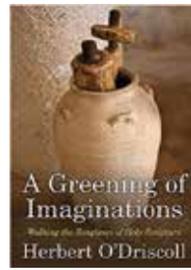


BLESSED ADVENT & MERRY CHRISTMAS



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St. Nicholas
unwrapped



Herbert
O'Driscoll
on Christ's
guardian

4

7 Leading Women 2019:
Breaking through the
stained glass ceiling



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'You weep before you get to Bethlehem'

Canadian Anglicans visit the city of
Christ's birth in a tension-fraught time

By Tali Folkins
STAFF WRITER

For the past quarter-century, Canon Richard LeSueur, who lectured at St. George's College in Jerusalem in the early 1990s, has been returning to the Holy Land for one month almost every year to teach or lead pilgrimages.

There's something he often says to groups of westerners when he first guides them into Bethlehem for Christmas: "I can't show you the Bethlehem you have imagined, because it doesn't exist."

See BETHLEHEM, p. 8

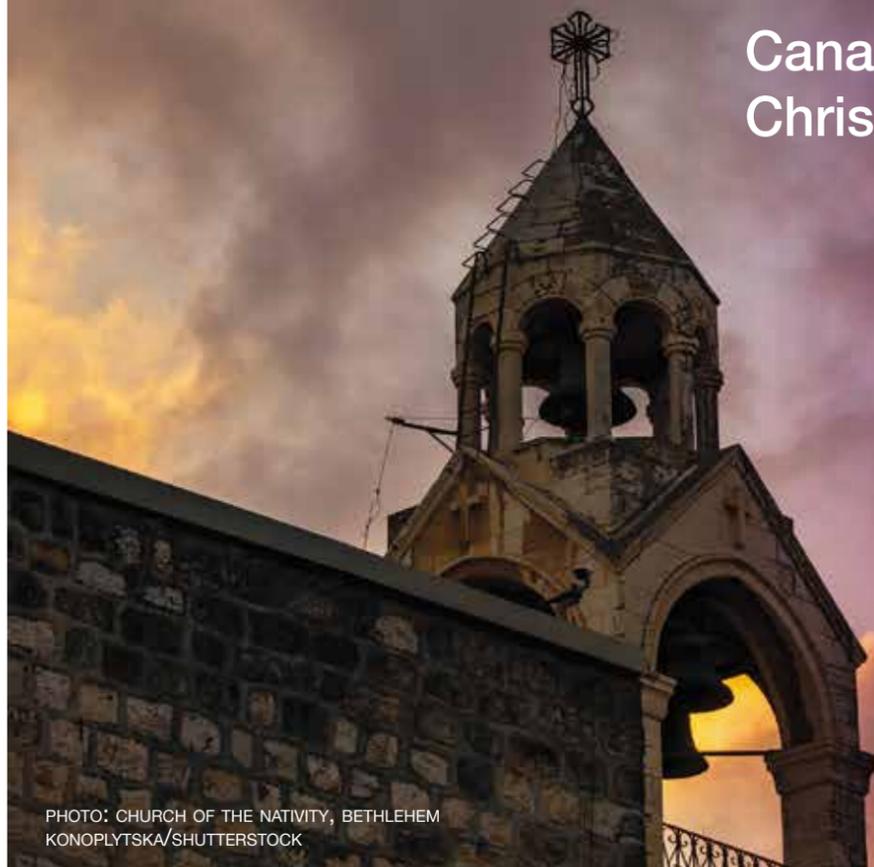


PHOTO: CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY, BETHLEHEM
KONOPLYTSKA/SHUTTERSTOCK

Amidst rising global conflict, Anglicans work for peace on earth

Nuclear disarmament
a key issue for Project
Ploughshares

Matt Gardner
STAFF WRITER

The Cold War was at one of its many heights in 1982 when Phyllis Creighton's essay "The Ethics of Death" appeared in *Voice from the Mountain*, a series of reflections from Anglicans on the Ten Commandments.

In her essay, Creighton described nuclear policies pursued by the world's superpowers as resting on "the willingness to unleash hideous, incalculable poisoning of the earth and mutation of the human species—apocalyptic terror." She warned that the world stood "more in danger of war, and annihilation, than at any time since 1945" and that the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists had recently moved the hands of its Doomsday Clock from 12 minutes to midnight to four.

Much has changed since Creighton's essay was published. The Cold War officially

ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Creighton went on to serve as the Anglican Church of Canada's representative to Project Ploughshares, the peace research institute of the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC), from 1987-88 and from 1990-98. And since 2018, the Doomsday Clock now stands at two minutes to midnight.

The forward march of the clock suggests humanity is closer than ever to global destruction caused by its own technologies. In response, many Christians have sought to challenge the weapons and dealers of death. Through participation in Project Ploughshares and activism in their churches and communities, Canadian Anglicans are living out the call of the Marks of Mission "to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation."

At the October meeting of the United Nations General Assembly, representatives of Project Ploughshares were present for the annual gathering of the First Committee, Disarmament and International Security. As a founding member of the CCC, the

See PEACE, p. 6



PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

Peter Goodwin (left) led a PWRDF team at the Vancouver Ride for Refuge event—one of several such rides in Canada through which participants raised funds.

PWRDF Ride for Refuge teams raise more
than \$18,000 for DRC hospital program

Joelle Kidd
STAFF WRITER

For the sixth consecutive year, riders under the banner of the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) hopped on their bikes and rode up to 50 km to support victims of sexual and gender-based violence.

The latest Ride for Refuge took place Oct. 5. PWRDF, which has participated since 2014, raised \$18,498 for Maison Dorcas, part of the Panzi Hospital in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Ride for Refuge is a non-competitive cycling and walking event that takes place

See RIDE, p. 2

Ride teams support victims of gender-based violence

Continued from p. 1

annually in cities across Canada. There are 10 km, 25 km or 50 km routes for cyclists and 5 km walking routes for those who want to participate on foot. Funds raised go towards charities chosen by participating teams in Canada and around the world.

This year, 37 participants rode for PWRDF in six teams in multiple cities—Vancouver, Toronto, Ottawa and Brampton. There were also some “RIDE Anywhere” participants (individuals without teams, in cities with no official Ride for Refuge event).

The Panzi Hospital, according to Jeanine Cudmore, PWRDF development program coordinator, was founded in 1999 by Dr. Denis Mukwege “as a response to the devastating war that surrounded his community” in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The hospital provides medical care for women and girls who are survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, in an area that still experiences armed conflict. Mukwege won the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in 2018.

Maison Dorcas was started in 2008, following realizations that up to 40%



PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

The Toronto team stands with their bikes. A total of 37 participants on six teams rode for PWRDF this year.

60% of women treated at Panzi Hospital are unable to return home afterwards—whether because of the extent of their injuries, continuing danger or stigma attached to victims of sexual violence. The safe home provides housing, meals and access to therapeutic care to victims of sexual

violence and their dependent children. The program also offers training in literacy, business, job skills and micro-lending to help the women launch micro-enterprises.

Peter Goodwin, PWRDF representative for the diocese of New Westminster, has organized PWRDF’s Vancouver ride team

since 2014. “There was a call out to the diocesan reps to try and get teams going in their area. When I saw...they’ve got teams going in Hamilton and Toronto, I said, ‘We’ve gotta get one going out here!’”

Goodwin says he is inspired by the chance to raise money for a good cause, as well as the camaraderie the ride creates. “It’s amazing, you see the same people, once a year... You ride with your fellow Anglicans for the cause, and it’s just a great experience all around.”

The event also allows PWRDF to raise money for partner organizations without taking on any of the logistic and administrative costs, which are managed through Ride for Refuge.

Around eight or nine people joined the PWRDF Vancouver team this year and raised more than \$6,000, Goodwin says.

Ride for Refuge has raised more than \$12 million since its founding in 2004, according to the organization’s corporate social responsibility and development associate, Liam Good. This year, rides were held in 22 cities across Canada, in addition to sites chosen by independent “RIDE Anywhere” teams, with more than 6,500 participants. ■

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GOODWILL
TO ALL ▶

St. Nicholas

A legendary figure with contemporary relevance



▲ The Dutch cultural representation of St. Nicholas, Sinterklaas, was a mythical figure said to fill children's shoes with treats.

PHOTO: GORDINE N/ SHUTTERSTOCK

Matt Gardner
STAFF WRITER

THE NAME OF St. Nicholas is commonly associated with the Christmas season, but popular imagination is likely to picture him less as a saint wearing bishop's robes and more as a plump, jolly man in a bright red suit.

Santa Claus is commonly known as "old Saint Nick," and the modern idea of him was influenced in part by the legendary figure of St. Nicholas. But in Christian denominations around the world, Nicholas of Myra remains one of the most widely venerated saints, known as the patron saint of sailors, merchants, students and children, among other groups.

Within the Anglican Church of Canada, Nicholas is the patron saint of the Anglican Military Ordinariate. At least seven Anglican churches across Canada—in Ontario, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador—have named themselves after him. Each year, Anglicans celebrate his feast day on Dec. 6, the date on which Nicholas is said to have died in Myra in the year 342.

Separating historical fact from fiction, however, can be difficult when it comes to the lives of the saints. Nicholas is noteworthy among the saints for the sheer number of legendary tales that came to be associated with him. Traditionally, he is said to have been born in the year 270 in Patara, a Greek commercial city in Asia Minor that was then part of the Roman Empire. But even his very existence remains an open question among some scholars.

"If St. Nicholas of Myra existed at all, we can know nothing of his life with historical certainty," says Thomas Power, adjunct professor of church history at Wycliffe College. "We do know that he was Bishop of Myra in Lycia, ... an ancient city located on the southern coast of Turkey on the Mediterranean."

Kevin Flynn, director of Anglican studies at St. Paul University, offers a similar assessment of the historical record, noting only that "people are pretty confident that there was somebody named Nicholas who was a bishop in that part of the world."

"There's not a huge amount that can be said [with] absolute certainty about the details of his life," Flynn adds. "There's abundant legendary material, including, for example, that he was at the Council of Nicaea and punched Arius the heretic. But there's not even any record of his having been there."

Many legends became associated with Nicholas that later led to his status as a patron saint.

The port city of Myra in which Nicholas served as bishop was a common stop for ships en route between Rome, Egypt and Byzantium. According to legend, Nicholas is said to have saved Myra from starvation by seizing grain from a ship bound for Byzantium from Egypt. No one noticed the stolen cargo; this was viewed as a miracle. As a result, Nicholas became the patron saint of sailors, and churches dedicated to him are often built so they can be viewed off the coast as landmarks.

In another story, a poor father in Myra had three young daughters who were being courted for marriage but lacked dowries.



▲ Paintings and icons of St. Nicholas of Myra traditionally depict him wearing bishop's robes—a far cry from the image of Santa Claus in a bright red suit popularized by *The Night Before Christmas* and advertisements for Coca-Cola.

PHOTO: PUBLIC DOMAIN

Nicholas is said to have supplied their dowries by anonymously leaving bags of gold in their home.

"In this way he rescued them from what would otherwise might have been a life of impoverishment and degradation," Power says. "When Nicholas's identity was revealed, his fame as a gift-giver spread."

"Here was all the raw material for what was to become in time the Santa Claus tale: A secret nighttime visitor who silently entered a home to bestow wonderful gifts on children. The result was that he became the patron saint of children, his gifts to whom became the basis of his later association (as Santa Claus) with Christmas."

Over the years, Power says, a cult grew up around Nicholas, and his church in Myra became a major centre of pilgrimage. In 1087, sailors from the southern port city of Bari in Italy raided the church and stole Nicholas's remains, claiming that the Muslim Turks who then occupied Myra would desecrate his tomb. The theft of his bones transferred many of the traditions surrounding Nicholas from the East to the West, where they subsequently spread.

Legends about Nicholas gradually became entrenched in the unique cultural traditions of different countries. In the Netherlands, he took the form of Sinterklaas, a mythical figure said to have sailed from Spain with a Moorish helper named Black Peter ("*Zwarte Piet*"). Sinterklaas supposedly filled Dutch children's shoes with treats and knew whether their behaviour was good or bad.

In North America, the idea of Sinterklaas arrived with Dutch immigrants, and his name became anglicized as Santa Claus. The publication in 1823 of Clement Clarke Moore's poem *A Visit from St. Nicholas*, commonly known as *The Night Before Christmas*, helped establish the modern image of Santa Claus, which was

further popularized in the 1930s through advertisements for Coca-Cola.

While the feast day for Nicholas falls near the start of Advent, Flynn calls the date largely a coincidence. He suggests that perceptions of Nicholas were more likely influenced by Advent rather than the other way around, due to the prominence of contemporary Christmas culture.

"These days, you wouldn't know that [Nicholas] was a bishop," Flynn says. "There are some places, like in the Netherlands still, where on Dec. 6 there is a Santa Claus, a St. Nicholas, who goes around, he's still dressed in bishop's robes and so forth. That's disappeared from the contemporary Santa Claus phenomenon, so in a way, it's too bad that that's been obscured by more sentimental and frankly commercial interests."

Yet if, as Power argues, "the original cult of St. Nicholas has been overshadowed by that of Santa Claus," Nicholas still maintains a prominent place in the devotional imagination, particularly in the Christian East.

As the patron saint of countries like Greece and Russia, Nicholas is widely depicted in icons dressed as an Orthodox bishop. In many Eastern Orthodox traditions, when a child is born, parents will place an icon of St. Nicholas at the foot of the child's cradle, underscoring his image as a protector of children.

Though Nicholas is a less central figure among Canadian Anglicans, the Anglican Military Ordinariate reiterated his continuing relevance in June 2010 when the ordinariate named Nicholas its patron saint. In an article from the time, Padre Brad Smith called Nicholas "an inspiration to Christians everywhere," describing his veneration by both Western and Eastern Christians as a sign of the universality of the gospel.

"For chaplains, who are often called to provide advice to commanders and on-the-ground support to deployed troops, St. Nicholas represents the chaplain's call to serve regardless of religious background and encourages us to work with chaplains of other faith traditions," Smith wrote. "His birthplace (modern-day Turkey) also provides us with a catalyst to cross the boundary between Christians and Muslims."

Among tales of the saint, the story of Nicholas saving girls from being taken into sexual slavery also has relevance for Anglicans today as the worldwide Anglican Communion calls for the eradication of human trafficking and modern slavery.

Regardless of the historical facts around Nicholas, Flynn says, the legend that has grown up around him has become significant in its own right as a reminder of Christian concern for the young and those in need.

"I know *Romeo and Juliet* is a fiction, but it tells me a lot of true things about how people relate to one another," Flynn says as an analogy.

"We don't remember Nicholas just because the church is incurably antiquarian—but because the saints are not just our predecessors, but our contemporaries in Christ. What he represents about faithful Christian leadership is just as significant to us now as it's ever been." ■



Canon Herbert O'Driscoll,
reflecting on Matthew 1:18-25,
imagines Joseph's response to the
original Advent.

IHAVE ALWAYS FELT that when Jesus suggested to his disciples that they relate to God as a loving father, he was doing so because of his own loving relationship with the man he would have regarded as father, especially in his early years of childhood.

Recently I noticed in my *Church Desk Diary* that the lectionary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada has named in a new way the figure that Jesus would have looked to as parent. He is called Joseph: Guardian of Jesus, and the day on which we give thanks for his life is March 19.

I feel that the best way to meet him is to try to grasp what it might have meant for him to wrestle with an experience that must have been life-shattering. I imagine him trying to come to terms with what the woman he loved has just told him. I think it likely that the hour is late at night, perhaps even not long before dawn, a time when we often wrestle with troubled thought, and when we sometimes dream...

* * *

In desperation he tried to force himself to think clearly. There were only two things of which he could be certain. The woman to whom he was publicly betrothed was, by her own word, pregnant. At the same time he was only too aware that he himself was not the father of the unborn child.

Certain courses of action were open to him. One was to divorce as quickly and as quietly as possible. He had absolutely no wish to bring shame on anyone, least of all the girl for whom he had deep affection as well as deep respect for her family. Again and again he searched for some other course of action that might help. Exhausted and miserable, he slipped into troubled and restless sleep.

Years later, whenever he thought about that night—and he would remember it for the rest of his life, particularly when he would look at the growing boy who worked with him at the bench—he could never be sure whether the encounter had been dreamt or experienced in some mysterious reality beyond normal experience. The figure that addressed him was majestic yet neither fearsome nor threatening. He had felt cared for and valued. Even such words would always be insufficient to describe the



▲ **“Whenever he thought about that night—and he would remember it for the rest of his life, particularly when he would look at the growing boy who worked with him at the bench—he could never be sure whether the encounter had been dreamt or experienced in some mysterious reality beyond normal experience.”**

IMAGE: THOOM/
SHUTTERSTOCK

encounter.

He knew immediately that the figure was an angel. All his life since childhood he had been told of such visitations. What was disturbing and astounding was that he should be the recipient of such an encounter.

The voice was rich beyond description, gentle and reassuring. The very first word was his own name, spoken in a way that utterly affirmed and respected him. “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid.” Only in that moment did he recall that Mary, speaking of her own encounter, had likewise been assured that there was no need to fear. The voice continued. “Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She shall bear a son.”

He realized that he had no idea of the meaning of what was being said to him, but for some reason it didn't seem to matter. He felt himself to be in a state of utter trust. Things would be as this voice said they would be, no less, no more. So securely was he held within the aura of the visitor that he took a moment to realize

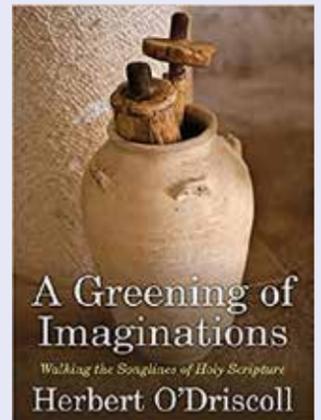
that the voice had taken on a commanding tone. “You are to name him Jesus,” he was told. The tone was quiet but brooked no question nor failure to respond.

Suddenly he knew why the messenger had come. Suddenly he realized the one thing that in his fear and confusion he had been withholding—his acceptance of the child that lay in Mary's womb. That acceptance, freely given, was the one thing needed to make this boy not only Mary's son but his too. Now he knew the reason for the immense gift of this visit. He had been given this gift to show him that there was a gift he had to give to this unborn child. His life was now for only one purpose: to bring up the boy, to treasure him and to love him for whatever years lay ahead.

Tears welled up in Joseph as he felt acceptance and gratitude flood over him. The angelic aura began to dim until it was no longer present. As it faded, the first rays of the morning sun splashed across the walls of the simple workshop in which he slept.

From now on, he thought, there would have to be a home, however simple, a home for his wife and for the boy. Who knows, he might yet make a good carpenter of him. Tears welled again, but this time they were tears of joy. ■

Herbert O'Driscoll is former cathedral dean of New Westminster and an internationally recognized preacher and hymn writer. He has written more than 30 books.



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SINGING WITH JOY ▶



Glory to God, peace on earth, goodwill to all...

By Linda Nicholls

IN MY EXPERIENCE there is something both ordinary and profound in the way that people close to the land live daily. Farmers and shepherds know the patience needed to tend the land or animals, knowing that they cannot control many of the factors they depend on—the sun or rain, the predators or growth. They have endurance and perseverance in the face of uncertainties and also have capacity to see beauty in the world around them in the most ordinary moments.

Some years ago I tried to encourage a very small congregation—which needed lay leaders to step up to lead worship—that each of them had the capacity to speak about their experience of God to others. I asked them to name a moment of encounter with God in their lives. One after another struggled to find the words except a taciturn farmer at the end of the table. In a few spare sentences he described a moment of encounter with the glory of God in nature as he stood at the fence of his fields—a moment both ordinary and profound.



▲ When describing an encounter with the glory of God, the taciturn farmer struggled the least.

PHOTO: YSBRAND COSIJN/SHUTTERSTOCK

Imagine the shepherds on the night of the birth of Jesus, tending the flocks as they have always done. Sitting or dozing under the stars, they keep one ear tuned for the wolf or thief and the other listening to the sounds of the flock at night. Was it the brilliance of the night sky? A song humming on the wind? Whatever it was that drew their attention, in that moment they took notice, and the night sky was filled with the song of the angels inviting them to seek the reason for this moment.

They leave their flocks to search, and find it in a baby. An ordinary night turned glorious and powerful enough to send the shepherds to seek the child, becomes infinitely ordinary and vulnerable again when they arrive at the manger. The feeding area for animals, such as they daily tended, holds just a baby—a wriggling, noisy baby boy watched by a young mother and father, nervous and new to their role as parents. And God is here.

This very ordinary moment contains the extraordinary promise of God. This child will carry the message of God's love to any and all who will hear. He will become

a shepherd to his people and change the world. For now, these shepherds simply enjoy the miracle of a new baby, the joy of his parents, and this moment of promise. Then they leave to tell the story and become the first evangelists of this part of the Good News that they have seen.

We now retell their story as a miraculous event with delight and awe. Yet every part is rooted in the activities of daily life of ordinary people open to the extraordinary possibilities of God at work around them.

God is always present. The possibilities of participating in God's creating activity in the world are only limited by our willingness to see God in our daily lives, inviting us to see—to wonder—and to tell the Good News we know. May this Christmas be a celebration of God in the midst of our lives here and now—filled with possibilities when we look and see God at work around us and are ready to hear the angels singing. ■

Archbishop Linda Nicholls is the primate of the Anglican Church of Canada.

WALKING TOGETHER ▶



Looking north

By Mark MacDonald

AROUND THIS TIME of year, the millions of Canadians who live in the south are reminded that Canada is one of the great northern countries. Though it doesn't appear to come to mind very often—it was largely missed in conversations that accompanied our recent election—the North is an essential part of our land. A great deal of the future of Canada and of our planet is unfolding in the North.

The Anglican Church of Canada is not unlike Canada in its relationship to the North. There is some awareness of our presence there, but it is not an active part of the identity of most Anglicans. Despite the challenges in the North, the churches there continue to bring an essential element to the whole of the region, providing gospel-based spiritual community and pastoral care. With that work, we are arguably one of the most northern churches in the world, but our denomination's attention is usually elsewhere. That is about to change. Forces—social, legal and environmental—are making Northern Canada, especially the Arctic, the place where a number of dangerous trends are coming together. The Anglican Church of Canada will be morally and spiritually tested by these trends.



PHOTO: ILYA BUYANOV/SHUTTERSTOCK

The Arctic is warming three times faster than the rest of the planet. While many contemplate the horrific consequences of melting ice and permafrost, others contemplate the opportunities a warmer Arctic provides to create wealth. Because of Canada's colonial policies, the people of the North are neither able to sufficiently control what happens on their land, nor are they able to participate fully in the wealth that is produced there. This is bad for them and the planet.

In addition to these issues, a few centuries of colonial social policy have left deep wounds among the people. Coupled with climate injustice, these conditions are a particularly toxic mix. Without full authority to oversee their land or their people, wealth, weather and economic expansion could intensify the social problems of the area.

It would appear that those least responsible for climate disaster now carry a heavy load of its consequences. This is a great problem for the planet, since the people who have been guardians of the Arctic for thousands of years are also the carriers of an environmental wisdom that could be a substantial contribution to a livable future for all. Furthermore, it seems certain that without the guardianship of the People of the Land, there will be no good way to slow down a melting Arctic

and its consequences for the planet.

The Arctic will provide much of the framework of our global future. It provides a vivid warning of the coming consequences of a warming planet. It is a call for meaningful action. Close to a quarter of the world's remaining usable land is now under the guardianship of Indigenous peoples around the globe. Many of the moral, legal and social principles that will decide the future of the Indigenous peoples of the world and their protection of their lands are being debated in the Arctic. Canada will either play a positive role in this conversation or frame it in a negative way.

During my time in the Arctic, I have heard many prophecies about a revival in the churches of the world that would begin there. I believe these prophecies. This revival will have many consequences—moral, political and spiritual. It means that we are all called to a deeper and more faithful commitment to Jesus. It also means that we are, right now, called to defend the peoples and land of the North, in the name of our God, in defence of our planet and in a commitment to justice and truth. ■

Archbishop Mark MacDonald is national Indigenous archbishop of the Anglican Church of Canada.

LETTERS ▶

Give voice to the people

I am disappointed that the House of Bishops voted by a mere two-vote margin against the motion to amend the marriage canon, while the laity and clergy supported the motion.

The Rev. Derek Perry (“Our rules exist for a reason,” Oct. 2019, p.5) has difficulty with the concept “that a simple majority govern.” Yet liberal democracies, including Canada, have spent over 200 years, at the cost of many lives and much suffering, to achieve this laudable end. Perry implies in a rather high-handed tone that democratic principles are OK for our political processes, but not for the church (“such a change would give a result...counter to our

basic identity”). I say the governance structure of the church should be changed to give more voice to the people (the majority who are asked to fund it and give time to support it). The gospel tells us we are all equal in God's eyes; let's take that seriously. And yes, maybe our “basic identity” and rules are due for a long overdue revamping if we are going to survive.

Ken Wightman
Markham, Ont.

Tyranny of the majority?

In his recent letter to *Anglican Journal*, the Rev. Derek Perry suggests that those seeking to re-

evaluate our church's governance structures are bristling against “the tyranny of the majority.” I think he'll find his math is off: though sexual minorities have been subject to the tyrannies of various majorities since time immemorial, that is not what happened in the vote on the marriage canon this past summer. When a decision which receives the support of variously 80.9%, 73.2%, and 62.2% across three orders is nevertheless vetoed, well—strictly speaking, it certainly ain't the majority being tyrannical.

Charles Demers
Vancouver

The Anglican Journal welcomes letters to the editor.

Since not all letters can be published, preference is given to short correspondence (300 words or less). All letters are subject to editing.

PHOTO: LUZVYKOVA
LAROSSLAVA/
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'Peace is possible': Creighton

Continued from p. 1

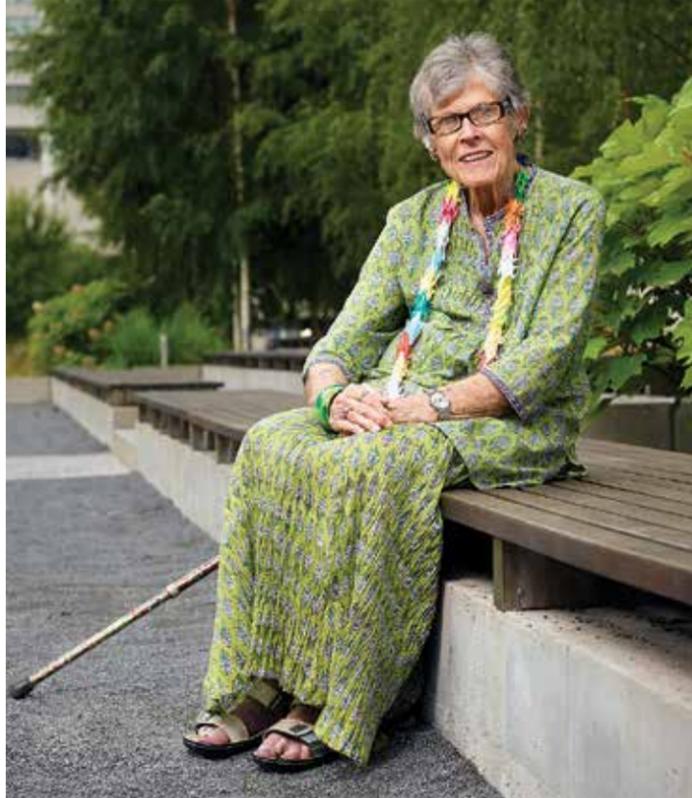
Anglican Church of Canada has a major presence on Project Ploughshares, which seeks to work with governments and civil society to advance policies for peace.

Cesar Jaramillo, executive director of Project Ploughshares, described a "somber" mood and "acrimonious tone" at the UN committee, characterized by mutual accusations traded between nations such as the United States and Russia, Israel and Iran, and Turkey and Syria.

He cited "confrontational" moves by U.S. President Donald Trump, such as withdrawing the United States from treaties with Russia and Iran, as a major factor in creating that atmosphere. Such circumstances may bode ill for next year's conference to review the 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. (The treaty stipulated that the parties to it meet every five years.)

"I don't know how one can measure human gloom," Jaramillo says. "But there is that sense of urgency around the [perception] that [things] seem to be getting worse, rather than better."

Nuclear disarmament has long been a major focus of Project Ploughshares, founded in 1976. The organization currently engages with governments to push for a renewed focus on disarmament and plans to



▲ **Phyllis Creighton:** "I think our Lord made very clear that the path of Christ is non-violent."

PHOTO: MICHAEL BARKER

attend the upcoming review conference for the non-proliferation treaty. But the church also has a history of advocating for nuclear disarmament through its own institutional structures.

Creighton has played a significant role in these efforts. At the 1983 General Synod, she presented a motion for the church to take an absolute stand against nuclear weapons. General Synod carried the motion, which declared that the church considered "the development, production or use of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction" as being "contrary to the will of God and the mind of Christ."

Creighton's stand against nuclear weapons dates back to 1945, when she was 15 years old and "horrified" by the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

As the Cold War intensified, Creighton gravitated towards peace activism inside and outside of the church. The same year she presented the General Synod motion opposing nuclear weapons, Creighton joined protests against a decision by the Liberal government of Pierre Trudeau to allow cruise missile testing by the U.S. in Alberta.

Shortly thereafter, Creighton joined a group called the Toronto-Volgograd Initiative. For a decade, she participated in a citizen exchange with Volgograd, the Russian city formerly known as Stalingrad. Over three visits, she learned how much people on both sides of the Cold War divide shared in common. "We met with citizens who, like us, were scared stiff about nuclear weapons," she remembers.

Continuing to move motions at General Synod against nuclear weapons in consultation with Project Ploughshares, Creighton also supported motions on non-nuclear issues related to peace. In 1989, General Synod passed a resolution calling on NATO to stop low-level flight training by bombers over the unceded lands of the Innu and Inuit.

In 2007, at her ninth General Synod, Creighton moved a motion committing the Anglican Church of Canada to support the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, founded only months beforehand. General Synod carried the resolution and became an early supporter of the campaign, due in part to the influence of Project Ploughshares. Ten years later, the campaign received the Nobel Peace Prize.

Creighton views the commitment to peace and disarmament as a central message of Christianity.

"I think our Lord made very clear that

the path of Christ is non-violent," she says. "It's a path that believes that love is the way forward, and love entails respect for other people. It entails respect for humanity, mercy and a belief that we have the power to create a world in which peace is possible."

Project Ploughshares is driven by a similar vision, which Jaramillo describes as "reducing human suffering." The organization seeks to accomplish this goal by working with NGOs, churches, ecumenical organizations and governments to enhance policies and regulatory frameworks aimed at promoting peace.

Along with nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Project Ploughshares focuses on protection of civilians and reducing the international arms trade. Representatives of Project Ploughshares recently attended an international conference in Vienna hosted by the Austrian government to develop a political declaration in which states would refrain from using explosive weapons in populated areas.

Though Jaramillo expresses respect for individuals at Global Affairs Canada, he criticizes the Canadian government, along with other states, for the distance between "lofty rhetoric" of peace and human rights and their actual policies.

In practice, he says, Canada has tended to side with nuclear-armed NATO allies to fight any moves towards abolition of nuclear weapons. The federal government also sells arms to countries such as Saudi Arabia, which Jaramillo calls "one of the worst human rights violators in the world." He draws a direct link between the arms trade and global human rights violations.

While Project Ploughshares offers a vehicle for Christians to reduce violence—and financial support is always welcome—Jaramillo says Anglicans can also support these efforts by becoming better informed around issues of war and peace.

Many Anglicans have sought to raise awareness in their own communities. David Fletcher, rector of the parish of Lantz in Nova Scotia, participated in the protests against cruise missile testing in the 1980s as a student.

Around the 50th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Fletcher helped students at a Halifax school make origami paper cranes based on a story popularized in the book *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*. The story details the experience of Sadako Sasaki, a Japanese girl who was caught in the bombing of Hiroshima and developed radiation poisoning. She decided to make 1,000 paper cranes based on a legend suggesting happiness or good fortune for anyone who could fold that number, but she died before she could reach her goal.

In August 2019, Fletcher started making paper cranes at his church in Lantz. At parish council, Anglican Church Women gatherings and sometimes at Sunday worship, he will spend a few minutes alongside members of the congregation folding paper cranes with the goal of eventually making 1,000.

Having served in the Canadian military for five years, Fletcher is of two minds about the necessity of war. He says that "there are probably circumstances where war may be unavoidable. I don't like to think about that. It's not my best possible alternative. But I also recognize that we still live in an age where the military may be called upon to do things that are not peaceable."

Yet, in pondering the Christian attitude towards war and peace, Fletcher finds himself returning to "the notion that peace as a state of mind is kind of a starting place." He recalls a collect about "peace in our world, peace in our country, peace in our church, peace in our family, peace in our hearts."

When it comes to peace, Fletcher says, "if it doesn't start in our hearts, it's not going to go anywhere else." ■

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Leading Women to leadership

Binational conference inspires ordained Anglican women to break ‘through the stained glass ceiling’

Matt Gardner
STAFF WRITER

Dozens of ordained women from the Anglican Church of Canada and the Episcopal Church gathered together Oct. 8-10 for the Leading Women conference, an all-women meeting at the Mundelein Seminary in Chicago that sought to encourage women in church leadership.

But they weren't the only ones on the premises.

As principal school for the formation of priests in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago, Mundelein that week also hosted a large number of young Catholic seminarians—all men. The two groups largely stayed separate, visible to each other only during meals. But for Archbishop Melissa Skelton, one of the main organizers of the Leading Women conference, the juxtaposition of genders drove home “the importance of the ministry of ordained women.”

“We were all women at the conference,” Skelton says. “Women organized it, women spoke at it, women participated. There was not a man anywhere to be seen, and it was just a new realization of how important this work is.”

The Leading Women conference began in the United Kingdom in 2010, at a time when there were no female bishops in the Church of England, as a way to prepare women who might be appointed bishops for the role. In 2016, the conference spread to the United States, inviting ordained Episcopal women to explore what it would be like to seek new leadership positions in the church.

The 2019 gathering marks the first time that Anglican women from Canada have attended Leading Women. A total of 68 women attended the event, including 31 women from Canada and 37 women from the United States. Canadian participants represented dioceses including New Westminster, British Columbia, Yukon, Algoma, Moosonee, Ottawa, Toronto, and Nova Scotia and P.E.I.

Over the course of their three days together, the participants—among them bishops, cathedral deans, executive archdeacons, and parish rectors—heard panel discussions on female church leadership and shared their own experiences in small groups.

“We prayed together, we ate together, we heard each other’s stories,” Skelton says.

“To say this was powerful is an understatement. It was, for some of the women, earth-shaking.... Women



▲ **The Leading Women conference brought together ordained women in leadership positions from the Anglican Church of Canada and the Episcopal Church.**

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

accompanying and encouraging other women is a very powerful experience, and it doesn't often happen in the circles that we have in our church.”

Some ordained women experience a “profound ambivalence” over whether or not they should pursue higher leadership positions, Skelton suggests. They might believe that to do so might seem “too overtly ambitious,” or tell themselves that they are unqualified when they are in fact overqualified.

By contrast, she says, some at the conference told stories about how “the men that they know just don't think twice.... Women have not always experienced the same kind of support in the church [and so] they very much appreciate the encouraging and challenging support of other women.”

The recent election of Linda Nicholls as the first female primate of the Anglican Church of Canada—following closely Katharine Jefferts Schori, who served as the first female presiding bishop in the Episcopal Church from 2006 to 2015 and was the first woman elected to primacy in the Anglican Communion—did not go unnoticed by those in attendance.

“Because of the timing in Canada and the U.S., being roughly the same time period...we feel like we were on the forefront together of women's ordination,” Skelton says. “That's all very encouraging.”

Keynote speakers included Bishop Chilton Knudsen, assisting bishop in the Episcopal diocese of Washington, and Canon Judy Rois, executive director of the Anglican Foundation of Canada. Knudsen

spoke on trends she saw for the role of women in the church, while Rois discussed the history of the ordination of women in Canada.

Breakout discussions touched on topics from the theology of leadership to building financial confidence, from ministry in rural and remote settings to intersectionality.

Rois calls her experience of the conference “uplifting and inspiring” as she met women from “diverse ages, cultures and faith journeys...all of whom have broken through the stained-glass ceiling that, in the past, was impenetrable.”

“My experience was that all of these women have moved past punching their fists in the air demanding recognition—or allowing a victim mindset to prevent a resolute and forward outlook,” Rois says.

“Each of the women I met had a sense of hope and anticipation as they looked to the future.”

“What I think many women took away with them was a strong, supportive network of women in Canada and the U.S., women who could be called upon for advice, counsel and support. I also think they returned home with hope and a sense that positions in the church previously not available to them could in fact be possibilities now more than ever.”

Major sponsors included the Anglican Foundation, which donated \$15,000, and the Anglican Initiatives Fund in the diocese of New Westminster. Bishops, synod office staff members and priests in the United States also helped sponsor the event. ■

“My experience was that all of these women have moved past punching their fists in the air demanding recognition—or allowing a victim mindset to prevent a resolute and forward outlook. Each of the women I met had a sense of hope and anticipation as they looked to the future.”

—Canon Judy Rois, executive director of the Anglican Foundation of Canada

PEACE ON EARTH ▶



PHOTO: PAPAARAZZA/SHUTTERSTOCK

Diocese of Jerusalem planning Bethlehem 'guest house' for pilgrims

Anglican pilgrims to Bethlehem could have their own place to stay and worship in the city in as few as two or three years, a priest with the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem says. Read more online on the *Anglican Journal's* website.

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Bethlehem: a city of divisions—and devotion

Continued from p. 1

Many of us who have grown up in Canada and other Western countries imagine Bethlehem as an oasis of peace and calm—the feelings we like to associate with Christmas Eve, and those evoked by pageants and carols like “O Little Town of Bethlehem.” But this Bethlehem of our imagination could hardly be further from the reality of the place—in Jesus’s time and our own, say LeSueur and other Canadian Anglicans who have visited the place more times than they can count.

“I’ll honestly say this: You almost crave the Western view of Bethlehem, at times, in Bethlehem,” says John Organ, bishop of the diocese of Western Newfoundland. Organ had visited the city several times already before serving from 2012 to 2015 as chaplain to bishop of the diocese of Jerusalem Suheil Dawani, now also primate of the province of Jerusalem and the Middle East.

“You almost want the Christmas card of Bethlehem with the star, and the stillness, and the animals, and Mary and Joseph, and everything is just lovely,” Organ says. “It’s all of that, but it was in the context of much more intensity—and that intensity remains.”

Deborah Neal, who served as Dawani’s executive assistant from 2011 to 2013, took countless visitors to and from Bethlehem during those two years, and remembers the tension that pervaded the place because of the unresolved conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.

“You get this juxtaposition of, it’s Christmas...and God is being born into this land, and yet all you see while you’re driving through the checkpoint is all the security, with a lot of weapons,” says Neal, who is now office administrator at the Lutheran Church of the Cross in Victoria, B.C. “On the one hand you get this sense of anticipation of joy, but also this sense of being in the middle of an occupied land.”

Bethlehem today is not a peaceful place at all, but one that feels on high alert, Organ says—as it would have in Jesus’s time also. The Holy Land at the time of Christ’s birth was a “client kingdom” or satellite of Rome; in 6 A.D. it was actually made a Roman province. In those days there would have been an intense resentment of Roman occupation, plus a “fever pitch” of excitement about the expected coming of the Messiah, he says.

Add to that, LeSueur says, the cruelty—known throughout the empire—of the “brilliant, paranoid, ruthless” Herod the Great, appointed king of Judea by the Roman senate.

The biblical account of the Massacre of the Innocents, according to which Herod had all the male babies in Bethlehem killed, attests to the great vulnerability of the powerless in every era, Organ says.

“Whether it’s literally true or not, I think there’s a truth there, that innocence is often slaughtered for power,” he says. “So it can be a dangerous place. And I think it was for our Lord.”

Bethlehem, which has a population of about 25,000, lies about 8 km to the south of Jerusalem. It’s in the West Bank, a predominantly Palestinian territory captured by Israel during the 1967 Six-Day War and partly settled by Israelis in the decades since. Following the 1993 Oslo Accords, the West Bank has been divided into a complex patchwork of zones. Most of it is under full Israeli



▲ The West Bank Barrier, as seen from Palestinian territory

PHOTO: RICHARD LESUEUR



PHOTO: PAPAARAZZA/SHUTTERSTOCK

Pilgrims at the Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem

control; some—including Bethlehem—is controlled by the Palestinian Authority; and the rest is jointly controlled.

Running between Bethlehem and Jerusalem is the West Bank Barrier, a wall in and around the West Bank built by Israel in the years since 2002, partway through the Second Intifada, the Palestinian uprising of 2000-2005.

The barrier, which pilgrims to Bethlehem must cross on the way from Jerusalem, is a particularly strong reminder of the tensions that pervade the city and region, the three Canadian Anglicans say.

To approach the wall and see it stretch “from horizon to horizon” can be an emotional experience, LeSueur says.

“It’s really a ghastly, shocking reminder of the failure to find peace in the land where the Prince of Peace was born. So you weep before you get to Bethlehem,” he says.

The pilgrims he guides to the city will often look on the wall in shocked silence.

It’s a massive structure, Organ says, with towers and soldiers keeping watch in them. Visitors must pass through a series of tunnels through the wall to enter the city; it feels like entering a prison, he says.

Passing through the wall is nerve-racking, adds Neal, because it involves going underneath a kind of grille, on top of which soldiers are posted.

“The IDF [Israel Defence Forces] will be walking above you, and they’re armed and they’re looking down on you, so it’s very intimidating and scary,” she says. Passing through the checkpoint takes anywhere from under half an hour to an hour or so, Neal adds.

Visiting the Holy Land, LeSueur says, often involves such moments. Along with glimpsing the magnificence of Jerusalem and the places where Jesus and his disciples walked, “you’re constantly bumping into the political realities of the land itself.”

The Western image of Christmas in Bethlehem is wrong in other ways, he says. For one thing, it tends not to take into account the cold, rainy weather that the hill country around Jerusalem is prone to in wintertime.

“I have never been to a Christmas Eve service in Bethlehem where I’m not drenching wet and the wind is strong and everybody is shivering because there is no double-pane and insulation,” he says.

Moreover, while it’s common to see in the Christmas cards and illustrated Bibles of Western countries the Holy Family gathered inside a wooden stable, wood is actually quite scarce in the Holy Land, and most buildings are made of stone. In any case, it’s much more likely that Jesus was born in one of the thousands of natural limestone caves that dot the ridge on which Bethlehem lies, and into which shepherds over the millennia have often taken their animals for shelter, LeSueur says.

Of the four Gospels, only Matthew and Luke mention Jesus being born in Bethlehem; John does not mention his birthplace or where he grew up, and Mark says only that he came from Nazareth. Matthew does not mention the details of Christ’s birth; with respect to where in Bethlehem he was born, Luke says only (Luke 2:7) that Mary “laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.”

Bethlehem’s Church of the Nativity, which has undergone numerous reconstructions and renovations since it was first built by Constantine the Great around 330 A.D., contains underneath it a cave where local tradition has it that Jesus was born.

The early Christian bishop and writer Eusebius of Caesarea, LeSueur notes, once said that the Holy Land itself is a fifth Gospel, because only by encountering it can Christians truly appreciate the other four. And LeSueur, Organ and Neal all say that visiting Bethlehem can be intensely memorable.

In Bethlehem at Christmastime, says Neal, “there’s many, many people, and you kind of have to find your own quiet in it. But just being there with people acknowledging the reason they’re there because they’re celebrating something they so profoundly believe in is striking—it warms your heart.”

All three, too, say that Anglicans making pilgrimages to Bethlehem are likely to especially appreciate an annual Christmas Eve service by Dawani at a shepherds’ cave in Bayt Sahur, just outside Bethlehem.

“We would go there as families, and we’d light a fire in the fire pit and the children would gather round and we’d read the scripture and sing the songs, and it was very, very meaningful,” LeSueur recalls.

Later in the evening, Anglicans in Bethlehem will typically proceed to the Church of the Nativity, in a side chapel of which the Anglican archbishop will give another service, which has recently been attended by dignitaries including Mahmoud Abbas, president of the State of Palestine. For Anglicans, the evening typically concludes with everyone returning to Jerusalem for midnight mass at St. George’s Cathedral.

Despite the tension, Organ says, Canadian Anglicans should not feel afraid of visiting, and they can be confident of a well-organized trip if they travel with the Anglican contingent from Jerusalem. And even in the real Bethlehem, he says, they may find they can discern a kind of peace amidst the tension—and be changed by it.

“ Militarism, heightened police security, danger—it’s all there, and yet you get inside the Church [of the Nativity], and as you go down into the lower level, where they marked the manger scene where Christ was born, it’s humble—it’s humble, humble, humble,” he says.

“And yet full of reverence, of devotion. And it’s powerful.” ■

THE INTERVIEW: GOODWILL TO ALL ▶

Lost connection

A conversation on Indigenous homelessness with scholar Jesse Thistle

Joelle Kidd
STAFF WRITER

In October 2019, United Nations special rapporteur Leilani Farha released her report on the right to adequate housing for Indigenous peoples. The report found housing conditions for Indigenous peoples around the world to be “overwhelmingly abhorrent” and often in violation of “the right to adequate housing, depriving them of their right to live in security and dignity.”

For a Canadian perspective on this issue, the *Journal* spoke with Métis-Cree writer and academic Jesse Thistle, an assistant professor at York University, Pierre Elliot Trudeau Scholar and Vanier Scholar, and winner of the Governor General’s Academic Medal. This interview has been edited for length.

What are your thoughts on the UN’s report?

I think [it’s] very explicit in capturing the scope of Indigenous homelessness as it relates to housing, and the right to adequate standard of living, basically.

Our governments are supposed to be beholden to Indigenous people who they’ve signed treaties with to be on the land. The housing that they’ve built, in many cases, is just inadequate or totally lacking infrastructure. Maintenance is almost non-existent. So all of that kind of plays into what [Farha] noted in her report.

In your work, you have a conception of “Indigenous homelessness.” Could you explain that? What are the factors affecting Indigenous people specifically?

Indigenous homelessness, as I’ve defined it through community consultation, is really about a displacement of healthy relationships over time through colonial interruption. What that means is, we’ve lost connection to land and land-based teachings.

When I say that, you’ve got to think about the land itself as a kind of home. Imagine going berry picking with your grandmother, or fishing with your grandfather, or hunting with your dad. Those were lessons. Those were universities. Those had systems of knowledge embedded within them; how to travel over the land, how to treat the land.

They also saw themselves as relations to the land, and all the creatures upon it. This is an ancient way of looking at human relations within the natural world that goes back in many different cultures, not just here in Canada. But Indigenous people here in Canada specifically have suffered an egregious displacement onto reserves where all those systems of knowledge were lost.

Then there’s a disconnection of spirit that’s happened as well. Indigenous worldviews, through the Christian conditioning of our youth—which was an altruistic effort, [but] what that did is, it took children out of their kinship networks and raised them in environments where they lost their sense of an Indigenous

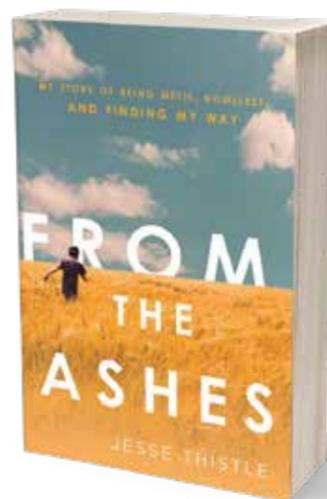


▲ “Indigenous homelessness... is really about a displacement of healthy relationships over time through colonial interruption.”

PHOTO: LUCIE THISTLE

▶ Thistle’s memoir chronicles his own homelessness and experience of dispossession—and his journey of reconnecting with his culture.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF JESSETHISTLE.COM



worldview and connection to the Creator.

Beyond that, then you have the loss of culture that’s happened because Indigenous culture was actually outlawed through official legislation. Then you have things like the Sixties Scoop, or what happened with the Millennial Scoop, where kids are taken out of their home and they lose connection to their family and they lose their languages and their customs.

Those are like the higher-level kinds of homelessness. Then you have to break it down to practicalities where, because the infrastructure is so bad on reserves, or in rural communities where often Métis people live, [or] Inuit settlements in the North, people will travel long distances to access things like health care, education, a job. That’s called mobility homelessness, and that’s a very specific type of homelessness that Indigenous people endure.

Beyond that, there’s overcrowded homelessness, because a lot of housing that was built in the ’50s and ’60s [was] when the Indigenous populations were a certain size. But the population’s exploded, and they haven’t built more. So now instead of

having five people per household, there’s 20 or 30. That’s very common.

When I say disconnection from healthy relations, I also mean a healthy relation from the state, too, and all of its bureaucratic arms that are supposed to take care of Indigenous people.

If you go back to the treaties, that was the first relationship—from an Indigenous perspective, they thought they were making kin out of the settlers, and that they would work together. From the British imperial perspective, they were ceding land, they were taking land and extinguishing their rights to have it. So that’s the fundamental broken relationship that needs to be mended.

What do you think it would take to make that kind of change?

Well, there has to be a right to housing extended to Indigenous people, and with that, it would have to take into consideration all [the UN] recommendations, and they would have to meet a certain amount of those to say that the state is actually securing a measurable right to housing for Indigenous people. You would have to meet, let’s say, 75% of the recommendations. If there’s no mechanism to make it measurable and then enforceable, I don’t know if governments will take it up.

How can the church play a role in advocating for or helping mend these issues?

Well, it’s one of the biggest institutions, and I know that the Anglican church has always led the way in reconciliation. So I think you’re already doing the hard work, you’ve already tried to make amends, you’re trying to build those bridges. Just use the influence of the church and some of its resources to help.

And when I say that, I mean in consultation with Indigenous people. Communities know what they need; you have to facilitate them to do the work. That’s really, really important. Because the other way, the paternalistic way, didn’t work very well.

You experienced homelessness yourself. Has your own life influenced your work?

Yeah. That’s where a lot of my understanding of these different systems and issues comes from, my own personal experience. I was off and on the streets for about a decade; I was a crack addict. A lot of times the church helped me—they were one of the only institutions [that was] there. So I thank the church; they’re like a safety net for people.

All these dispossessions that I described happened through my family, because we’re Métis-Cree. We stood up against Canada during the North-West Resistance, and we had our land and our culture, everything, stripped away from us. We were impoverished and made to live on the sides of the roads, all the way up to my own generation, and that led to my own personal trauma with my family falling apart, and then my own homelessness in my adulthood. So I have a really good understanding of what I write about academically. ■

Thistle’s memoir, From the Ashes, is available through Simon & Schuster (simonandschuster.ca). His Definition of Indigenous Homelessness in Canada can be found online at homelesshub.ca/IndigenousHomelessness.

PEOPLE ▶

New bishop elected for diocese of Huron

Joelle Kidd
STAFF WRITER

Canon Todd Townshend was elected 14th bishop of the diocese of Huron at a diocesan synod Oct. 26.

Townshend was elected on the third ballot by the diocese's orders of clergy and laity at St. Paul's Cathedral in London, Ont. There were four other candidates.

Townshend is the dean of the faculty of theology at Huron University College, a position he has held since 2013. He has also worked as a university instructor and associate professor, and as a parish priest.

In an interview with the *Anglican Journal*, Townshend said he felt excited and grateful to have been elected and "eager to get going."



▲ **Townshend:**
"I think there are creative ways to reshape the church."

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

Among his top priorities as bishop, Townshend said, is finding creative ways to organize the church as numbers and finances decline. "We are, as a church, everywhere, getting smaller numerically, and we try to hold up everything that's ever been going on around. So I think there are creative ways to reshape the church and change the sort of imagination part of the model of how we do things."

He also said that reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and discipleship will be themes of his upcoming work.

"I think the thing that has always excited me about ministry is to see the kind of thing that God is doing in people's lives, to find out what struggles there are, what hurts, but also to hear people talk about what living a life of faith has done

for them, and is for them," he told the *Journal*.

Townshend served as the chair of General Synod's Theological Education Commission and is a member of its pension committee.

He was ordained as a priest in the diocese of Huron in 1992, and became the diocese's canon theologian in 2009. His father, Bishop Robert (Bob) Townshend, and grandfather, Bishop William Townshend both served as suffragan bishops of the diocese of Huron.

Townshend will be consecrated at St. Paul's Cathedral on Jan. 25. He succeeds the previous bishop of Huron, Linda Nicholls, who in July was elected primate of the Anglican Church of Canada. ■

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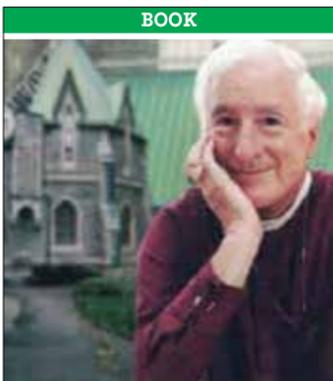
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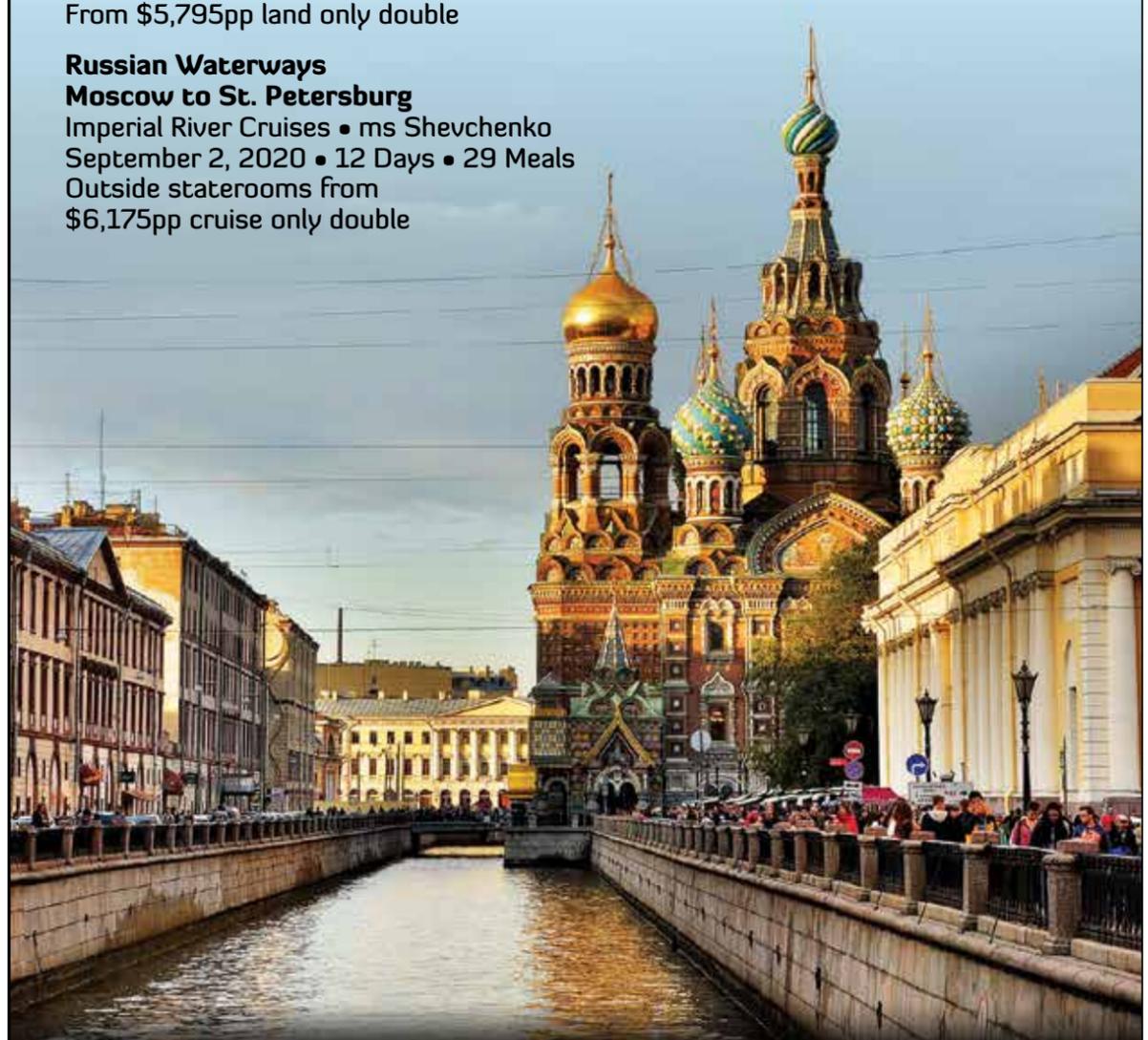
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