



Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul



Late this summer many Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul and friends gathered at their Motherhouse in Kingston to dedicate a peace pole installed in their front circle. The pole is inccribed in four

*languages: English, French, Spanish and Cree. It says **May Peace Prevail on Earth**. On page 3, Sister Pauline Lally talks about the origins of peace poles and the thoughts that installing this pole has provoked in her.*

PROVIDENCE PAGES

Mission Statement

We, the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul, are an apostolic congregation of vowed women religious called to be channels of God's Providence in the world through compassionate service in response to the needs of the times. Sharing our individual giftedness, we carry out diverse ministries in a spirit of humility, simplicity and charity in collaboration with others to bring about the reign of God.

Our heritage is rooted in the creativity and spirituality of Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac, in the willingness of Emilie Gamelin to risk and trust in Providence, in the responsiveness of the Montreal Sisters of Providence to the call of Bishop E.J. Horan, as well as in the courage and pioneer spirit of Mother Mary Edward McKinley and the original members of the Kingston community.

Impelled by the compassionate love of Jesus and Mary, we seek to empower others, especially the poor and oppressed, to achieve a quality of life in keeping with their human dignity. We strive to be prophetic leaders in our church and in society through the promotion of structures and relationships of equality and mutuality and through attitudes and actions for justice and peace.

Strengthened by prayer, we are bonded in unity and love through our corporate mission.

Serving with compassion, trusting in Providence, we walk in hope.

Dear readers,

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

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Thank you!

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Behind the peace pole: truth

BY SISTER PAULINE LALLY

In the midst of global tragedies and conflicts, we, Sisters of Providence, erected a simple white peace pole in front of the entrance to our Mother-house this summer. It has black letter-

The idea of peace poles was first thought up by Masahisa Goi in 1955 in Japan. Since then, more than 100,000 have been placed around the world in over 180 countries.

As I reflected upon those words of

like love. You know it when you see it. You know it when you experience it. It's the same with truth. You know it when you see or experience it. Maybe that's what Pontius Pilate sensed. That he was in the presence of Truth itself.

Webster's English dictionary defines truth as "freedom from falsehood or error; that which is according to facts."



ing. And there it stands in simple juxtaposition to the sufferings of the world.

The pole reads *May Peace Prevail on Earth* in four different languages. French is for our origins in France and Montreal. The Spanish is for our missions in Guatemala (now closed) and Peru. Cree represents our connections with First Nations in the West and in Northern Canada. Finally, English brings in all of us and our ministries in the rest of Canada.

prayer, I thought of the discipline of nonviolence. About how nonviolence grows out of truth, which ultimately leads to freedom and peace. *But what really is TRUTH?*

Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor in first century Palestine, asked that very question of Jesus – to the one who said, "I am the Truth." But Pilate didn't wait around for the answer.

It's a difficult question to answer. It's

Religious views on truth vary with faith traditions and cultures around the world. For example, Buddhism's Four Noble Truths are concerned with the existence of suffering. Christian truth is based upon the history, revelation and testimony from the Bible. For a Hindu, it is defined as upholding the central concept of righteousness.

Ghandi invented a word, *Satyagraha*, using Sanskrit, the ancient language of

continued on next page

The unity of truth: something to get in our heads!

continued from previous page

India. He formulated what he learned in his search for truth during his struggle for the rights of the Indians in South Africa. Satyagraha can be translated as “Truth-force” – a quiet, fervent but unyielding pursuit of Truth.

that embraces and possesses us.”

If we believe truth is invincible, we do not need to attack others to preserve it. And truth is a force to be reckoned with. Like the child in the fairy tale, “The Emperor’s New Clothes,” the truth

It is the same with a people or a nation. It is in this insecurity that makes truth the first casualty of war. Would World War I, and all the subsequent wars that followed, have been avoided if the truth had been sought earnestly and followed with integrity?



I recall reading somewhere that truth is not an abstraction. It abides in people and communities. It transcends religion and culture. The Christian Church and other faith traditions are not masters of the Truth, but ministers of the Truth, called to witness to the truth. In his recent encyclical, *Lumen Fidei* or “The Light of Faith,” Pope Francis says it well: “... truth leads to humility; since believers know that, rather than ourselves possessing truth, it is truth

sets one free. It can also get you into some trouble. Just recall where Jesus’ speaking-truth-to-power led him.

If we defend a so-called truth with violence, we are not serving the truth but ourselves. We turn to violence because at some level we know the truth is not in us. We fudge the truth. We muddy its waters. Words that do not increase the light, increase the darkness in our world. Such words are untrue, inauthentic.

By virtue of being born into the human earth family, we are basically called to live on earth in a unity of truth that respects and supports all earthlings. The sooner we get this into our heads and hearts – the healthier and authentically true will we be. So truth is really a means to live life fully on this beautiful green planet we call home. It is a means to love. Then will our prayer be answered:

Peace will Prevail on Earth.

A whole new take on local, when it comes to food

BY TARA KAINER

From Toronto to Vancouver, Chicago to California, Seoul, South Korea to Havana, Cuba and points in between, Jennifer Cockrall-King explores the future of food in *Food and the City: Urban Agriculture and the New Food Revolution* (Prometheus Books, 2012).

Speaking to an appreciative crowd at Writers' Fest in Kingston this fall, the Edmonton-based writer used glorious photographs to demonstrate how food can be found growing in cities in surprising places and ways. Urban landscapes across the world contain lush community gardens and vibrant farmers' markets; vegetable-laden patios, balconies, and rooftops; dumpsters and shipping containers overflowing with root vegetables; urban forests of nut and fruit trees; backyard chickens, urban wine crops, bee hives, and inner-city flocks of goats and sheep.

Cockrall-King began with shocking statistics – we throw away 50% of the food we produce; factory food travels

an average of 2400 kilometres from field to fork; in the United States, 70% of all antibiotics are used not for human health but for industrially-produced meat. Those stats let the author create a contrast through an account of 19th-century Paris. There, horse manure nurtured 8500 urban gardens making up a sixth of the city's land to produce as many as six crops per year. That fed not only Paris but also many European cities as well.

The arrival of railroads and refrigeration moved food production out to the country, and it's only very recently that urban agriculture returned to Paris. Cockrall-King noted that in 2014, 100 community gardens existed in the city.

Recounting her travels around the globe, Cockrall-King spoke of industrial

warehouses turned into fish farms and hydroponic vegetable production in Chicago, "spin farming" that can yield 13 crops a year on half an acre of land in Kelowna, B.C., abandoned rail yards and parking lots in

Vancouver transformed into orchards and gardens. In Seoul, where 80% of the population lives in concrete apartments and alienation from nature caused a high suicide rate, the city is now full of roof top gardens, municipal parks that allow food production, and green belts dedicated to large-scale urban farms.

Hugely inspiring and passionately delivered, Cockrall-King's presentation evoked a future in which we who live in cities will grow and raise enough fresh, healthy food to feed one another and liberate ourselves from the industrial food system. Watch for her next book: stories of seed savers from around the world.



Climate change in Ontario?

BY BRIDGET DOHERTY

As part of a regular update to the Sisters of Service, who co-fund the Integrity of Creation position of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation team, Bridget Doherty gives an update on the work of energy poverty:

I have some exciting news! You may remember from previous reports that I'm on the Low-Income Energy Network (LIEN) steering committee. In March of this year we organized a conference titled: Celebrating a Decade of Low-Income Energy Advocacy.

Supporting the principle of subsidiarity, I felt it important that, in addition to speakers from high profile businesses and organizations, like Greenpeace and Union Gas, we also hear from the voice of someone living with energy poverty. A local mother of three agreed to talk about her experience with energy poverty. Delina delivered her message with such passion that MPP Bob Delaney could not look her in the eyes.

On the train back to Kingston, Delina and I both remarked how disappointing it was that this representative, who had attended in place of Ontario Minister



Bridget Doherty takes a little rest during the People's Climate Change March in New York City in October.

of Energy Bob Chiarelli, could not look at Delina when it was his turn to speak. He was the only speaker to not refer to her words.

Soon after, though, there was action. Three weeks later, Minister Chiarelli directed the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) to develop an electricity rate affordability program to help low-income consumers pay for their essential electricity service, as well as other basic needs such as rent, food, transportation and medications.

The Ontario Electricity Support Program will build on the OEB's Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) which is a program that was implemented in 2011 after years of advocacy. You may remember LEAP from my 2009-2011 reports.

When the announcement was made, Delina and I couldn't help but wonder if MPP Delaney's reaction was not due to ignorance but rather the opposite. Could it be that he listened, heard and acted? One never knows but after years of advocating for such a program it feels likely that the timing was right for a single mother's words to be heard.

See next page for the speech that may have made the difference

Power, poverty and resisting shame

BY DELINA MACDONALD

I guess I never realized I had grown up in poverty until I felt the shame and fear of poverty as an adult. I watched my father struggle financially after my mother left and felt my dad's shame when I needed new shoes or clothes and he couldn't afford it. I hated asking and felt guilty because I knew it only made him feel bad too. He didn't know how to deal with the heavyweight feeling of shame, so he coped by drinking... a lot.

After leaving the military and struggling financially myself, I felt that same shame my dad must have felt when my kids needed something I couldn't afford. I believed my children deserved better, as we all hope for our children, as I am sure my dad yearned for too. I felt stuck and hopeless. Mental unwellness was born and manifested into depression.

In a materialistic society that admires more and dictates our worth based on



what we have or own, I felt “less than.” Poverty has become shameful. I shamed myself for not being the parent who could participate in consumerism let alone provide the basic necessities – all the while unintentionally passing these stresses and untruths to the next generation. I was repeating the patterns of intergenerational mental unwellness.

Humans can handle a certain amount of stress. Continually high amounts of stress interfere with the normal thought process and mental wellness. High concentrations of stress send the brain into what is called “survival mode.” Survival mode is a living hell for many. It is panic and fear and many turn to drugs or alcohol in their misguided effort to feel better.

Imagine, just put yourself in my shoes, what it must be like to wake up Christmas morning explaining to your children why the Christmas lights are not radiant and there is no power to make Christmas dinner. This is gloomy for the



children and torture for the parents....

Poverty is not a crime; social injustice is the crime.

Poverty is political when government heavily funds energy companies in lieu of its suffering people. We must break the cycle of mental slavery to poverty for future generations, maybe even your own. The priority of responsibility toward shareholders has to shift to responsibility toward citizens. Poverty is a social injustice caused by humans and, therefore, if we can see past the profits, we can see.

Serving the very poor

BY SISTER GAYLE DESARMIA

This year the Providence Associates in Peru have undertaken an important ministry to the very poor in their area. After evaluating their own ministries and the needs present in the area of Carabayllo, they have decided to focus their ministry this year in Fray Martin de Porres.

Fray Martin de Porres is a remote and very needy village further up in the mountains than El Progreso, where the Sisters of Providence live. Previously, monies from the Marillac Mission Fund were used to build a small chapel for the people. This chapel serves as a multi-purpose meeting place for the residents of this village. Fray Martin, located in Our Lady of Guadalupe parish, is in an agricultural area commonly referred to as 'el campo.' This area has been the main focus of ministry for Sister Sara Jimenez.

In addition to offering their friendship and support, the Peruvian Associates' had three goals for their Ministry:

1. To offer assistance as educators to both parents and children
2. To offer health services to the people
3. To celebrate the feast of St. Vincent de Paul with the people

On September 15 last year, the Associates made their initial visit to Fray Martin to offer their services in the areas of healthcare, education and entertainment to the people.

Between May and September this year, the Associates made three more visits to Fray Martin.

May 10 the teachers among the Associates offered friendship and support to both children and parents. First they met with the children, engaging them in educational activities and games. When the parents returned from their work in the fields, the Associates discussed educational issues with them.

August 24 the healthcare workers among the Associates went to Fray Martin and set up a health clinic in



the little chapel where they were able to offer education, basic medical assistance and advice. Among the Associates were a doctor, a nurse, an oncologist and a massage therapist. With the help of the Marillac Mission Fund, Sister Rose-Marie Bokenfohr was able to give out select medications.

The Associates' third visit this year took place on September 20 when they celebrated the feast of St.

Vincent de Paul with a paraliturgy, shared food and song.

While unable to change many factors in the lives of the residents of Fray Martin de Porres, the Associates reached out in love and compassion. The people of this poverty-stricken village now know in a tangible way that the Providence Associates are interested in them and care about their well-being.



Peruvian Associates focus on their neighbours in Fray Martin de Porres



Photos of Fray Martin de Porres, the focus of the work of Sister Sara Jimenez (above, in green shirt). Photos: Sister Gayle Desarmia.

Shining a light in St. Mary's Hospital, Camrose

BY VERONICA STIENBURG

Ninety years ago, Sister Mary Angel Guardian Mangan supervised the building of St. Mary's Hospital in Camrose, Alberta. The hospital opened in October 1924 and was staffed by eight Sisters. While, according to the annals, the Sisters' days were "spent opening boxes, unpacking furniture, trying to place it, picking [their] way among workmen of all trades," they also

had to go to the parish church every day for Mass, as the hospital chapel was not ready yet. The hospital's annals document how the cold and snowy weather made the journey to Mass quite difficult – and even impossible at times.

October 29, 1924 – The evening brought a heavy snow fall which made the roads bad especially going out to Mass.

November 4, 1924 – The church was so

cold that Mass was celebrated in the priest's house.

November 8, 1924 – We started out for Mass. The wind was so cold and strong we had to turn back, unable to go on.

November 9, 1924 – Sunday – Mass in church 8:30. How delighted we were to hear Father say, "One Mass next Sunday will be at the hospital." Thanks be to God.



Original chapel, St. Mary's Hospital, Camrose, Alberta ca. 1925.
Photo: 203.2.1-92, Archives, Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul.



This sanctuary lamp is from the Chapel of St. Mary's Hospital, Camrose, Alberta, and is part of the Archives collection. The Catholic Church instructs that a light be kept burning near the tabernacle where the Blessed Sacrament is stored to indicate the presence of Christ.

Much to the Sisters' delight the first Mass in the hospital chapel was celebrated on November 12, 1924. November 12th ended up being an exciting day for another reason. According to the annals:

“At 6p.m. Dr. Craig called to say he had an emergency case for operation, if possible. Everyone got busy preparing a room. Mrs. Edward Kremin, Ohaton was the patient – ruptured appendix. Dr. Craig Surgeon, Dr. P.F. Smith Anaesthesiologist, Sister Mary Mercy assistant, Sister Mary Alban and Miss Green circulating. Another problem – who will stay up with the patient. Sister Mary Alban solved that problem.”

This seems to have been the first operation in the new hospital.

The chapel was furnished over the next year, including the purchase of an organ in late November 1924, the erection of the Stations of the Cross in February 1925, and the arrival of the statues of Our Lady and St. Joseph on December 18, 1925 (visible in the photograph) and the acquisition of a wax infant for the Christmas crib for Christmas 1925.

ANNOUNCEMENT

SAVE THE DATE

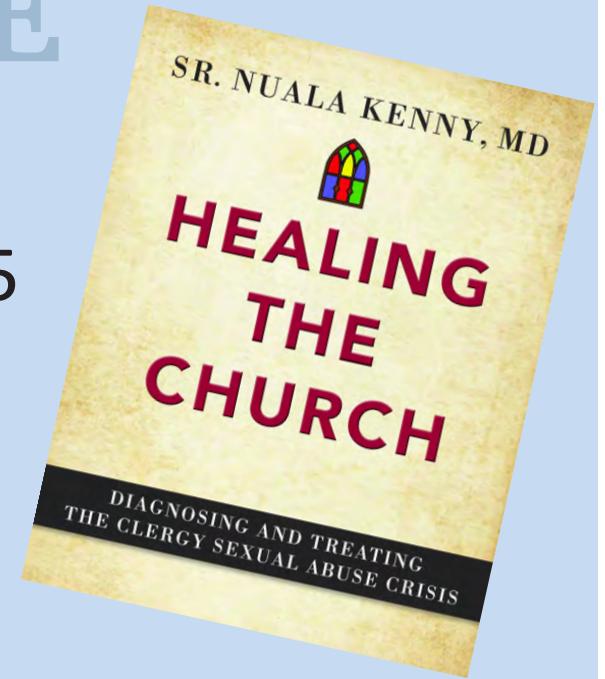
September 12, 2015

A day with Nuala Kenny, SC

author of

***Healing the Church:
Diagnosing and Treating the Clergy
Sexual Abuse Crisis***

At the Motherhouse in
Kingston, Ontario



A presentation of the Healing Violence committee

Sisters look to future plans

For the congregation that has ministered in health care, education and social work, and spent years advocating for society’s most vulnerable members, the coming years will carry new challenges.

The Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul have led lives of compassionate service for over 150 years, beginning their mission work in Kingston, Ontario in 1861. Since then, they have founded hospitals and schools across Canada, Central and South America, and supported numerous other social causes, including prison and justice ministries.

Today, there are 75 Sisters remaining and their average age is over 70.

“Like many other religious congregations in North America, we are facing a future where we know our numbers are decreasing,” says Sister Sandra Shannon, General Superior. “Because we know this trend will continue, we have decided to begin conversations about our future while we have the ability to choose our next steps.”

At their August Assembly, the Sisters of Providence initiated a formal long-range planning process that will continue through the coming months and years. The goal of the planning process will be to establish a plan for 2015-2023 that will see the Sisters make decisions about their assets and resources. Their objectives are to ensure they are able to provide for their aging members, as well as to find ways to continue the Congregation’s mission into the future.

“One of our first decisions will be to finalize the next steps for the property currently occupied by Providence Care’s St. Mary’s of the Lake Hospital in Kingston,” says Sister Shannon.

“We expect to finalize the necessary paperwork so it can be offered for sale in 2015. St. Mary’s has been our property for more than 100 years – this, like many of the decisions ahead, is not easy. We are thankful we can trust in Providence to guide us as we move forward.”



Photo: Courtesy of Providence Care

Sr. Sandra Shannon, being shown plans for the new St. Mary’s hospital. The current hospital is on land owned by the Sisters of Providence.

Sister Shannon noted that the St. Mary’s property will not be transferred to new ownership until after the hospital operations have moved in 2017, so that patient care is not affected.

Decisions about the Sisters’ other properties and current ministries, including the Spirituality Centre and the Motherhouse in Kingston will not be made immediately, but as part of the long-range planning. The Sisters will be meeting again in April 2015 to continue these deliberations.

Be alert! Behold Our God

Incarnational Cycle 2014-2015 Advent – Christmas - Epiphany



November

Saturday, November 29* 6:30 pm Evening Prayer
 Sunday, November 30 10 am 1st Sunday of Advent

December

Sunday, December 7 10 am 2nd Sunday of Advent
 Tuesday, December 9 6:30 pm Sacrament of Reconciliation
 Sunday, December 14 10 am 3rd Sunday of Advent
 3 pm Cantabile Choirs
 Sunday, December 21 10 am 4th Sunday of Advent
 Wednesday, December 24 7 pm Christmas Eve Liturgy followed by refreshments
 Thursday, December 25 10 am Nativity of the Lord
 Sunday, December 28 10 am Holy Family

January

Thursday, January 1 10 am Mary, Mother of God
 Sunday, January 4 10 am Epiphany of the Lord

Day of Eucharistic Devotion

11 am – 3 pm Solemn Exposition and Adoration
 3 pm* Communal Eucharistic devotions concluding with Benediction

Sunday, January 11 10 am Baptism of the Lord

* Incense will be used in these celebrations

Artwork used with permission: Illumination, Mary Southard, CSJ. www.MarySouthardArt.Org



Sister Mary Ellen Killeen

March 29, 1921 - October 3, 2014

BY SISTER BARBARA THIFFAULT

Sister Mary Ellen was born on March 29, 1921 in Timmins, Ontario, the fifth of seven children of Daniel Killeen and Anne Lennon. She grew up in Timmins attending Holy Family School and Timmins Secondary and Vocational School. After training as a hairdresser, she worked in Timmins and Toronto until she entered the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul in Kingston on August 15, 1943.

After making her First Profession of Vows two years later and taking the name Sister Mary Stephen, she was sent to the House of Providence, now Providence Manor, Kingston, to look after the elderly. After one year she was



assigned to night duty at St. Mary's of the Lake Hospital in Kingston. The next year she went to the orphanage located on the Motherhouse property. Her ministry to the sick, orphans and boarders was carried out at St. Anthony's Home, Moose Jaw; St. Mary's Orphanage, Edmonton; Rosary Academy, Athabasca; Providence Hospital, Daysland and St. Vincent de Paul Home in Athabasca. After graduating from St. Vincent de Paul Hospital in Brockville as a Registered Nursing Assistant, she was assigned to the Father Dowd Home in Montreal from 1961 - 1965. She then was assigned to night duty in the Sisters' infirmary until 1978.

For the next nine years she did part-time volunteer work at the St. Vincent

de Paul warehouse in Kingston. In 1987 she attended the Credo Program at Gonzaga University. The following year she returned to the St. Vincent de Paul warehouse in Kingston and remained in that work until failing health necessitated her retirement.

Sister Mary Ellen was called home to her loving God at Providence Motherhouse, Kingston, Ontario, on October 3, 2014 in the 71st year of her religious life.

Sister will be remembered as a prayerful person with a deep devotion to the Eucharist. She was a diligent and devoted woman of Providence who gently served others.

The Mass of Christian Burial, held in the Chapel of Mary, Mother of Compassion, Providence Motherhouse on October 7th, was presided over by Rev. Robert Masters, who also delivered the homily.



Prepare ye, the way of the Lord

SUPPER AND EVENING OF REFLECTION:

Advent Calls and Promises

Thurs Dec 4, 5-9 PM

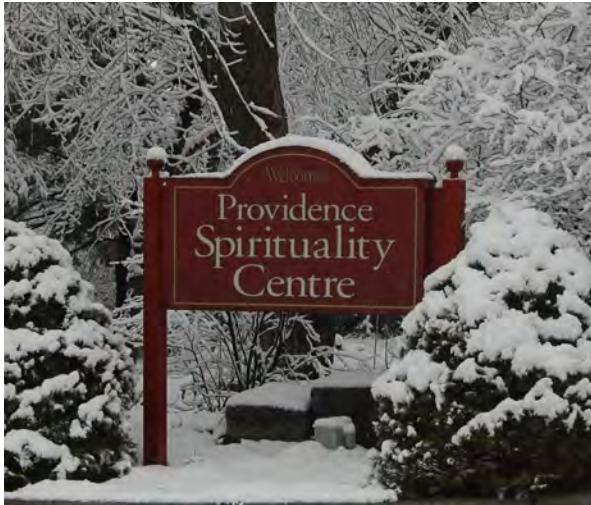
Register by Thu Nov 20

Denise Bérubé, CND

Cost \$25

The Advent season teaches us to wait for what is beyond the obvious. It trains us to see what is behind the apparent. It makes us look for God in all those places we have, until now, ignored. Joan Chittister

Come! Spend time in a quiet atmosphere in order to hear God's Advent calls and promises in the silence of your own heart and the in-between of conversation.



ADVENT GUIDED RETREAT WEEKEND:

Advent Birth Pangs: Staying Awake to the Heart Cry of the World

Fri Dec 5, 7 PM – Sun Dec 7, 1 PM

Register by Fri Nov 21

Denise Bérubé, CND

\$165

The seed of God is in us... We are all meant to be mothers of God, for God is always needing to be born. Meister Eckhart

Advent is a time for open hearts and minds. It invites us to let go of our commitment to the frenetic in a fast-paced world and slows us down to notice the new life coming into being within us and in our world. We will reflect together on the many ways we respond to the call to "give birth to God in our time."

- *Those who prefer a directed retreat are also invited to register.*

SENIORS ADVENT REFLECTION & DINNER:

Advent, Season of Hope, Promise and Transformation

Tues Dec 9, 9:45 AM – 1 PM

Register by Tue Nov 25

Lucy Bethel, SP

\$25

Come, let's pause long enough to discover and become our truest selves, allowing transformation through God revealed to the world in Jesus of Nazareth. Come, slow down, listen to the Spirit and take time to allow the scriptures and reflections to take root in our deepest selves. Reflect, renew, listen, discover and become. *Senior or not – if you'd like to come you're welcome!*

JANUARY PREACHED RETREAT:

How we live the Reign of God today

Mon Jan 26, 4PM – Sat Jan 31, 1 PM

Register by Mon Jan 12

Fr. Eugene O'Reilly, C.Ss.R.

\$360

Jesus proclaimed the Reign of God, not the Kingdom of Heaven. The Beatitudes are the foundation of this Reign.

Father O'Reilly is a Redemptorist priest born in Monaghan, Ireland in 1944. Since 1983, he has preached missions and retreats to parishes, teachers, school boards, clergy and religious throughout Canada and the United States. He has a particular interest in music and has composed a number of religious songs. He has teamed up with other Redemptorists, and together they have produced four recordings.



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Vigil, Witness to Justice



PROGRAM FOUR
Poverty and Food



PROGRAM FIVE
Liturgy in Focus



PROGRAM SIX
Integrity of Creation



PROGRAM SEVEN
Heirloom Seed Sanctuary



PROGRAM EIGHT
Seeds in the Community



PROGRAM NINE
PeaceQuest



PROGRAM TEN
War... For What?



PROGRAM ELEVEN
Welcoming Associates



PROGRAM TWELVE
When God Calls



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POST		CANADA
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