



Nouvelle messe hebdomadaire en français à la cathédrale

À partir du 3 mars, la Cathédrale de Christ Church commencera une célébration de l'eucharistie en français toutes les semaines.

Le Révérend Donald Boisvert, diacre et francophone bilingue, a déclaré que cette proposition répondait aux missions prioritaires de la cathédrale et au plan d'action pastorale du diocèse de Montréal, vu que les deux font appel à un rayonnement francophone.

« Ceci est non seulement une opportunité en or pour attirer de nouveaux membres, mais elle fait partie de nos responsabilités majeures en tant qu'église missionnaire si nous voulons atteindre et évangéliser les Montréalais qui ont quitté d'autres confessions, sans parler des visiteurs et autres touristes. » Il a ajouté: « Puisque la cathédrale est la 'mère'



DONALD BOISVERT

du diocèse en plus d'être une paroisse située stratégiquement dans le centre-ville, il est normal qu'elle fasse exprès d'offrir des offices en

langue française. »

Boisvert a mentionné que l'évêque Barry Clarke a exhorté le diocèse à en faire davantage dans le domaine des pastorales francophones.

Boisvert a indiqué aussi que cette proposition avait été approuvée de façon quasi unanime lors d'une réunion paroissiale – le Forum. Elle était soutenue par les membres d'une petite, mais ancienne, communauté francophone, la Communauté du Rédempteur. Celle-ci s'est réunie récemment pour étudier la Bible ensemble ainsi que pour célébrer l'Eucharistie tous les premiers samedis du mois. Il y a également un soutien des francophones qui assistent aux autres offices à la cathédrale.

Cette messe hebdomadaire du dimanche remplacera celle du samedi qui était mensuelle. On dis-

cute encore dans quelle mesure d'autres activités seront offertes en français, comme l'étude de la Bible.

Boisvert a aussi déclaré que la cathédrale souhaite que la qualité liturgique de la messe dominicale en français soit comparable à celle en anglais. Elle sera chantée. La cathédrale trouvera les fonds pour le faire, ainsi que pour faire de la publicité pendant un an.

Boisvert et le doyen, Paul Kennington, sont tous les deux bilingues, mais Boisvert étant diacre, il ne peut pas encore célébrer la messe. Il s'attend à ce que « le clergé de la cathédrale, aidé par la générosité de nos collègues du diocèse et des laïcs, puisse suffire aux besoins pendant cette année-là. »

Cette nouvelle messe est donc un test, qui sera suivi par un groupe de

paroissiens et de prêtres. Si cet essai s'avère positif et qu'on continue ces offices après un an, « à ce moment-là, la cathédrale devra sérieusement considérer les conséquences sur le financement, le personnel et l'espace. »

Boisvert a mentionné que le diocèse voisin de Québec offre une messe dominicale en français depuis pas mal de temps déjà à la Cathédrale de la Sainte Trinité à Québec. Une communauté de taille moyenne – la Paroisse de Tous les Saints – a été fondée.

Il a dit que cette messe dominicale à Montréal « est un signe majeur de notre implication et du besoin de rayonner vers tous, et en particulier vers nos compatriotes francophones.

« L'Esprit Saint exige de nous cette pastorale. »

(For an English version of this report, see Page 3.)

St. Michael's Mission reaches out to homeless in the Métro

Harvey Shepherd

The two Montreal police officers had had special training in dealing with homeless men who may be more or less deranged. But they were still glad to see Caitlin Murphy in the Berri-UQAM Métro station, a little out of her usual territory.

They were having problems with a man who was for some reason trying to haul a basket of garbage into the station and creating a fair bit of disruption in so doing.

She was able to persuade him to give up this project and return to St. Michael's Mission, in the basement of the downtown Church of St. John the Evangelist, where she had been on staff since May and director of a ground-breaking project since December. There she helped him get something to eat and clean up a bit and eventually found him a bed for the night at the Maison du Père shelter.

Much of her work, though, has been at the Place des Arts Métro station, right next to St. Michael's Mission, where she looks for people in distress, confronting police officers or misbehaving and tries to make things right – or a little less wrong, before the police have no alternative but to take firmer measures.

Since December, she has been part of what organizers believe is a co-operative venture without precedent in North America.

Montreal Mayor Michael Applebaum and Bishop Barry Clarke were among dignitaries on hand for the launch, shortly before Christmas, of the "service point for the homeless downtown," which involves business, social agencies, the Montreal police, the transit network, benevolent medical groups, universities and others.

The service is directed to homeless or otherwise distressed people who, collapse, clash with police or get into other difficulty while in the Place des Arts Métro station – and in the future perhaps a couple of other stations. A lot of these people are among the more than 200 people a day, largely men, often homeless and, many of them, struggling with

mental illness and other problems who patronize the mission, a soup kitchen and day centre.

The "service point" was conceived and is being funded by the Société de développement social de Ville-Marie, an arm of the Ville Marie Borough of Montreal that describes itself as the first "social broker" of its kind in North America.

Damien Silès, chief executive officer of the SDSVM, said it "is proud to have mobilized the business, academic, social, medical and cultural community working to help the homeless in order to create the first Homeless Service Point at metro Place-des-arts." He said the project is to be expanded later to at least a couple of other Métro stations.

He said the project will enable St. Michael's Mission, which has operated for 85 years, to reposition itself to become a one-of-a kind day centre offering, through health-care professionals, services to meet the growing medical needs of some of the more than 200 persons every day who visit St. Michael's Mission.

Two mornings a week, Ms. Murphy, visits the Métro station looking for men and women in distress – many of whom she recognizes from her work at the mission. She invites them back to the mission for the food, emergency clothing and other services the mission has offered for some time but also a new range of referrals and other services, including the efforts of a doctor and nurse in a new examining room.

There are also staff with special qualifications to help Inuit, a significant group among those who visit the centre.

"A better access for vulnerable people, often homeless, to complete care that integrates mental health and substance abuse is important, with strong partnerships between the first-line community agencies and psychiatric hospitals," said Dr. Didier Jutras Aswad, assistant clinical professor in the department of psychiatry, at the Université de Montréal.

"This is the most exciting project yet for St. Michael's Mission," said

George Greene, acting director of the mission. While the mission continues to feed the hungry, "what we

really have to start doing feeds the soul" through a broader range of counselling and other services. "This

is one-stop shopping."

(See also "Gabe Foreman cooks up more than soup" on Page 7)



SPECIALLY TRAINED POLICE officers, social and medical caregivers and representatives of business and government were on hand for press launch at St. Michael's Mission.

(Photo: Harvey Shepherd)

Street magazine looks at intangible religious heritage

Harvey Shepherd

There is a broad consensus in Quebec that the decline of religious practice poses a threat to Quebec's architectural heritage of churches and other religious buildings and that it behooves Quebecers, believers or not, to support its conservation. Some scholars, especially a group of ethnologists at Université Laval in Quebec City, have been developing the idea that Quebec society is also impregnated by an intangible religious heritage, conservation of which should also be the concern of Quebecers. Believers or not.

Just before Christmas, more support for this idea came from what some might consider an unlikely source in Montreal.

Many readers of *The Montreal Anglican* who use the Métro or frequent various other public places in downtown Montreal have no doubt

been approached by vendors offering copies of *L'itinéraire* for \$3 each. Since 1994 this magazine has been sold on the street as a source of income by people who have been unable to make their way in the regular job market, some of them homeless. The vendor keeps \$1.50 of the price of each copy he or she sells.

L'itinéraire devoted a half-dozen pages of its issue for the first part of December – a month of traditions – to several articles by Marie-Lise Rousseau, managing editor (*superviseuse de la rédaction*), and contributor Arnaud Barbet on Quebec's religious heritage, especially its intangible religious heritage.

They interviewed people including Sister Pierrette Leclerc, head of a group called the Mission Patrimoine Religieux, Laurier Turgeon, chair of ethnology at Université Laval preoccupied with religious heritage, and

scholar Benoît Lacroix, a Dominican father and at 97 an example of religious heritage in his own right.

Another specialist they interviewed was Rev. Richard Gauthier, long a specialist in religious heritage and for the last several years a priest of the Anglican Diocese of Montreal. Since October he has been incumbent of St. Mark Longueuil and St. Margaret of Antioch in St. Hubert and he is involved in discussions of the future of the historic Longueuil church building.

Four of these articles are reprinted, almost unchanged, on Pages 4 and 5.

For more of this issue of *L'itinéraire* and for other back issues see the *L'itinéraire* website at www.itineraire.ca. For the current issue see the friendly vendor near your favourite Métro stop or call 514-597-0238, local 231, and subscribe.

Verdun stalwart heads list for 2012 Bishop's Awards

Staff
As the parishioners of the Church of the Epiphany in Verdun rise to the challenges that follow its creation in 2010, Gail Gollan, one of the two parish wardens, is the go-to person, says her fellow warden, Wendy McCullough.

"The most commonly heard phrase you hear is 'Ask Gail,' says her fellow warden, who describes Ms. Gollan as "a woman of tireless energy and devotion who is ready to take on any task not only for the welfare of the church but also for the welfare of the people."

Bishop Barry Clarke joined in the

praise at the January meeting of the Diocesan Council when he announced the choice of Ms. Gollan, a warden of the new parish since it was created from the former All Saints and St. Clement's Parishes in Verdun and St. Aidan's in the Ville Émard district of Montreal, as the recipient of the 2012 Bishop's Award for the Diocese of Montreal. The church worships in the former St. Clement's Church on Wellington Street in Verdun.

Wendy McCullough said her fellow-warden, a former parishioner of St. Clement's "keeps the people at the center of her work.

"She has helped us to move forward with the merger."

Rev. Patrick Wheeler said Ms. Gollan has been a "steady pastoral presence" through this period and has been particularly active in activities with seniors.

Along with the diocese-wide Bishop's Award, the bishop announced recipients for awards for each of the four territorial archdeaconries in the diocese. The announcement of the 2012 awards was a little belated because of the pressure of other events. The recipients:

- The recipient for the **Archdeaconry of the South Shore** will be **Valerie Bennett**. She assists in the liturgy at her parish, St. Paul's Church in Greenfield Park, and on occasion leads worship in other parishes. She also serves, among other things, as a pastoral visitor and is people's warden and parish communicator for her parish and its representative to the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund. She has been a lay reader in the parish and trained in the Education for

Ministry program. She is an active participant in diocesan affairs.

- **Carol Comer**, the people's warden of Holy Trinity Ste. Agathe is the recipient for the **Archdeaconry of St. Andrew's** in the northern part of the diocese. Archdeacon Ralph Leavitt, rector of the parish, says she "has been involved in every ministry in the parish for many, many years"
- **Barbara and Edward (Ted) Humphreys** are being honoured in the **Archdeaconry of Montreal** for their efforts over the years in facing the challenges their parish, St. Ignatius in Montreal North, faces in a district of declining English-speaking population. A fellow parishioner says the couple and Audrey Saunders are sometimes called the "Three Musketeers" because of their vital contribution.

- **Penny and Raymond Noël** of the Parish of St. Andrew and St. Mark in Dorval receive the award for the **Archdeaconry of St. Lawrence**. In addition to their many activities in the parish, where both have served as wardens and Raymond is stewardship co-ordinator. Both have also been active in the wider mission of the church, recently including the partnership between the Diocese of



Montreal and the Diocese of Masasi in Tanzania. They have served as host to Bishop Patrick Mwachiko of Masasi on several occasions and Penny has herself visited Masasi three times. She is chair of the diocesan Partners in Mission Committee and he has been chair of the Stewardship of the Environment Committee.

The awards will be presented later, probably in the parishes of the recipients. However, the bishop took the occasion of the Diocesan Council meeting to honour a recipient whose busy schedule, along with his own, had prevented presentation up to then of a 2011 award. In the photo, he's presenting the 2011 plaque for the Archdeaconry of St. Lawrence to Susan Winn of St. George's Ste. Anne de Bellevue.

Launch brings interim mayor to St. Michael's Mission



MONTREAL MAYOR MICHAEL APPLEBAUM was on hand for the launch of an innovative "one-stop" outreach to homeless people in the Métro.

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Sunday, March 3

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Sunday, March 10

4:30 p.m.

Evening Prayer

Peter Stands and Leads

Palm Sunday, March 24

10:00 a.m. Dramatic Reading of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ

Afire for youth work



PARTICIPANTS in one of several "Ignite" workshops for parish youth workers pose after a workshop in Chambly. In the back row are Rev. Robert Camara of St. George's Châteauguay, Rev. Eileen Steele of St. Stephen's with St. James Chambly, Susan Sutton of St. George's and Mark Dunwoody, diocesan youth consultant. In front are Geoff Greer and Debbie Stevens-Boyer, both of St. George's.

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Cathedral to begin weekly French Eucharist in March

Staff

Christ Church Cathedral will launch a weekly Eucharist in French March 3.

Rev. Donald Boisvert, a bilingual francophone deacon on the Cathedral staff, said the move responds to mission priorities of the Cathedral and in the Ministry Action Plan of the Diocese of Montreal, both of which call for outreach in French.

“Not only is this a unique opportunity for us to attract new members, but, more importantly, it is part of our broader responsibility as God’s missional church, particularly in our outreach and evangelization to Montrealers disaffected from other churches, and to visitors and tourists,” he said. “In its role as mother church of the Diocese and as a strategic downtown Montreal parish, it also makes good sense that the Cathedral should be more deliberate in offering French-language services.”

Deacon Boisvert noted that Bishop Barry Clarke has urged more French ministry.

Deacon Boisvert said the proposal was endorsed almost unanimously at a parish gathering called the Forum. It was supported by the members of a small francophone community with a long history, the *Communauté du Rédempteur*, which has recently been meeting for

Bible study and the Eucharist on the first Saturday of the month. There is also support from francophones who attend the largely English-language worship services at the Cathedral.

The new service will replace the *Communauté’s* monthly Eucharist. Discussions were continuing about the extent to which the Cathedral will offer separate French-language activities like Bible study.

The weekly service in French will begin at 12:45 p.m. This will permit worshippers from the 10 a.m. service and those arriving for the French-language service to enjoy a common coffee hour.

Deacon Boisvert said the Cathedral wants the liturgical quality of the French Eucharist to be on a par with other Sunday offerings. The Eucharist will be sung. The Cathedral is providing special funds for this and for advertising and publicity for the one-year period.

Both Deacon Boisvert and Cathedral Dean Paul Kennington are bilingual, although as a deacon Dr. Boisvert is not yet authorized to cel-



DONALD BOISVERT

brate the Eucharist. He expects that “Cathedral clergy, supplemented by the generosity of diocesan colleagues and key lay members, should be sufficient to carry us through the one-year period.”

The new Eucharist is a one-year experiment, to be monitored by a group of parishioners and clergy. If experience justifies continuing the services after that, “then the Cathedral will have to give serious thought to the financial, personnel and space implications.”

Deacon Boisvert noted that the neighbouring Diocese of Quebec has been offering a weekly Sunday Eucharist in French for some time at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in Quebec City. A mid-size French-speaking Anglican community – the *Paroisse de Tous les Saints* – has emerged.

He said the weekly Eucharist in Montreal “constitutes a powerful sign of our commitment to reaching out, as a Church for all people, to our French-speaking fellow citizens.”

“The Spirit is calling us to this ministry.”

Fair trade boutique tops \$11,000



WHEN PROCEEDS WERE COUNTED, it turned out that the Fair Trade Boutique November 26-December 2 in the Atrium entrance to the Diocesan offices sold over \$11,000 of fair trade products, helping to artisans in developing countries earn a fair income. The Boutique was organized by the Fair Trade Working Group of Christ Church Cathedral in collaboration with the Dix Mille Villages store on St Denis Street. Christ Church Cathedral received 15 per cent of sales, or \$1,650, towards its own outreach program. (The Cathedral share of proceeds from the 2011 boutique was donated to Crossroads International, with projects in mutual learning, solidarity and collective action.)

One Fair Trade story: a cow in Bangladesh

Volunteers and some of the shoppers at the pre-Christmas Fair Trade Boutique run by volunteers from Christ Church Cathedral were inspired by life stories about people behind the products. One was the story of Snehorani Halder, who works for an artisan group in Bangladesh called Prokritee, which oversees job-creation programs to generate income for, especially, poor rural women who are heads of households. The daughter of a poor farmer, Snehorani went to school until age 10, but later dropped out of

school to help her take care of Snehorani’s five younger sisters. When Snehorani was 16, her parents arranged for her marriage to a neighbouring farmer. Unfortunately, six years ago, her husband became ill and was unable to work so Snehorani needed to find a job. Prokritee hires poor and widowed women to make handmade paper products, which Snehorani has been doing now for five years. Now, at age 30, Snehorani is a proud mother of three boys, whom she hopes will one day attend university.

News in brief

Revisit to Masasi

Bishop Barry Clarke and Executive Archdeacon Janet Griffith are to visit the Diocese of Masasi this month in the latest of a series of visits back and forth under the partnership agreement between the two dioceses. The latest visits were by the bishop and archdeacon to Masasi in July 2011 and by Bishop Patrick Mwachiko and Rev. Deacon Geoffrey Monjesa, development officer of the Masasi diocese, to Montreal last fall, where they attended the Montreal diocesan synod and Deacon Monjesa was ordained to that order.

Quebec Lodge Foundation gets a reprieve

A group hoping to resurrect the Quebec Lodge camp on Lake Massawippi has received an eleventh-hour extension on a deadline to raise \$1.5 million. Under an agreement with the Diocese of Quebec, that’s how much the Quebec Lodge Foundation needed to raise by December 31 to demonstrate the new camp’s viability.

By the deadline, \$920,000 in donations and pledges had been raised. However, the following day an additional pledge of \$250,000 was received, bringing the total to nearly \$1.2 million.

That was close enough for Bishop Dennis Drainville to offer a three-month extension, which was approved by the diocesan executive council on January 4. The foundation now has until March 31 to raise the remaining \$300,000. If that goal is reached, the diocese will donate the land to the group. If not, it can look for other buyers for the land.

The foundation hopes to re-open the summer camp starting this summer. By the summer of 2015 the new camp would accommodate up to 90 campers in collections of round, semi-permanent tents called “yurts.” Opened in 1943, the original Quebec Lodge was run by the Diocese of Quebec as a Christian summer camp. It ceased operations in 2005 owing to financial difficulties. In 2010, the diocese sold a portion of the campsite to a developer for \$3.2 million and entered into the agreement with the Quebec Lodge Foundation.

Accentuating positive to be discussed in May

A tool for organizational development and management that has had a vogue in the United States and elsewhere for about two decades in business, government and non-profit organizations can also be applied in churches. Rob Voyle, an Episcopalian priest born and raised in New



ROB VOYLE

Zealand and now based in Hillsboro, Oregon, is a specialist in using “Appreciative Inquiry” and will lead a session on “Understanding the Appreciative Way and Transformation” for the Diocese of Montreal May 9-11. Appreciative Inquiry has been described as a method for increasing what an organization does well rather than eliminating what it does badly.

In a church context Dr. Voyle describes it as “an intentional and strategic way of engaging in transformation by discovering and growing what is life-giving to the congregation.”

Robert J. Voyle, who has degrees in psychology, theology, counseling and mechanical engineering, has extensive experience in both the church and executive counselling. His website is at www.voyle.com/about.html.

Fresh Expressions Canada launches free resource

Early response has been gratifying to a new Canadian downloadable free resource that its developers hope will help people “take permission” to reimagine what a church would look like that could meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Rev. Nick Brotherwood of St. Stephen’s Westmount, team leader of Fresh Expressions Canada, said that by Christmas over 200 people, three of them bishops, had downloaded *Reimagining Church: shaped for mission*, launched at the end of October. Developed by Dr. John Bowen, professor of evangelism and director of the Institute of Evangelism at Wycliffe College in the University of Toronto, the five-session course helps churches “start the conversation around what it might mean to be a church shaped by and for God’s mission in our world.” Nick Brotherwood said church leaders have shown themselves willing to give people permission to break out of familiar ways of trying to pass on church tradition. “But we haven’t taken that permission and asked what it means.” Fresh Expressions Canada is an initiative of the Wycliffe College Institute of Evangelism with the Anglican bishop of Montreal, the Right Rev. Barry Clarke. Fresh Expressions Canada, “seeks to encourage the development of fresh expressions of church alongside more traditional expressions, with the aim of seeing a more mission-shaped church take shape throughout the country.”

For more information contact Nick Brotherwood, team leader Fresh Expressions Canada, at nick.brotherwood@freshexpressions.ca or call 514-246 5796.

Obituary

George Long chaplain for 25 years at youth protection services

Rev. Canon George Alfred Long, who served as a chaplain for 25 years with the youth protection services in Quebec, died December 8 in the Veterans’ Hospital in Ste. Anne de Bellevue. He was 90.

Born in Montreal, he served in the Royal Canadian Navy during the Second World War and later worked for the youth protection services before studies, largely evenings, that led to his becoming a lay reader and eventually a priest. He attended McGill University and the Montreal Diocesan Theological College and was ordained as a deacon in 1967 and a priest in 1968.

His career as a priest included service to parishes in Grenville, Calumet, Longueuil and Sutton in the Diocese of Montreal, but he was particularly active as a chaplain. As well as his chaplaincy in the youth protection services, he served for several years as a chaplain at the Ste. Anne’s hospital where he would later spend his own last years, as well as for several branches of the Royal Canadian Legion and the War Amputees of Canada.

Archdeacon J. Wallace Sparling, former executive archdeacon in the Diocese of Montreal and now priest-in-charge at the Parish of Bedford/Phillipsburgh/Farnham, and a friend of Canon Long’s from their days as a lay ministers and theology students, recalled that, “He always had fun and enjoyed life very much.”

Yet he was also “totally committed to whatever he did.”

While a handicap limited his own participation in sports, Canon Long was a great fan, especially of baseball, and this was an asset in his work with youth.

Bishop Barry B. Clarke, Archdeacon Sparling, Rev. Canon Timothy Smart and Rev. Stephen Petrie – who as chaplain at the veterans’ hospital knew Canon Long there in recent years – participated at the funeral at Grace Anglican Church December 13 in Sutton.

Canon Long was predeceased by his beloved wife A.E. Winnifred Long (Tidy), sister Gwendolyn N. Long, brother Gordon A. Long and sister Audrey M. Olmstead (the late Harold).

Mary Benoy

A beloved member of St. Joseph of Nazareth in Brossard, Mary Benoy, died over the Christmas holidays. She is remembered as an elegant lady who touched many lives with her gentle spirit and her many talents and as the widow of Benny Benoy, the colourful founder of the Logifem shelter for women in Montreal. They are survived by a daughter, Linda.



GEORGE LONG

Le patrimoine religieux à échelle humaine

Marie-Lise Rousseau

On pourrait croire à tort qu'en expulsant la religion catholique de

leur quotidien dans les années 60, les Québécois ont aussi rejeté toute forme de spiritualité. Au contraire:



RICHARD GAUTHIER

(photo: Marie-Lise Rousseau)

en étant libres de vivre comme bon nous semble, nous serions encore plus empreints de spiritualité aujourd'hui. Selon Sœur Pierrette Leclerc, présidente de Mission Patrimoine Religieux, la spiritualité est essentielle, surtout dans un monde dominé par l'économie capitaliste. « Qu'est-ce qu'on va faire de nos millions? Ce n'est pas l'argent qui rend heureux », dit-elle, convaincue, en entretien téléphonique.

La religieuse en sait quelque chose: elle a travaillé durant 25 ans avec des délinquants. « Ce sont des gens à la recherche de plus qu'eux-mêmes. Quand on n'a plus rien, on s'attache à l'essentiel. « N'est-ce pas le besoin de chaque personne, de trouver un sens à sa vie au-delà du métro-boulot-dodo? Le père Benoît Lacroix définit cette quête spirituelle comme la recherche du sacré (lire notre entrevue).

Selon Richard Gauthier, spécialiste de la question du patrimoine religieux et prêtre anglican, les origi-

nes du rapport complexe des Québécois à la religion catholique remontent à l'Antiquité, quand les Romains ont choisi de vivre la religion de façon liturgique, en imposant des règles plutôt que de mettre de l'avant l'être humain. « On a raté le train, car si on avait suivi l'approche humaine, on aurait mis sur soi d'abord, sur le cheminement personnel », explique-t-il. Richard Gauthier se dit heureux de vivre à notre époque, où chacun est libre d'explorer la spiritualité de son choix et d'exercer son esprit critique face aux religions.

Qui a dit qu'il faut croire en Dieu pour avoir une vie spirituelle? Certainement pas André Comte-Sponville, philosophe français et auteur de l'essai *L'Esprit de l'athéisme*, qui se définit comme un athée fidèle. « Athée, parce que je ne crois en aucun Dieu. Fidèle, parce que je reste attaché aux valeurs véhiculées par cette tradition-là. La morale des Évangiles me convient. Et puis toute

notre civilisation est judéo-chrétienne. Faudrait-il, parce que je suis athée, travailler à sa disparition? », a-t-il déclaré en entrevue à la revue *Psychologies* en 2009. C'est la base du principe de la spiritualité athée: « Nous sommes des êtres finis ouverts sur l'infini; des êtres éphémères ouverts sur l'éternité; des êtres relatifs ouverts sur l'absolu. La spiritualité consiste à expérimenter cette ouverture, à l'exercer, à la vivre. »

De nos jours, on retrouve beaucoup cette forme spiritualité chez les artistes. George Leroux, professeur de philosophie à l'UQAM, donne en exemple les films de Bernard Émond: bien que le cinéaste se définisse comme athée, il dépeint des personnages en quête de spiritualité. « Dans la spiritualité, il y a toujours la recherche du dépassement, du bien commun, plutôt que l'abandon à la facilité », explique le philosophe.

(Marie-Lise Rousseau est superviseuse de la rédaction de l'itinéraire.)

Aux églises, citoyens!

Arnaud Barbet

Montréal se vide de ses églises. Saint-Marc, au cœur de Rosemont/Petite-Patrie, est à vendre depuis quelques années déjà. La conversion de l'édifice est proche. Un mouvement citoyen a décidé de se réapproprier les lieux pour un temps et de lui trouver une vocation citoyenne. Christine, artiste mosaïste, a répondu à l'appel du mouvement *Imaginons Saint-Marc* et profite ainsi d'un vaste atelier béni des dieux pendant que d'autres sirotent un café solidaire dans la sacristie. « C'est un projet utopique, mais la volonté citoyenne de reprendre sa place dans la cité est bien réelle! », explique-t-elle.

« La future transformation de Saint-Marc n'est pas une exception », signale Lyne Bernier, spécialiste de l'histoire des monuments ecclésiastiques au Québec. Depuis 2005, 62 églises ont été vendues à Montréal, un chiffre en expansion constante selon elle. Mme Bernier félicite cette démarche de consultation citoyenne et les groupes communautaires qui s'y rattachent afin de ne pas laisser Saint-Marc aux mains de promoteurs privés. « C'est un mouvement exceptionnel. Malheureusement, cet engouement ne se retrouve pas dans tous les arrondissements de Montréal », ajoute-t-elle.

Que deviennent ces églises mises en vente par le diocèse? Quand on demande à Christine ce qu'elle pense de l'implantation potentielle d'un spa ou d'un ensemble de condos pour l'église Saint-Marc, elle s'esclaffe et dit: « La maison de Dieu est pour tous, alors même si elle perd sa fonction religieuse, elle doit rester au peuple! L'argent des promoteurs n'a rien à y faire! ». Et pourtant, dans la Petite Italie, l'église Saint-Jean-de-la-Croix est devenue en 2004 un ensemble de condominiums primé par l'Association de la construction du Québec. « Un exemple déplorable et inintéressant » pour le directeur du Conseil du patrimoine religieux du Québec, Jocelyn Groux, qui renchérit: « Nous essayons avant tout de promouvoir des projets où le lieu de culte, l'usage culturel et l'échange communautaire se côtoient. Saint-Jean-de-la-Croix restera, on l'espère, une exception. »

Selon Lyne Bernier, une bonne conversion consiste à mettre le lieu à la disposition de la communauté.

Elle ajoute que « le lieu de culte doit garder un usage public et redevenir un lieu de rassemblement symbolique ». Ce n'est pas M. Archambault qui va la contredire. Petit monsieur fringant et paroissien de l'église Saint-Eugène, sur la rue Beaubien, il tient fermement à son petit appartement à loyer modique pour personnes âgées, avec vue sur l'église s'il vous plaît! Cette petite résidence a été mise en place par l'Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal et elle est érigée sur le terrain de l'église avec un accès direct à celle-ci. « C'est tellement agréable d'aller à la messe en ascenseur! », dit M. Archambault en souriant. L'extérieur de l'édifice est resté intact et l'intérieur a été aménagé pour offrir de nombreux services et une salle communautaire aux résidents.

Catholiques, anglicanes ou protestantes, les églises sont de plus en plus nombreuses à être mises en vente, souligne Jocelyn Groux. Certaines font partie du patrimoine national et sont donc protégées; d'autres, beaucoup plus nombreuses, restent à la merci des promoteurs immobiliers, explique-t-il. Une partie de ces églises garderont leur vocation de culte; d'autres seront démolies et certaines devraient servir à la communauté. « Il est réellement important que les citoyens s'impliquent afin de préserver les vestiges de leur passé, de leur histoire et de leur culture tout en créant un lieu de vie et d'échange pour l'avenir », conclut-il.

(Redigé pour l'itinéraire)



ÉGLISE ST-MARC

(Photo Arnaud Barbet)

'The unrelenting fate of all of us'

In some ways we may bewail the decline of religion, at least in some of its aspects, but in other ways it may feel like we could not get rid of religion even if we wanted to.

On the one hand, many people who are not especially religious retain a nostalgic refection for some rites and customs, especially around Christmas and Easter. (The articles reprinted here originally appeared just before Christmas, with a short introduction mentioning the persistence of Christmas traditions.) Some people are also on the lookout for new spiritualities or fresh expressions that could breathe new life into old ones.

On the other hand, people also complain that the secular and political approaches of other people, especially people they disagree with, seem to be marked by unpleasant religious characteristics like dogmatism.

People at their idealistic best also express those ideals in imagery that seems to echo that of religion and Christianity in particular. There is a vague sentiment that things were once somehow simpler and better than they are today. There is hope that a better world is coming again. There is a pervasive feeling that people are often different - better or worse - than they seem.

The maverick German psychologist Wolfgang Giegerich has argued that in the modern world the Incarnation of Christ remains, "a psychological reality, that is, not a mere reality of faith, but a real factor of our intellectual life, an objective might with determining force that has to be reckoned with in reality because we are all in it, and exposed to its workings in our ordinary practical reality. It is not a mere claim, an idea that we may or may not entertain. It is not (a representation) in us,

but we are *in it*. It is the world in which we live, the scope of our existence. And thus it is absolutely irrelevant whether we believe in it, have inwardly experienced it and accept it or not. It is the unrelenting fate of all of us." (*Technology and the Soul: From the Nuclear Bomb to the World Wide Web*, New Orleans, Spring Journal Books, 2007)

Without necessarily going that far, the accompanying articles from a December issue of the Montreal street newspaper explore some of these themes and their implications as they play out in Quebec, with particular reference to church heritage architecture in a secular age and the fate of customs once rooted in religion and through an interview with the Dominican priest and historian of popular culture - and spiritual mentor of the late Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau - Benoît Lacroix.

- Harvey Shepherd

Not quite that old-time religion



NOT QUITE THAT OLD-TIME RELIGION. While many churches are in decline, the religious heritage of Quebec and the Western world in general has its legacy, which sometimes shows up in surprising ways. Some of these are explored in articles reprinted in this issue from the street newspaper *L'itinéraire*. The editor of *The Montreal Anglican* noticed another case in point: a new jeans store, an affiliate of an international group, that opened in The Eaton Centre late last year.

(Photo: Harvey Shepherd)

Patrimoine immatériel, que faire de toi?

Marie-Lise Rousseau

Il existe autour de nous une quantité innombrable de rues et de villages dont le nom est emprunté à des glorieux canonisés. De Saint-Constant à Saint-Tite, du boulevard

Saint-Joseph à la rue Saint-Paul, ça n'en finit plus de finir. Idem pour la quantité d'églises. Montréal n'est pas la ville aux 100 clochers pour rien. Tout ça, c'est du patrimoine matériel. Mais il y a aussi un autre patrimoine,

dit immatériel, qu'on ne peut ni voir ni toucher, mais qui donne tout son sens aux objets et aux lieux de culte.

« C'est beau l'Oratoire Saint-Joseph, mais dans 50 ans, est-ce qu'on saura qui était le frère André?

» s'inquiète Sœur Pierrette Leclerc, présidente de Mission Patrimoine Religieux.

Les savoir-faire traditionnels, la transmission des connaissances, les métiers artisanaux, les coutumes, les fêtes et les rituels, entre autres, constituent un patrimoine immatériel religieux. En 2007, le gouvernement du Québec a donné au département d'ethnologie de l'Université Laval, à Québec, le mandat de dresser l'inventaire de ce patrimoine, « qu'on connaît très peu et très mal », selon Laurier Turgeon, titulaire de la chaire en ethnologie de l'université.

Au cours des cinq dernières années, l'équipe de l'Inventaire du patrimoine immatériel religieux (ou IPIR) de ce département d'ethnologie a réalisé un travail de moine: jusqu'à l'été dernier, une petite équipe d'étudiants est allée à la rencontre d'une quarantaine de communautés religieuses pour documenter leurs pratiques ancestrales. Cet inventaire est répertorié sur Internet, où, grâce à des entrevues vidéo et à des visites virtuelles interactives, les internautes peuvent reconstituer la mémoire d'autrefois. On peut par exemple y observer des religieux tresser à la main et bénir des rameaux d'olivier pour le dimanche des Rameaux, célébré une semaine avant le dimanche de Pâques, ou encore y lire l'histoire de la création de la crèche sculptée de l'église de Saint-Jean-Port-Joli. Mais il reste encore beaucoup à faire: il existe 240 communautés religieuses dans la belle province.

Laurier Turgeon explique l'urgence de recueillir ce patrimoine par l'âge des religieux: « Les communautés sont vieillissantes et lorsque des personnes décèdent, on perd ce patrimoine transmis par la parole. » Contrairement aux précédentes générations, il n'y a plus de relève, d'où la nécessité de recueillir ce savoir.

Pourquoi conserver des pratiques qui peuvent sembler obsolètes en 2012? « C'est une partie importante de l'histoire du Québec », répond le chercheur, mentionnant la valeur ethnologique des objets d'autrefois. Selon Sœur Pierrette Leclerc, le patrimoine religieux fait partie de nos racines. « Si on coupe les racines d'un arbre, il ne pourra pas vivre. C'est la même chose pour la nation québécoise. »

Selon George Leroux, professeur de philosophie à l'UQAM, on ne

peut pas renier notre patrimoine religieux, car il correspond aux fondements de la société dans laquelle nous vivons aujourd'hui, ce qu'on a tendance à oublier. L'éducation et le syndicalisme sont deux exemples de cet héritage sécularisé. « Les valeurs chrétiennes ne sont plus rattachées à des croyances, mais elles sont encore vivantes », résume-t-il, prenant en exemple la solidarité et le souci que nous manifestons envers les plus démunis, qui découlent du célèbre « aimer son prochain » du catholicisme.

Diffuser le patrimoine

Conserver le patrimoine est une chose, mais le diffuser en est une autre. L'IPIR s'en charge sur son site Web. Laurier Turgeon affirme non sans fierté que le site a reçu 80 000 visites en un an, témoignage de l'intérêt des Québécois envers leur patrimoine, malgré la baisse draconienne de la fréquentation des églises.

Cet inventaire est notamment utilisé par les enseignants du programme d'Éthique et culture religieuse, en place depuis 2008. George Leroux, qui a participé à la création du programme, se dit satisfait de l'enseignement du patrimoine religieux qui se fait dans le cadre de ce cours destiné aux jeunes du primaire et du secondaire. « On devait éviter de mettre de côté notre héritage patrimonial, et en même temps, il fallait aller à la rencontre des autres religions », dit-il à propos du contenu du cours.

Le 19 octobre dernier, la nouvelle *Loi sur le patrimoine culturel* entrain en vigueur au Québec et remplaçait la *Loi sur les biens culturels*, qui datait de 1972. En incluant l'immatériel dans sa définition de patrimoine, cette loi favorise le financement de projets comme celui de l'IPIR. Cette décision fait suite à la convention de l'UNESCO sur la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel immatériel.

(Pour consulter l'Inventaire du patrimoine religieux immatériel du Québec, consultez www.ipir.ulaval.ca. Sœur Pierrette Leclerc fait référence au frère André, né Albert Besette, orphelin à 12 ans, qui a été à l'origine de la création l'Oratoire Saint-Joseph, au début du XX^e siècle. Ce temple est aujourd'hui le plus grand sanctuaire au monde dédié à Saint-Joseph. Marie-Lise Rousseau est superviseuse de la rédaction de l'itinéraire.)

Benoît Lacroix: Patrimoine humain

Marie-Lise Rousseau

« Je vais t'en montrer, du patrimoine », me dit le père Benoît Lacroix après plus d'une heure d'entrevue à son bureau, au couvent des Dominicains Saint-Albert-le-Grand. Le vieil homme se lève alors et me tend un livre daté de 1496. Lui aussi, à 97 ans, fait partie du patrimoine québécois, ayant connu près d'un siècle d'évolution de la présence religieuse au Québec.

L'itinéraire (LI): *Quelle est la place du patrimoine religieux québécois aujourd'hui?*

Benoît Lacroix (B. L.): On se définit à partir de racines familiales et sociales, mais il reste encore beaucoup de racines religieuses au Québec. Beaucoup de jeunes athées me disent « prie pour que je réussisse mes examens ».

Il y a encore une confiance dans la prière, mais il n'y a plus d'étiquette religieuse. Le patrimoine n'est pas actif comme autrefois, mais il est là.

Dans le folklore matériel, il y a encore des bancs pour prier, des croix, des églises, des temples. On ne détruira jamais ça. Les gens ont besoin d'un folklore matériel pour incarner leurs sentiments. Croyant ou pas, les gens ont besoin de rites. Comme en amour, on a besoin de dire et d'entendre « je t'aime ». C'est un goût de spiritualité qui se vit de façon libre.

LI: *Les Québécois sont-ils en conflit avec leur patrimoine religieux?*

B. L.: Les Québécois ne boudent pas la religion; ils boudent les curés. On a nos responsabilités, on a mis trop de lois. Les gens ne pouvaient plus supporter qu'on leur dise toujours comment faire, et ils avaient raison. Sans liberté, il n'y a pas de religion. C'est plus facile d'être religieux librement aujourd'hui. Autrefois le clergé était tellement puissant, j'ai vécu ça, moi, j'ai 97 ans! La liberté, c'est plus humain et intelligent que l'obligation. Par contre, on

peut-être jeté le bébé avec l'eau du bain.

LI: *En effet, vous dites souvent qu'on a perdu le sens du sacré. Qu'en est-il au juste?*

B. L.: Le sacré, ça touche au secret et au mystérieux. C'est personnel à chacun. Parfois, c'est un objet qui a une valeur personnelle comme un collier, une bague. On dit souvent: « touche pas à ça, c'est sacré ». Autrefois on ne pouvait pas toucher aux hosties, au ciboire, au calice, car c'était sacré. Les gens en ont eu assez et se sont mis à sacrer en utilisant ces mots, c'en est un exemple. On a perdu le sens du sacré, parce qu'on est devenu un peu vulgaire. Le sacré et la pudeur, ça va ensemble. L'hypersexualisation est un exemple de perte du sacré. Mais on a tous besoin de croire au sacré.

LI: *S'est-on éloigné de la spiritualité en s'éloignant de la pratique religieuse?*

B. L.: Quand on vient au monde, c'est d'abord l'univers qui nous accueille. L'univers a des rites, les saisons sont rituelles. L'hiver arrive après l'automne, c'est inévitable. Les plus beaux rituels sont ceux qui font partie de la nature. Je suis interpellé par les Amérindiens, parce que pour moi, le plus important, c'est d'aimer la nature, les fleurs, le soleil, les étoiles... Les Amérindiens prient toujours avec la nature. Avant de tuer un chevreuil, l'Amérindien le remercie pour la vie qu'il lui donne. Je suis très sensible à leur spiritualité. Nous, les capitalistes qu'on est, on veut conquérir la nature et faire de l'argent avec.

LI: *Comment transmettre le goût du sacré aux nouvelles générations?*

B. L.: Quand on n'a pas eu d'instruction religieuse, il faut suivre son instinct, se poser des questions. Vous, qui êtes une jeune femme, pourrez un jour choisir comment parler du Christ, de la bonté, de l'amour et de la compassion à vos enfants. Les enfants ont besoin de savoir pourquoi on meurt, pourquoi on vit.



DU PATRIMOINE HUMAIN ET MATÉRIEL: le père Benoît Lacroix, 97 ans, feuillette un livre de sa bibliothèque daté de 1496.

(Photo: Marie-Lise Rousseau)

Song and joy in Cowansville

Robert F. Morell

It was an unseasonably mild evening in early December as we arrived at the Cowansville Penitentiary for the monthly Bible study. However, on this occasion, our usual group of suspects included folk and blues singer/guitarist Dale Boyle who had agreed to give a concert for the inmates. The show would be the culmination of several attempts over the last year to stage an entertainment event for the inmates, whom, as volunteers at the prison, we have gotten to know and like very much through Bible studies. Prison chaplain Tim Smart, had tried on a few occasions to realize the dream of such a concert for the inmates. Our goal was to bring some happiness and joy into their lives but we had kept hitting roadblocks. Now as we approached the prison armed only with approvals for a volunteer musi-

cian, his guitar and harmonica, we were excited but guardedly optimistic that the dream would become reality. Only one brief snag occurred when the guitar and case were passing through the scanner and the guard spotted something on his screen that looked like a cell phone – an absolute no-no – but it turned out to be Dale's electronic guitar tuner.

We entered the chapel shortly before the inmates began to arrive. Since we expected the usual number of about 20 to 25 men for the Bible study, chairs were set up in a circle. The inmates began to trickle in, greeting the volunteers as usual with handshakes and hugs and being introduced to Dale, who they had heard would be there. Then as Nick, one of the inmates, came face to face with Dale, there was momentary shock. They yelled each other's names and embraced. Incredibly, it



DALE BOYLE in concert recently at the Parish of St. Andrew and St. Mark in Dorval. (Photo: Barbara Peden)

turned out that they both come from the same small town in the Gaspé, and that the last time they saw each

other was six or seven years ago when Dale sang a song that he wrote at Nick's father's funeral. Dale wrote the song, "Small Town Van Gogh," as a tribute to Nick's father, Tennyson Johnson, a Gaspé-born painter. Dale said he had such an emotional connection with the song that had he only performed it publicly twice, once during a folk performance, and the other time at Tennyson's funeral. When everyone took their seats, naturally Dale and Nick sat beside each other.

Tim began the evening as usual by asking a question, this time, "What is your favourite music?" Around the circle each person, inmates and volunteers alike, gave their answer. Clearly, Dale remembered the answers and with only a rough set list, he quickly adapted the show, which included lots of group participation and clapping, to include

songs that people wanted to hear. Part way through the first of two sets he said, "I cannot be in this place with you guys and NOT sing this," as he hammered out a medley starting with Elvis' "That's Alright" and switching half way to "Folsom Prison Blues", only replacing the word "Folsom" with "Cowansville" to broad smiles and chuckles all around. The inmates' reactions were varied but some stood out. Randy, who is normally quiet, shy but thoughtful when called upon to speak, had his eyes closed throughout the show, head tilted upwards with one leg keeping the beat, fingers snapping and a look of absolute bliss on his face. Bruce, with an encyclopaedic knowledge of music, kept up a running banter with Dale, calling out songs and reciting lyrics that Dale always seemed to know and willing-

continued on page 7

THE STILLNESS WITHIN

A column by Cedric Cobb – where you might find a meditation, a poem, an awareness exercise or an inspiration.



February: a month for loving – yourself

I think of the story of the storm and everyone waking and seeing the distant yet familiar figure far across the water calling to them, and how we are all preparing for that abrupt waking, and that calling, and that moment we have to say yes, except it will not come so grandly, so Biblically, but more subtly and intimately in the face of the one you know you have to love.
from *The True Love* by David Whyte

February is the month for “lovers.” What is more, it can be a perfect opportunity to embrace the way of the heart – the way of compassion, kindness, and care toward ourselves, others, and the earth. As we follow this path in our daily lives, we will find healing, restoration, and wholeness. But, as many sages have pointed out, the key is to first be able to love ourselves, and to let go of any self-hatred that may burden our hearts.

This notion of loving oneself might seem to some to be a selfish proposition, but here I am speaking of the kind of love for one’s self which expands our consciousness rather than constricts it. For in truth, if our hearts remain closed to ourselves we really have nothing to give to others. Derek Walcott add-

resses this issue in his poem “Love after Love.” He says:

*Give wine. Give bread. Give back your heart
To itself, to the stranger who has loved you*

*All your life, whom you ignored
For another, who knows you by heart.*

Take down the love letters from the bookshelf,

*The photographs, the desperate notes,
Peel your image from the mirror.
Sit. Feast on your life.*

In other words, we have failed to acknowledge our true worthiness to love and be loved for far too long. Now is the time to let go of these false images of ourselves. Now is the time to honour and feast on our lives.

In David Whyte’s poem “The True Love,” he speaks of “that abrupt waking, and that calling, and that moment we have to say yes.” So in addition to having compassion for ourselves, the way of the heart involves waking up, hearing the call, and saying yes. I believe the “waking” Whyte is referring to is what happens when we awake to our true nature – that we are Beloved and

connected to the Divine Presence. Awakening in this way, we hear “that calling” to soften our hearts, hearts that have become hardened by fear, anger, distrust, and lack of forgiveness. Then comes the moment of letting go or surrender in which we find ourselves saying, “yes” – yes to having compassion for ourselves; yes to the preciousness of all life; yes to our interconnectedness with others.

The great spiritual traditions speak with one voice in proclaiming that life is an affair of the heart. The question each one of us will have to answer at the end of our days is not “How much did I accumulate?” but “How well did I love?” Jack Kornfield puts it this way:

The things that matter most in our lives are not fantastic or grand. They are the moments when we touch one another, when we are there in the most attentive or caring way. This simple and profound intimacy is the love that we all long for. These moments of touching and being touched can take place in the most immediate and direct way. Mother Teresa put it like this: “In this life we cannot do great things. We can only do small things with great love.”

The way of the heart is about

expanding our hearts, and freeing our lives. It is about becoming a lover, using our gifts to heal and serve, to create peace, to honor the sacredness of life, and to bless whatever we encounter with acts of loving-kindness. Yes, February is the month for lovers.

A Loving-Kindness Practice

The following loving-kindness practice can be a powerful spiritual exercise helping us to walk the way of the heart, loving “our neighbor as our self.”

Sit in a comfortable position. Be relaxed. As much as possible let your mind be quiet, letting go of plans and preoccupations. To help yourself even further, take a few deep breaths. Then just breathe naturally. Now imagine Divine light and love pouring over you, and washing through you. See yourself totally enfolded by this loving, healing energy. When you feel ready, repeat these loving-kindness blessings for yourself:

*May I be at peace, May my heart remain open,
May I awaken to the light of my own true nature,
May I be healed, May I be a source of healing for all beings.*

Now you can just rest for a moment in what you are feeling. After a short time, bring a loved one to mind. See them in as much detail as possible. Then imagine the Light of God shining down on them and washing through them.

Then repeat these loving-kindness blessings for them:

*May you be at peace, May your heart remain open,
May you awaken to the light of your own true nature,
May you be healed, May you be a source of healing for all beings.*

Repeat this for as many people as you wish. Close the exercise with a simple offering of thanksgiving.

As a follow up, you can repeat these blessings for yourself at any time during the day when you feel alone, afraid or out of touch with the Light within. Also, if worried thoughts about loved ones occur during the day, take a minute to send them a loving-kindness blessing rather than a fearful thought.

Loving-kindness meditation adapted from the work of Joan Borysenko and Jack Kornfield.

Until next time, Blessings and Shalom,
Cedric+

Still Presence Spirituality Centre

At Christ Church, Beaurepaire, 455 Church St., Beaconsfield, QC
For further details: 514-697-2204
www.StillPresence.com – cedric.c.cobb@gmail.com

Calendar of Events for February 2013

Monday Meditation Circles

February 4, 11, 18, and 25, 7 to 8:15 pm

Theme of the Month: *Cultivating a Loving Heart*

Alternately led by Arch. Michael Johnson, and Rev. Cedric Cobb

This month we deepen our practice of the Way of the Heart through loving-kindness meditations for ourselves and others, through awareness exercises, and through intentional acts of love and service.

Come to one or all of the Circles. All are welcome.

WEST ISLAND WOMEN’S RETREAT 2013

Every woman needs a quiet time when she can stop and reflect and turn to God... a time when she can think through the priorities of her life without those inevitable interruptions and those seemingly endless demands on her time and energy – a time for renewing herself mentally, physically and spiritually.

The West Island Women’s Retreat will be held on Friday April 26 – Sunday April 28

Spiritual Director: The Ven. Janet Griffith,

Executive Archdeacon – Diocese of Montreal.

Location: the beautiful ERMITAGE STE- CROIX, 21269 Gouin Blvd. West Pierrefonds, QC.

The cost is \$140, bursaries available.

To obtain a registration form please contact Liz Glasgow, at 514-453-0883 or email: glasgows@videotron.ca

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, please contact:

Liz Glasgow (514) 453-0883 glasgows@videotron.ca

or

Ann Yaxley (450) 461-1296 Annyaxley52@gmail.com

Notes from Mile End

A sanctuary in every sense

(This article by Jay, a member of the Mile End Mission, is one of what is expected to be a regular series by people at this mission in north-central Montreal.)

When you have nothing left to lose, it is nice to find a sanctuary. When you are at the razor’s edge of poverty and absolute deprivation, it is good to be handed a hot meal every once in a while. It’s a wonderful thing to be able to buy a sweater for your child for only a couple of dollars. When you are at the absolute end of it all, when the clouds of despair are hovering over your head and you are feeling persecuted and tormented beyond endurance, it is grand to have a community center where you can go and talk to the true people who have been through the same thing. These are the people who will give you a shoulder to cry on. It is the best environment, for real, and you can feel tender when you are under the wings of The Mile End Mission.

The Mission is truly a sanctuary in every sense of the word. It is a place where judgements are suspended or depend entirely upon how you treat people while you are under that roof. The Mission is a place where, by just showing up, you are helping others out. You get to feel a solidarity there, a communing with others who are feeling kicked apart by this wild world. I, for one, do not know what would have happened to me without the arms of this place, or the people who make it possible. It is the kind of place that you need to come down and experience for yourself in order to appreciate the special care and ambience The Mission creates

and fosters. You are always welcome here.

The Mission at Mile End has everything from Art Therapy to Counseling to Legal Advice to Cabbage Rolls and Rice to Grapevine to Tylenol to Psychotherapy to Free Bookstore to Boutique to whatever paradise on Earth is all about for you. It is a place to share and to be shared with. The best part of it all is everything is given easily, with a smile and a genuinely heartfelt tug on the spirit that says, “Hey, I understand, and you and I know it is beneficial to the soul to have someone you can trust.”

There is an unprecedented tolerance present at the mission. There are smiles and laughter and knowledge that help to dissolve tears and anger, and wash away a little of the pain. We play music at the Mission. The radio is always on or the piano is being dextrously tinkled, sometimes a guitar player is heard and it sounds as if someone is always singing around the rooms. One of the amazing lifestyles the staff presents at this

Mile End sanctuary is that almost every object utilized and given away comes to us second-hand. Even the food they give out has come from donations. It is these donations – that you, and people like you, give – that bring relief to people in need. It is true that a little bit can go a long way. Everybody and anyone is welcome to come and partake. That is the reason that it all comes together so nicely there. Everyone is welcome, and everyone shares.

I would have it that this world would be so beautiful and fulfilling that there would never be a need for a place like the Mile End Mission. As a matter of fact, I would love to see this world follow the example of the Mission, and perhaps one day this old world will be able to grasp unto the meaning of sharing as human nature. This idea certainly would advance us out of these shadows we have to struggle with every day. Until that time arrives, the best hope that we can see and experience comes to us from places similar to the Mile End Mission, where sharing is a way of life.



FRIENDS ENJOY a Christmas dinner at the Mile End Mission.

(Photo: Roslyn Macgregor)

Books

Gabe Foreman cooks up more than soup

A review of Gabe Foreman:
A Complete Encyclopedia of Different Types of People.
(Coach House Press 2011, 93 pages)

Reviewed by Harvey Shepherd

Staff, volunteers and some of the regulars at the St. Michael's Mission day centre in the basement of the Church of St. John the Evangelist know Gabe Foreman as the cook who day after day prepares nourishing and enticing meals, largely from surplus or donated food, for over 200 homeless or otherwise needy people who frequent the centre daily.

Some people in the literary world know him as the founder of a small literary press whose work has appeared in a number of literary journals and whose collection *A Complete Encyclopedia of Different Types of People* was shortlisted for the CBC Literary Awards and was awarded the A.M. Klein Poetry Award, considered the top award for English-language poetry in Quebec, for 2011.

Not everyone makes the connection, although it's no secret. His poetic prowess was mentioned casually, for instance, at a recent press conference launching a new outreach based at the centre and reaching out to homeless people in distress at the Place des Arts Métro station.

The connection is probably more than happenstance but also complex and subtle, like the poems in this slim volume. The cook-poet, who previously worked as a tree planter

in British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario, said in a brief conversation at the launch that the book was still in preparation by the time he began working at the mission about three years ago but most of the poems had already been written.

Still, the poems show a combination of sensibility, tough-mindedness and, above all, humour that must stand him in good stead in his work at the mission.

For example, whatever the real origins of his poem "Tough Cookies" – there are a lot of puns in this book, particularly in titles – it's hard for the reader – this one, anyway – not to imagine a connection with some of the tough cookies who patronize the mission.

Poems and titles in the volume purport to be about "types of people," and this poem and title are no exception. Still, this poem begins with a list of ingredients: two types of sugar, butter, orange zest, eggs, flour. An acquaintance of mine who knows a little about baking tells me you could probably make cookies with those ingredients, but since no leavening agent is included they would be – tough cookies.

Similarly, I doubt that the clientèle at the mission have ever been served a concoction with the ingredients from his poem "Couch Potatoes," which begins:

*I flick shucked oysters into a bin
of hazelnuts, brie, Brazilian Swiss
chard.
I stuff red lentils into grain-fed pork*

*hocks.
The meat sizzles when it hits the
sauce composed*

*of caramelized papaya, Danish
lavender
icing sugar and plums.*

Still, I imagine Foreman's real-life soups and stews, like his poetic ones, reflect the imagination of their creator.

The book is not really an encyclopedia, of course, but part of the fun is the way Foreman plays with the idea. The "different types of people" are listed in alphabetical order, except when they aren't, and in those cases there is a reason. There is also an encyclopedic range of genres and topics, ranging through parody, topical comment, what I suspect are personal references, cartoons and aphorisms.

*Please do not despise your hands
Feel what you need to feel.*

I don't know anything about Foreman's religious affiliation, and I didn't ask him, but echoes of religious tradition do crop up among all the irreverence in this volume.

*You – or someone who looked like
you – selected a direction at random
and swam, somehow certain that you
would reach the dock – though the*



GABE FOREMAN on duty in the St. Michael's Mission kitchen.

*shore was without form, and void,
and darkness was upon the face of the
deep. And darkness was upon the face
of the deep. And darkness was upon
the face of the deep.*

More than that, though, there are moments when these poems, a little like a Zen koan, make you wonder whether Foreman is giving you a glimpse of eternity or just pulling

your leg. Perhaps both at the same time.

*If this rain is ever going to stop
it already has.*

.....

*And if the far muddy shore
will someday become visible
it must have been visible
for years.*

Prison concert... continued from page 5

ly played. Bruce clearly enjoyed talking music with a kindred spirit, probably for the first time in years. Most of the guys have no difficulty expressing their emotions and feelings during Bible study, but Marvin is one who rarely shows his feelings. All night he was smiling and at times laughing and after the show he shook my hand, looked me in the eyes and told me that in all his time in prison he had never experienced such happiness.

During the intermission Tim led a Bible study and I noticed Dale standing off to the side, a pensive look on his face. When he returned he had come to a decision. In Nick's honour he would sing Small Town Van Gogh warning that the emotions might be too much but he had to try. He did make it through, as Nick wept, continually wiping away the tears. Nick reached over and touched Dale saying, "Thank you man, thank you." Then to everyone's amazement, Nick said, "Pass that

thing over." Dale handed Nick his guitar and Nick delivered a heartfelt version of *Let It Be*, strumming the guitar and singing with a raspy voice, sounding much like Tom Waits. Marvin could hardly contain himself, doubled over with laughter, not mocking, just unbridled joy at a fellow inmate with this hidden talent.

The chapel was beautifully decorated by the inmates with a Christmas scene and as we passed out cards, individually addressed to each inmate, there was a festive atmosphere as we said the closing prayer and reluctantly left the chapel. As we stood at the place where the inmates return to their cells and we pass through the first of three security doors, Dale remained beside Nick and joked that he was staying. This is always the saddest part of the prison visit.

Normally the hour and a half ride back to town is filled with chatter but that quickly faded as we sat in

quiet reflection, trying to absorb what had just happened. The goal of bringing some happiness into the dull routine was accomplished but so much more than that. Most of the inmates rarely get visits and so we are the lifeline to the outside, a world they think would rather forget about them. In my introduction I told them that from the first time I mentioned the idea of a concert at the prison, I received overwhelming support and donations from family, friends and the church. It is important for them to know there will be people on their side when they leave. Thanks to the part-time chaplains – a program the government is determined to scrap, many of us have the opportunity to demonstrate that and spread the Word of Hope. God-willing, volunteer help will be allowed to continue and events like the concert will happen again.

(A version of this article appeared in the newsletter of the Parish of St. Andrew and St. Mark in Dorval.)

Poetry

Marginalia

Pamela Dillon

dusk.
sparrows seek shelter
their limb for the night.

So too
the human marginalia
cluster and form
their own line
along the sidewalk
at the back door of the shelter.
the early birds
may get clean socks
but all deserve warmth.
to come in
from the cold.

Marginalia.

They tell their own story
and testify with their own witness
that all that is written for the record
does not always include
the full story.

the full text may
not include the voices
of these sojourners among us.

in the margins of life
all is revealed.

Like sparrows nested
in war-torn trees.
constructions
of crate and plastic
nailed against a pitiless wind
passers-by notice
and count the lucky stars above them.
they button up their collars
and press on for home into the warm light
of their own belonging.

(Pamela Dillon of Stanbridge East is a frequent volunteer at Cowansville Institution in Cowansville.)

CHURCH OF
THE EPIPHANY

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SHROVE TUESDAY
PANCAKE SUPPER

Tuesday, Feb 12 – 6:00 pm
Freewill Offering
Proceeds to benefit PWRDF

COMFORT FOOD
DINNER & MUSIC

Saturday, Feb. 23 – 6:00 pm
Beef Stew or Chicken Stew

Tickets \$10

Contact Gail Gollan

ST. JAMES
ROSEMERE

328 Pine St.

SHROVE TUESDAY
PANCAKE SUPPER

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 6 p.m.
For details on this and other
events 450-621-6466 or visit
the St. James Website or
Facebook page.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

Feb. 13 at 7:30 p.m.

DROP-IN CENTRE

continues every Wednesday
from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Everyone is welcome.

Winston and Becky Fraser
are your hosts. Refreshments
are served. Come and meet
some old friends and make
new ones.

Christ Church,
Beaurepaire

455 Church Street,
Beaconsfield

SHROVE TUESDAY
PANCAKE SUPPER

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 5-7 p.m.

A traditional Shrove Tuesday pancake
supper with sausages/ham \$6/person
\$25/family. Following the supper
there will be an "Immolation of
Palms" in the church parking lot. Info:
514-697-2204. Everyone welcome.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES

Ash Wednesday Feb. 13. Services of
the Holy Eucharist at 10 a.m. and
7 p.m. Both will include the
Imposition of Ashes.

LENTEN LUNCHES

Every Wednesday
Feb. 13-March 20,
11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
Hearty homemade soup, along with
bread, cheese, squares and tea/coffee
for just \$7/person.

✂ Diocesan Clippings (and Snapshots) 📷

St. Matthias' raises \$10,400 for the community

Even though St. Matthias' Church in Westmount has been operating in the red, the Fellowship Guild at the parish donated most of the proceeds from the three popular community events at the church last year - two rummage sales and a fair - to projects in the community. The guild voted in December to make a contribution to reduce the parish deficit but give divide \$10,400 to 11 outside groups: \$1,000 each to Tyndale St-Georges Community Centre, St. Michael's Mission, the Old Brewery Mission, the Open Door program at Saint Stephen's Westmount, the Mile End Mission, the Chez Doris women's day shelter, the Auberge Madeleine women's shelter, the N.D.G. Food Bank, the Dans la Rue program for street kids and the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal. The other \$400 went to the Atwater Library. Volunteers from the Fellowship Guild also served meals at the Old Brewery Mission and worked at its Patricia McKenzie Pavilion, the largest shelter for homeless women in Canada. "I'm thrilled, just thrilled that we can do this," said Rev. Kenneth Near, rector. "Dozens and dozens of volunteers did a huge variety of different tasks to bring this about and I am filled with gratitude for their efforts."

Making the new couple right at home



NOT CONTENT WITH the reception after the induction service at St. George's Church in Châteauguay for the new rector, Rev. Robert Camara, parishioners at St. George's again welcomed him and his spouse, Gabriele Spina, with a special pot-luck dinner in December. Food flowed like milk and honey in the local traditional style at St. George's. Below: the cast of the Christmas pageant at St. George's.



BLACK HISTORY

St. CHL, Sunday, February 10

Jazz Mass

10am

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live
...where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin
but by the content of their character. (MLK, Jr.)

6341, de L'Assommoir (b/w Bellechasse & Beaubien)
12:00 Caribbean Luncheon
RSVP - (514) 722-3061

Back-to-church Sunday - with lunch



BACK-TO-CHURCH SUNDAY was combined with a community meal at St. James Bedford, for the parish of Bedford, Philipsburg and Farnham, on the first Sunday of Advent, December 2. Karen Craft organized the meal. "We measured our success with this event not so much by how many new people came, but by the number of individual Anglicans who prayerfully invited someone to church," Rev. Andy O'Donnell says. "Much to their surprise, some who were invited came and enjoyed the service and the meal together."

*'Well organized, well presented
and well attended'*



ONCE AGAIN, AN ACW TEAM did an excellent job in organizing the annual Christmas bazaar and luncheon of the Anglican Church Women of St. James Church in Bedford, reports Rev. Andy O'Donnell. Organizer Lana Bordo was ably backed up by Elsie Callahan at the bake table, Maggie Cook, Joan Hislop and Pat Miller at the nearly new table and Charlotte Sheltus at the book sale. These two tykes were among those who enjoyed the luncheon of chili and chicken noodle soup, fresh rolls and delicious sweets.

Advent voices



SHOWING THEIR VOCAL TALENTS at a talent show that followed an Advent carol service and pot luck supper at the Church of St. Cuthbert, St. Hilda and St. Luc in the north-central Rosemont district are Tom Mennier, Richard Winnell, "everyone's Aunt" Una Adams and Jeannette Gibson.

Christmas Eve in Verdun



CANDLES were a big part of the Christmas Eve service at the Church of the Epiphany, Verdun.

'No crying he makes'



BUT A YAWN was permitted. The pageant was at St. George's, Châteauguay.

The Grinch who Found Christ(mas) at St. George's, Ste Anne de Bellevue

At 4 pm on Christmas Eve, St. George's was filled with families, babies and toddlers, as well as seniors who appreciate an early Christmas festival service. Fifteen minutes before the service was to begin "Charlie Brown's Christmas" was projected onto a screen as people poured through the doors and settled in for a family event. By 4:15, all was quite quiet as the Rev'd Neil Mancor invited little people to place the figures in the manger at the front of the church. Following an opening carol, the congregation was treated to a marvelous production of "The Grinch Who Found Christ(mas)" with a cast of many youth and parents. The script was adapted by Neil Mancor, and music was provided by Neil on the piano, and soloist, Sarah Conway.

The Grinch, played by Gerry Zampini, is a bitter, grouchy, cave-dwelling creature with a heart "two sizes too small." He lives on a high mountain just north of Whoville, home of the merry and warm-hearted Whos. His only

companion is his unloved but loyal dog, Max. From his perch high atop Mount Crumpit, (a ladder in the case of this production), the Grinch can hear the noisy Christmas festivities that take place in Whoville. Annoyed at their rejoicing and unable to understand the Whos' happiness, he makes plans to descend on the town and to deprive the Whos of their Christmas presents, dinners, and decorations, and wants to "find a way to keep Christmas from coming." On Christmas Eve, the Grinch disguises himself as Santa, and steals all of the Whos' Christmas presents. As dawn breaks, he expects to hear wails of anguish from the Whos, but is confused to hear them singing a joyous Christmas song instead. He puzzles for a moment until it dawns upon him that perhaps Christmas is more than presents and feasting. His shrunken heart grows three sizes larger and the Whos welcome him to share the Christmas feast with them.

The congregation of delighted St.

George's families then shared the Eucharistic feast and bundled up to head home for Christmas Eve supper, congratulating the talented cast who had worked so hard to bring Christ into the center of Christmas, for the Grinch, and for all who shared in this very special event.



GERRY ZAMPINI was the Grinch