the fact that you live in Canada. Even with all its flaws and shortcomings, it is a blessing to live in a country where we have the many rights and freedoms that we do.
- 2) Follow Jesus' example. When we read the gospels, we read about Jesus ministering to those who were outside of acceptable society, like those from another culture, race, including those who practiced different religious beliefs. How can we take time each day to make a point of extending a real human encounter to those who are on the peripheries? Who are those that are most needing of our time? Who is the Spirit calling us into relationship with? Especially those who are from another culture, race, or religious tradition.
- 3) People within our own circles. Jesus also ministered to, albeit in a different way, those within the Jewish culture, and those in positions of power like the Pharisees and Sadducees. He challenged them to live out the law and to understand the many teachings with their hearts, minds, and beings, rather than in a narrow legalistic way. In which ways are we, or our peer group not living the gospel message out in our lives? Where do we need to be challenged and grow in mercy, compassion, and love? Who can we respectfully invite into a fuller understanding of the message of God's love for creation?
- 4) Live a life of authentic human encounter. Pope Francis has launched a campaign through Caritas Internationalis that is encouraging all people to truly encounter those around us so that we may come to know them as our brothers and sisters. Think about the care, time, and love that you give to your siblings. Is there a way that you can interact with others around you in a similar way? Can you say honestly that your faith has helped you to see "the other" in your life as a sister or brother?

## SHARE THE JOURNEY... ARCHDIOCESE OF REGINA STAFF PRAY AND WALK IN SOLIDARITY WITH FORCED MIGRANTS

By Armella Sonntag

For one week in November, 2018 Archdiocese of Regina staff focused on the plight of the world's almost 68.5 million forced migrant people during their regular morning prayer. Staff gathered each day to pray and to learn about the Share the Journey campaign which was launched by Pope Francis in autumn 2017. This campaign is coordinated globally by Caritas Internationalis and is organized in Canada by Development and Peace. To complete their week of prayer, diocesan staff carried out a symbolic walk, in solidarity with forced migrants and in communion with our universal Church.



## ARCHBISHOP'S APPEAL ARCHDIOCESE OF REGINA



*Thank YOU!*  
**Together, we have raised  
\$1,447,000 so far!**  
(Official audited amount will be announced soon)

We are deeply grateful to all who responded to our call and supported the Archbishop's Appeal in 2018. Our total raised this year is higher than the amounts raised each year since 2001! We are overwhelmed by your generosity!

The funds raised in 2018 will be disbursed in 2019. In 2018 a portion of your Appeal donations helped to support employment for those with intellectual challenges. In addition, you have helped to provide marriage preparation for couples contemplating marriage, spiritual care to those in hospitals, and support for an additional 5 Lay Formation Program candidates who will join the 564 alumni already working and volunteering in a variety of capacities throughout the Archdiocese of Regina.

The Archbishop's Appeal continues to support the education of seminarians, and we are all looking forward to the Ordination to the Sacred Order of the Priesthood for three of more seminarians in 2019!



## SASKATCHEWAN'S FARMLAND LEGACIES... SUSTAINABILITY FOR THE EARTH AND THOSE IN NEED



*By Matthew Dipple*

A little south of Little Quill Lake near Wynyard, Saskatchewan lies what the operators of Farmland Legacies affectionately refer to as “the Home Quarter.” Comprised of 7 full quarters of land, the project seeks to model sustainable land use and agriculture as a means of not only providing good stewardship of the earth but for feeding the hungry as well. Community Outreach manager, Matthew Dipple is excited to share their story and invite your participation:

Farmland Legacies is a charity that was started in the mid-1990s with seed money from the three Roman Catholic dioceses in the province, and today are blessed with an ecumenical board of directors. Our mission is to help build a food system which meets the needs of farmers, of the land, and the hungry in our community.

### **Meeting the needs of the hungry:**

Since 2014, we have donated a portion of the grass-fed beef we produce on the farm each year to food banks and soup kitchens in the province, through the generosity of our supporters. We can grow the impact of donation dollars by producing top-quality beef for below market cost. Every \$1 donated covers the cost of 1 ¼-lb serving of ground beef. Last year we donated 30,000 servings, and our target for this year is 40,000 servings!

This year, in addition to food banks, we are excited to partner with the Marian Centre soup kitchen in Regina, which serves a daily meal to hungry men in the city. We're quite proud to

share with donors, and the general public just how many locations throughout Saskatchewan have benefitted from quality, sustainable, grass-fed Saskatchewan beef through our interactive locations map.

### **Meeting the needs of the land:**

By raising our cattle herd on grass, and practicing holistic management, we can work with rather than against nature to produce good quality local food. We incorporate leafcutter bees as pollinators to improve our pastures and produce solar power to run a number of our electric fences and water bowls. We also work on projects to educate about sustainable agriculture including speaking to classrooms most recently.

### **Meeting the needs of farmers:**

We manage a land trust which acquires arable land through donation or bequest and leases that land to farmers who share our commitment to sustainable agricultural practices and who act as stewards of the land. Farmland Legacies works with leaseholders to ensure that the land is managed responsibly, with a focus on providing long-term, ecologically sound stewardship.

We invite you to join with us in looking for new ways to care for our planet while creating a society that is life-giving for all. Visit our website at [www.farmlandlegacies.org](http://www.farmlandlegacies.org) to learn more about our programs and vision and follow us

@farmlandlegacies on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to keep track of our latest developments. Thank you for your support!

## SOURCE “PACKS THE PEWS”



On a Sunday night, once a month you can find dozens of teens, and young adults gathered together in a Regina church to share a meal, listen to a presentation and then spend some time in prayer. Over the past few years, these gatherings have been referred to as “Source.” They take place monthly at one of four host parishes in the city of Regina; Christ the King, Holy Family, Resurrection, and St. Cecilia Parishes.

These Source gatherings began six years ago in Regina by former youth minister Reed Miller, who is now studying as a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Regina. Since then it has continued to be supported by a core group of young people, the diocesan youth office and youth ministers and youth ministry volunteers at each of the four parishes.

January’s Source involved an annual themed event called “Pack the Pews.” This was an opportunity for young people to be intentional about not only gathering together but also about inviting friends to join them.

The adventure began as young people from Regina and surrounding areas, including Dysart and Weyburn, gathered

on Sunday afternoon at Laser Quest. After two hard-fought battles of laser tag, participants headed to Christ the King Parish in anticipation of a great meal and hospitality.

The response of our young people in the Archdiocese was overwhelming. The host parish of Christ the King had an opportunity to truly put its reputation for Christian hospitality to the test as participants continued to flock to the event. More and more tables were joyfully set up, extra food was quickly cooked, and extra prayer ministry stations organized!

Guest speaker, Pierre O’Reilly, challenged young people to live a faith that is dangerous, a faith that would have a strong and decided impact on us and the world. Three priests were kept busy with reconciliation, and 120 young people were led in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament by a gifted and dedicated worship band.

Many of these young people list Source as one of the highlights of their month and young people are welcome to join at any time! If you would like to offer a similar experience for young people in your town or deanery, contact the youth office at the Archdiocese of Regina, 306-352-1651 ext 223.