



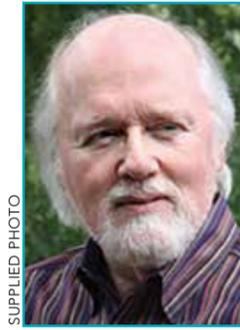
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Singapore New bishop for influential diocese

BY MARK MICHAEL

THROUGH SUSTAINED GROWTH and a vigorous program of missionary activity, Singapore has likely become Asian Anglicanism's most influential diocese,



PHOTO: ANGLICAN INK
Titus Chung

and has played a significant role in Anglican realignment in recent decades. Soon it will have a new bishop. On Feb. 9th the Rev. Canon Titus Chung, a systematic theologian, was appointed as the 10th Bishop of Singapore. The current bishop, Rennis Ponniah, will step down when Chung is consecrated on Oct. 18.

Since 2009 Chung, 55, has served at St. Andrew's Cathedral, currently as priest-in-charge of the Mandarin congregation. The large neo-Gothic building in the modern city's historic core was the first Anglican church to be built in the region, in 1835. It is now a bustling congregation, with 16 services offered each weekend. Most are conducted in either English or Mandarin, but the Cathedral also hosts congregations that worship in Tamil, Burmese, Cantonese, Tagalog, Hokkien and Bahasa Indonesian. Under the leadership of a British missionary, Canon Frank Lomax, it became a center of charismatic renewal in the mid-1970's.

The Diocese of Singapore has about 21,000 communicants, but only 28 parish churches, all located within the densely populated independent city state, which has a landmass of 725 sq. km or 280 sq. miles, smaller in size than Shawinigan, Quebec.

Singapore has planted congregations in other countries across Southern and Southeastern Asia, and currently has deaneries in Vietnam, Laos, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia and Nepal. Bishop Ponniah reported at the New Wineskins Conference in 2017 that the Nepal deanery had grown to 83 churches, and 10,000-15,000 members, especially after Anglicans provided valuable pastoral support in the aftermath of a devastating earthquake in 2015.

According to church statistician David Goodhew, the number of Anglicans in Singapore increased fivefold from 1970 to 2000, as charismatic renewal and a conservative evangelical theological vision swept a church that had been initially shaped by the work of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, a British high-church mission society. Singapore maintains active links with the Anglican Church of Australia's conservative evangelical Diocese of Sydney.

Alongside its active evangelistic work, the Diocese of Singapore operates 10 Anglican schools, the St. Andrew's Missionary Hospital and Singapore Anglican Community Services. This agency, which incorporates 10 local centres around the city, is significantly focused on mental illness and the care of children with autism.

Chung was ordained to the priesthood in the Diocese of Singapore in 1997. Like
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The Church & COVID-19

BY C. PETER MOLLOY



PHOTO: SUE CARELESS

I THINK we can agree that we are in unfamiliar territory with the COVID-19 pandemic. Our daily lives feel increasingly like a dystopian movie. The speed at which the effects of the Coronavirus has been spreading is incredible.

Most western countries effectively shuttered 60% of their daily economic life in the course of just seven days. As I was writing this, I received a news bulletin that all non-essential businesses in my province are being closed. It seems inconceivable that children will not return to school for several months, and churches across the country have suspended public worship and are experimenting with ways to continue their corporate life and ministry. Again, the speed at which so many aspects of our daily lives have come to a grinding halt is truly incredible. What will be the lingering consequences of this? Certainly, we are seeing a toll in human lives. It is hard to imagine what will be the long-term effect on our economy, culture and churches.

How should we think about all of this? Let me say from the outset, in case I lose you below, that God is sovereign and his divine purpose for his Church and for your lives will not be thwarted by COVID-19 or the consequences of dealing with a global pandemic. Let me remind you of that in clear terms right up front.

Now, let's consider the spiritual realities of this, and what this pandemic can teach us about God and his purposes.

It needs to be said that it was not God's plan

for sickness and death to come into the world, but that it came into the world through sin. Now I don't associate this pandemic, or other sicknesses, with individual sin in a glib fashion.

God is sovereign and his divine purpose for his Church and for your lives will not be thwarted by COVID-19 or the consequences of dealing with a global pandemic.

This is not God's judgment upon a particular person or group. However, it is important for us to recognise that the root of this pandemic, which has the whole world in its grip, is spiritual and our response should be the same. In earlier generations people lived with some sense of the imminence of death – be it through war, disease, poverty or childbirth. People had a sense that they lived in the shadow of death and to a much greater degree they turned to the mercy of God for hope and relief. In our day we tend to feel insulated from death and as such we seek no rescue. The Prayer for the Parish in the BCP wisely bids us to pray: "Guard from forgetfulness of thee those who are strong and prosperous." (p. 44) It is time for us to remember that we are in the hands of the Most High God.

It should be noted, moreover, that the response to this pandemic is to separate and isolate people. The term 'Social Distancing' is new to me, and it is undoubtedly the right approach to slowing the spread of COVID-19. Please, when at all possible, stay home. But it should also illustrate for us the effect of sin in this world, which is to distance ourselves from one another. From the beginning God created us for relationship. He meant for us to be together. It is telling that human history began with one lonely man

in a garden and it ends with a 'vast crowd too numerous to count' gathered together in a city. God created us as relational people and established the Church as the place where Christian fellowship deepens and grows. The necessary response to our current circumstances is isolation, but we must also recognise that this is not God's created or ultimate purpose.

Third, this pandemic has created a culture of fear. Fear of death, fear of sickness, fear of economic hardship, and fear of one another. Certainly, we see this in social isolation protocols, but even more so we see it in the selling off of stocks and the silliness of panic shopping for toilet paper – grabbing now before someone else does. It reflects a fundamental distrust of one another and a fear that someone else will rob me of what I need. We were not meant to live in fear.

I think it is helpful to see in this the agenda of Satan in this world. Again, I think we have been too insulated in this age and have been lulled into thinking that he is not active. But as St. Peter reminds us, he is like a roaring lion, prowling about seeking to devour whomever he may. And death, isolation and fear are Satan's agenda and not our heavenly Father's. So we must push back that roaring lion with the sweet truths of God's victory through Christ.

Concerning death? Let us comfort ourselves with the truth so wonderfully expressed in the first answer in the Heidelberg Catechism. My comfort in all circumstances is "That I am not my own, but belong – body and soul, in life and in death – to my faithful Saviour, Jesus Christ." Brothers and sisters, it seems this virus is spreading exponentially so that many of us will be touched with death one way or another. In these times turn to the mercy of God. Do not allow the sobering of our society pass without kneeling before the throne of God and asking for his Spirit to purge you body and soul. And as we comfort those who mourn, point to the hope of the Resurrection. There is no other hope.

Concerning isolation? Remind yourself of that great reality revealed by our Lord to St. John the Divine. That when we bring our praises to Almighty God, we stand together with brothers and sisters from every nation and age, and with angels and archangels in perfect fellowship around the throne of God. Enjoy the fellowship of your fellow Christians and family and friends through phone and email. But also delve deeply into the richness of our fellowship with the Church universal by worshipping with them. Pick up your prayer book and unite

See **COVID-19** page 2

Church of England Bishops say no to blessing civil partnerships

BY MARK MICHAEL

CHURCH OF ENGLAND clergy may not bless civil partnerships of any kind, according to a ruling by the church's House of Bishops in a pastoral statement issued Jan. 23. The teaching document, which was released a month after new laws permitting opposite-sex civil partnerships took effect, emphasized that the church's doctrine is unchanged, "that marriage between a man and a woman is the proper context for sexual intercourse." The directives were nearly identical to those issued by the bishops in 2005, when same-sex civil partnerships were introduced.

Civil partnerships for same-sex couples became legal in England and Wales in 2004, as a way of providing access to tax, inheritance and property benefits extended to married couples. The number of civil partnerships has fallen sharply since same-sex marriage was authorized by Parliament in 2013. However, there are 3.3 million cohabiting heterosexual couples in the UK, and the government estimates that as many as 84,000 of them will enter civil partnerships in 2020.

The bishops focused on the ambiguous meaning of civil partnerships, which "leave entirely open the nature of the commitment that members of a couple choose to make to each other." Unlike marriage, civil partnerships are "not predicated on the intention to engage in a sexual relationship," but neither do they exclude this.

Civil partnerships are also, the bishops pointed out, decidedly secular. In the 2018 UK Supreme Court case that led to the legislation, civil partnership advocates pled for them citing "the desire for a publicly authorized institution which explicitly rejected the perceived religious connotations of marriage." Partnership registrations also cannot, by law, include religious ceremonies or take place in houses of worship.

"One consequence of the ambiguity contained within the civil partnerships legislation," the statement continues, "is that people in a variety of relationships will be eligible to register as civil partners, some living consistently with the teaching of the Church, others not. In these circumstances, the House continues to believe that it would not be right to produce an authorized public liturgy in connection with the registering of civil partnerships. In addition, the

House of Bishops affirms that clergy of the Church of England should not provide services of blessing for those who register a civil partnership."

The parish clergy should expect requests for such blessings, the bishops added. While ultimately obliged to decline these requests, they should respond graciously, especially since some civil partnerships may be abstinent friendships. "Clergy need to have regard to the teaching of the church on sexual morality, celibacy and the positive value of committed friendships in the Christian tradition. Where clergy are approached by people asking for prayer in relation to entering into a civil partnership they should respond pastorally and sensitively in the light of the circumstances of each case."

The pastoral statement does not impose any church discipline on lay



SUPPLIED PHOTO

people who choose to enter civil partnerships. "Lay people who have registered civil partnerships," it says, "ought not to be asked to give assurances about the nature of their relationship before being admitted to baptism, confirmation and communion." The provision also applies to the baptism of infants born to parents in civil partnerships.

The clergy are not barred from entering civil partnerships, as they are not "intrinsically incompatible with holy orders." However, clergy who choose to enter them should be willing to provide assurances that they are celibate relationships. Clergy and candidates for holy orders who enter opposite-sex civil partnerships "should expect to be asked to explain their understanding of the theological and social meanings of their decision," because the partnerships are purposefully differentiated from Christian marriage.

The statement envisages that legal permission may be given in the future for converting marriages to civil partnerships. It notes that clergy who would choose to take such an action would be subject to the same discipline as divorced clergy because such a conversion in the legal status of the relationship would involve repudiation of the marriage vows.

The pastoral statement's clear assertion of the Church's traditional sexual ethic is significant. The bishops note, for example, that when Parliament authorized same-sex marriage in 2013, "a substantive gap emerged between the Church's understanding of marriage and that of the State." The concluding section opens, "With opposite sex civil partnerships, and with those for same sex couples, the Church's teaching on sexual ethics remains unchanged. For Christians, marriage – that is the lifelong union between a man and a woman, contracted with the making of vows – remains the proper context for sexual activity."

Supporters of LGBT inclusion in the Church of England expressed strong opposition to the statement. Jayne Ozanne, a member of General Synod who has publicly advocated for change, told *The Daily Telegraph*, "I am sadly unsurprised by the content of this statement but I am deeply saddened by its tone." She added, "It will appear far from 'pastoral' to those it affects and shows little evidence to those wishing the Church will help them celebrate their loving committed relationships of the 'radical new Christian inclusion' that we have been promised."

On Jan. 25, the Ven. Cherry Vann, a priest of the Church of England who is in a same-sex civil partnership, was consecrated as Bishop of Monmouth in the Church in Wales. The Church in Wales authorized prayers that can be used to mark the forming of a civil partnership in 2016, and does not require sexual abstinence of clergy in civil partnerships. A 2015 vote that would have authorized same-sex marriage fell short of the 2/3 majority needed for passage, but the Church's governing body said in 2018 that it was "pastorally unsustainable for the Church to make no formal provision for those in same-gender relationships."

The conservative evangelical Church Society, by contrast, was clearly pleased with the pastoral statement, commenting on its blog, "Given the confusion in our culture, and even in many of our churches, we believe the House of Bishops should be thanked for making such a courageous and counter-cultural statement." TAP

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The Living Church

Late-breaking news:

Lambeth postponed 'til 2021

BY SUE CARELESS

IN THE SHADOW of the Coronavirus pandemic, a huge gathering in England of over 600 Anglican bishops from 165 countries around the world has been postponed until next summer.

The Lambeth Conference, which usually meets every ten years, had been scheduled for July 22-Aug. 2 but with global travel restrictions and the banning of large gatherings in Britain, the massive meeting has been rescheduled.



PHOTO: ANTONY MCCALLUM

Canterbury Cathedral and the University of Kent.

Lambeth Conference 2020 was set to be the largest conference yet with many of the bishops being accompanied by their spouses. And it was estimated that another 1,000 organizers and volunteers would also have been present.

On March 23, the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby announced the postponement:

"So that we may be good shepherds as bishops in the Anglican world, and encourage the Church to be there for God's suffering world, we have decided to reschedule and postpone the conference and to put it forward 'til 2021 at pretty well the same time.

"We also recognise bishops and spouses attending the Lambeth Conference will be playing a vital leadership and pastoral role in their Provinces and dioceses as together the Anglican Communion seeks to respond to COVID-19 around the globe."

* Those registered to attend Lambeth 2020 will have their registration carried forward to 2021.

* Any new bishops that take up their post before 2021 will also be invited to register.

* Bishops who are due to retire before the summer of 2021 will be invited to send their successor.

In a video broadcast Welby said: "The test of our faith and our behaviour is not when things are going well but when they are tough. ...The place of a bishop at a time of difficulty is the place of the shepherd when the wolf is attacking the flock. It is to be with them, to be alongside them, to love them, to suffer with them."

Welby noted that the Lambeth Conference of 1920 was delayed from 1918 and met in the shadow of WWI. Likewise, Lambeth 1948 met in the shadow of WWII. "Both of them had seen terrible events. Godsend that we do not see anything like that."

There are four "Instruments of Communion" or unity within the structure of the world-wide Anglican Communion: the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Anglican Consultative Council, the Primates Meetings and the Lambeth Conference. While smaller gatherings such as the Council or the Primates' Meeting might be possible via teleconference, the massive Lambeth gathering would not.

"God's Church for God's World" is the conference theme so Welby asked for prayer "as we seek to be God's Church for God's World in this difficult time." He concluded his video broadcast saying, "We will meet in a year and four months, and what rejoicing there will be then." TAP

FROM P.1 COVID-19

your prayers with brothers and sisters from this day and generations past.

Finally, concerning fear? God does not intend for us to live in fear. Be cautious – certainly. Wash your hands whilst saying the *Nunc Dimittis*. But don't be afraid. Christ has already won the battle and now he rests from his labours and the author of Hebrews tells us that we, too, can enter into his rest. The only thing we need to fear is unbelief. The only thing we need to be afraid of is that we follow unbelievers in putting our hope in the institutions and comforts and the strongholds of this world and in doing so we fail to put our trust in God. Do not be afraid.

Brothers and Sisters, these are strange and uncertain times, times in which we can be tempted to retreat into safe positions. And given our duty of social distancing that may be the temporal reality. But in this time of widespread fear and uncertainty, how you and I respond to this crisis will reveal Christ to the world. This

is an opportunity for the gospel to shine forth through your life into the darkness of this world, so that people who are isolated and fearful can see the peace of Christ in you and glorify our Heavenly Father. TAP

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FROM P.1 SINGAPORE

three of his four predecessors, his family background is Chinese. Chung earned a doctorate in theology from Edinburgh University, writing a dissertation on the Scottish theologian T. F. Torrance's theory of divine revelation. After serving for a time as a lecturer at Edinburgh, he returned to Singapore to teach at Trinity Theological Seminary, which trains Anglican priests for service throughout Asia. He currently serves as convenor of continuing ministerial education for clergy and deaconesses within the diocese.

Singapore's bishops, sometimes working in consultation with the Diocese of Sydney, have been influential in the Anglican realignment process. In 2000, former Singapore bishop Moses Tay joined with Archbishop Emmanuel Kolini of Rwanda to consecrate Chuck Murphy and John Rogers at St. Andrew's Cathedral to serve as the first bishops in what became the Anglican Mission in the Americas.

The Province of Southeast Asia, of which Singapore is a member, declared itself to be in impaired communion with the Episcopal Church following the consecration of Bishop Gene Robinson in 2003. In 2019, the province recognized the Anglican Church in North America as a fellow Anglican province (a step the official Anglican Instruments of Communion have repeatedly refused to take) and declared itself in full communion with the clergy of that church.

Singapore's current bishop has been an important leader in the Global South Anglicans group. Ponniah chaired the committee that prepared the Cov-

enantal Structure document, known by some as the Cairo Covenant. The document, whose drafters also included Singaporean theologian Michael Poon, was approved by the Global South primates' council last November, and sent to the member churches of the body for study and potential adoption.

Ponniah commented on the Cairo Covenant in Singapore's most recent *Diocesan Digest*, noting:

"The Global South Fellowship of Anglicans is an orthodox grouping within the communion that seeks to limit diversity in faith and practice among its member churches according to the plain teaching of Holy Scripture. In this way it is poised to be a faithful servant-community for God to use in his church and in his world (Isa. 49:1-6). We rejoice in this breakthrough to establish a covenantal structure among orthodox Anglican churches and now we must follow through with prayer and zeal that it may become an effective instrument of witness and mission for such a time as this."

Ponniah has also been active in the GAFCON Moment, and was one of the principal speakers at the movement's 2018 conference in Jerusalem. He stayed away from the 2008 Lambeth Conference in protest, but has not yet announced if he will participate in this summer's Communion-wide gathering. The new archbishop of the Anglican Province of Southeast Asia, Datuk Melter Thais, is serving on the Lambeth Design Group, which has been charged with preparing the program for the meeting. TAP

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The Living Church.

Mary Magdalene's

Darkness-to-Light Morning

BY LISSA M. WRAY BEAL

"The Life was the Light of All People!" John 1:4

IF YOU GO to Jerusalem, you will likely want to visit The Garden Tomb. While not the traditional location of Jesus's crucifixion and burial, there you can walk in a garden setting, and see a tomb such as the one that would have housed the body of Jesus. Stooping through the tomb's doorway and peering into the dim chamber beyond, you can imagine the experience of Mary Magdalene, Peter and the other, unnamed, disciple in John's narrative of the resurrection (John 20:1-18).

I visited this garden a year ago, on a sunny Sunday morning. But my sunny morning visit sat uneasily with the account in John's gospel, which alone has Mary arriving at the tomb – not as the sun was dawning (as in Matthew and Luke), and certainly not after the sun had risen (as in Mark) – but "while it was still dark" (v. 1). The difference is more than one of perspective, of different descriptions of a transitional moment from night to day. It is a difference that is crucial to our understanding of John's gospel.

Poor Mary! Does she come in the dark because she'd had a sleepless night of weeping? Did she rise in the dark because, in her distress and grief, she opted to just begin the tasks of the day? Haven't we all done the same thing after our own sleepless nights? Or does she come before it is light out of anxious, loving concern to tend the body of the Lord she loved?

Certainly, she came expecting a dead body and not a resurrection. She came bowed down with sorrow, yet committed to preparing that body for burial. But then... the shock of the open tomb... her heart-pounding run to Peter and the other disciple...the breathlessly uttered conclusion that the body had been moved...the heart-pounding run back, Peter falling behind...then entering the tomb (would you enter?)...the notice of grave-cloths lying carefully arranged. Surely no grave robbers would take the time to unwrap the body and leave the cloths behind, would they? The other disciple "saw and believed." But believed what? – Mary's account, perhaps? – for "as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead." Perplexed, distressed, uncertain, they return home.

No wonder John tells us this occurs while it is still dark. For in the rush and confusion, in the theories of moved bodies, they remain in the dark. Without understanding the resurrection has occurred, darkness is all they have, for hope is gone. For the disciples, if the Lord is dead it is indeed dark – for John's Jesus proclaims, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). This is what John tells us as he begins his gospel. In a passage that echoes the creation in Genesis 1 John tells of a *new* creation in which it is Jesus Christ – the Word – that is both life and light (John 1:4). It is no accident that in John's gospel, at the very moment Judas departs to effect the betrayal, "it was night" (John

13:30). What else *could* it be, when forces gather to crucify the Light of the World?

Peter and the other disciple depart. Without an understanding of the resurrection, Jesus is simply dead and gone, and it is still dark.

It is at this point that John's account takes a decidedly supernatural turn, leading us into the light. Poor Mary remains weeping. Perhaps she's hoping for someone to come with an explanation. Maybe she's getting up the courage to look into the tomb to check if they'd *seen wrongly*, and somehow the body is still there. For the first time Mary looks into the dark tomb and, despite her grief, begins to *see rightly*. She sees two angels. Less startled by them than by the discovery of the open tomb, she answers their "Why are you weeping?" It is the same question voiced by the gardener she then turns and sees. To both, she answers wondering where the body has been moved, that she might tend it.

It is only when the gardener calls her by name that Mary's understanding of the dark morning falls into place, and light dawns. For he is not the gardener but "The Word that turns her night, and ours, to Day" as Malcolm Guite writes in his poem, "Easter dawn" in *Sounding the Seasons*. As Jesus says her name, Mary sees rightly. Her eyes are opened and she recognizes him for who and what he is: the risen Lord of Life, the Light of the World. Truly, as John says as his gospel begins, the light who "shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" (John 1:5).

This is the very moment Mary enters the new creation—a new creation in a new garden in which the darkness of death, and sin, of confusion, and human frailty, is overcome. And desiring that all his disciples know that the new creation has dawned on Resurrection Day, the resurrected Lord commissions Mary to go, and tell. "I have seen the Lord" is her report.

I sat with other clergy this morning and we pondered how to be Church in the midst of the panic arising out of COVID-19. It is a time of global fear, and a staving-off of the acknowledgement of our human frailty. Last month, a friend's wife was diagnosed with aggressive cancer. This young couple with a newborn child is entering their own valley of darkness and, while they know Christ walks with them, they have moments of fear. Elsewhere, reports of corrupt governments remind us that darkness remains a powerful enemy. Even within our own hearts, we know the whispers – or shouts – of dark desire.

It is these daily realities that show the great Good News of Mary's darkness-to-light garden morning. Beyond the finality of death, ending confusion and grief, banning the darkness of sin and despair, Christ the Light of the World has overcome the darkness. It is an overcoming that addresses us still today, for its power is undiminished, even in our own world of dark death, false understandings and confusions.

It is Easter! Alleluia! He is Risen! Mary's words tell of the

It is only when the gardener calls her by name that Mary's understanding of the dark morning falls into place, and light dawns.



Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene, a stained glass window by Egran Ddu Lakelin in Beacon Hill Benefice, Wales.

PHOTO: BEACON HILL BENEFICE

Lord, calling us to affirm with her, "I have seen the Lord!" And like her, to go; to live; to tell. The Light has come into the world, and darkness cannot overcome it. TAP

The Rev'd Dr. Lissa M. Wray Beal is Professor of Old Testament and Chair of the Seminary Bible and Theology Department at Providence University College and Theological Seminary in Otterburne, Manitoba.

Euthanasia

Québec Superior Court gives federal government four more months to extend euthanasia law

COMMENT BY

ALEX SCHADENBERG

LAST SEPTEMBER Quebec Justice Christine Baudouin struck down the requirement in Canada's euthanasia law that a person's natural death be "reasonably foreseeable." The Quebec court decision gave the federal government six months to amend the euthanasia law in line with their decision. The federal government did not appeal the decision.

At that time, I reported that striking down the "terminal illness" requirement in the law opened the door to euthanasia for psychiatric conditions alone.

On Feb. 17, Canada's Justice Minister and the Attorney General of Canada, David Lametti, and Canada's Minister of Health, Patty Hajdu, asked a Quebec Superior Court for a four-month extension

to amend Canada's euthanasia law.

On March 2, a Québec Superior court granted the federal government four more months (until July 11) to extend Canada's euthanasia law. In doing so Justice Baudouin also granted those who have asked to die, but whose death is not "reasonably foreseeable," an exemption for assisted death. Canadian Press reported:

"In her ruling, Baudouin creates a provision for those who had been hoping to access medically assisted death as of March 11. The judge said people who meet the other criteria for the procedure but whose natural death is not 'reasonably foreseeable' can apply to a court for an exemption to receive an assisted death before the July 11 deadline."

On Feb. 24, Canada's federal government introduced Bill C-7, an act to amend the Criminal Code

regarding medical assistance in dying. Bill C-7 is the federal government's response to the Quebec Court decision that struck down the section of Canada's euthanasia law requiring that "natural death be reasonably foreseeable" before qualifying for death by euthanasia (lethal injection).

Bill C-7 pretends to prevent euthanasia for "mental illness." Section (2.1) states:

"For the purposes of paragraph (2)(a), a mental illness is not considered to be an illness, disease or disability."

This paragraph does not prevent euthanasia for mental illness or psychological reasons since the law specifically allows it. To prevent euthanasia for "mental illness" they would have had to define "mental illness" and they would have had to amend the requirements of the current law.

Bill C-7 creates a two-track law

where a person who is not terminally ill has a 90-day waiting period while Bill C-7 waves the 10-day waiting period for people who are terminally ill. Therefore, a person can request and then die by lethal injection on the same day. Yet studies show that the "Will to Live" fluctuates over time.

The government is wrong to create a two-tier euthanasia law. A future court decision will likely strike down the 90-day waiting period for people who are not terminally ill because this provision represents an inequality within the law.

Bill C-7 allows a person's health-care provider or care provider to be one of the witnesses. This is a conflict of interest.

Finally, Bill C-7 allows doctors and nurse practitioners to lethally inject an incompetent person, so long as that person had signed an "advanced request" before becoming incompetent. This

amendment to the law contravenes the Carter decision which required that a person be capable of consenting to die.

In June 2020, the government will begin a consultation on 5 years of euthanasia in Canada. The government should not amend the law until after the consultation is completed. TAP

Alex Schadenberg is the Executive Director of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition.

Join us!

St. Chad's Anglican Church
Anglican Network in Canada



Sunday Service
4:30 pm
41 Birchview Blvd.
Etobicoke, ON
416-889-8248
info@stchads.ca

Imago:

Affirming the Faith of



PHOTO: SUE CARELESS



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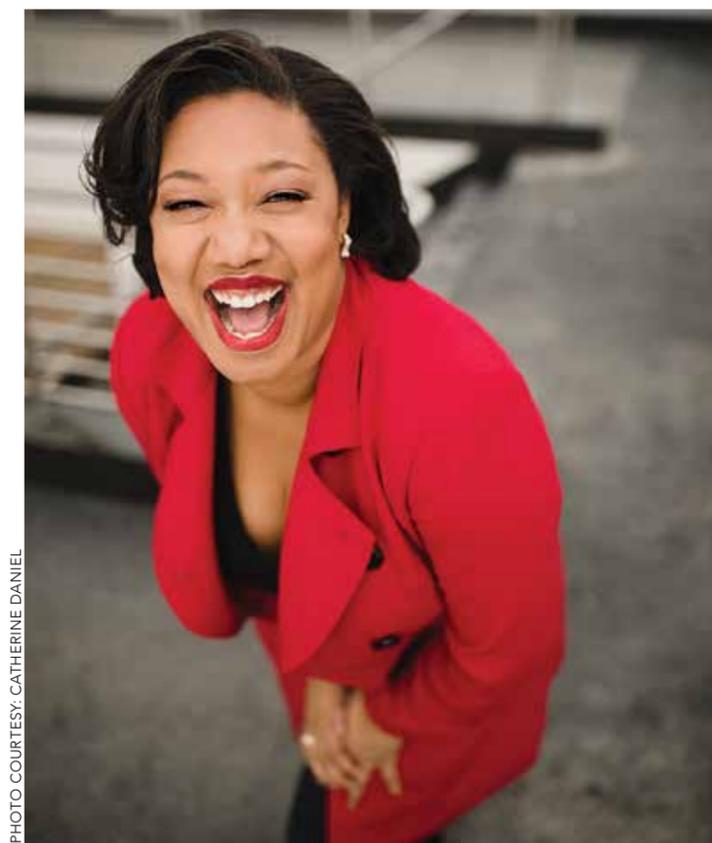


PHOTO COURTESY: CATHERINE DANIEL

Clockwise from top left: John and Marion Franklin; Laila Biali, singer/songwriter and Catherine Daniel, opera singer, two artists encouraged by Imago.

BY SUE CARELESS

THE DILEMMA faced by many Christians working in the arts was expressed succinctly in 1999 by Karyn Percival, a painter, printmaker and sculptor:

“We are marginalized by the world because we are Christians and we are marginalized by the Church because we are artists.”

John Franklin, the Executive Director of Imago, says that the charity was founded “to create a place to affirm the faith of Christian artists and to also affirm their art.”

John Franklin

Franklin’s own childhood home in Toronto had manifest little in the way of artistic or academic sensibilities. He

‘I was a spiritual gypsy and ecumenical from an early age.’

has no memory of his mother who died before he was two. His father remarried but died when John was only nine leaving John and his older brother orphans. But they were raised by their “extraordinary” stepmother, Auntie Em.

“My life is graced. God sent us an angel full of the fruits of the spirit.”

John’s father sent the two boys off to the Mennonite Sunday School each week. John so enjoyed the experience that later he attended three nearby church schools: a Methodist one at 9am, Mennonite Church at 11 and the Danforth Gospel Hall at 3pm.

“I was a spiritual gypsy and ecumenical from an early age,” Franklin admits with a smile.

John met his future wife Marion when they both were

attending grade nine at a Christian school but they didn’t date until later.

John never struggled with his faith, and by 16 had written a tract “Opportunity Knocks” which he passed out while evangelizing on Yonge Street.

After one semester at the University of Saskatchewan, Franklin took three months off to travel in Europe. There he found himself drawn over and over again to the great museums: the Louvre in Paris, the Prado in Madrid, Bavarian State Opera in Munich. He had never attended an opera but now he was listening to La Boheme at the Paris Opera House and Aida at the Baths of Caracalla in Rome.

“I found myself asking, ‘What am I doing here?’ but I loved it all.”

In 1966 he and Marion were married and lived for a year in London, England where they soaked up the city’s vibrant culture.

On their return to Toronto, John took up studies at the University of Guelph, majoring in philosophy. He then went on to U of T to do graduate studies in Philosophy. It was at that time he was invited to teach at what was then the Ontario Bible College, but which is now Tyndale College and Seminary. Although philosophy was his discipline, he spent much of his last decade there hanging art on the walls and organizing art events.

One September as new students arrived, Franklin was up a ladder hanging a painting. Glancing down he noticed a young woman in tears. When he asked if she was all right, she replied, “Oh, yes. It’s just that when I came here, I had no idea anyone would be interested in the arts.”

In 1995 Franklin was voted in by his colleagues as academic dean, but was stunned two years later to find himself and three others suddenly let go.

“I loved teaching and had no idea what I would do next.”

Despite his uncertainty he knew that he couldn’t nurture a spirit of retaliation or revenge. He knew that he had to forgive those who had been responsible for his dismissal else an unforgiving spirit would foster bitterness – and once bitterness took residence he would live under its tyranny.

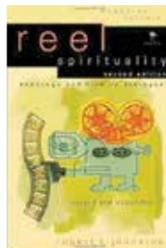
And by God’s grace he did land on his feet. Remarkably within a few months he was invited by the Chair of

Books on Art & Faith

COMPILED BY JOHN FRANKLIN

In 1980 it was not easy to find books on art and faith – while currently it is virtually impossible to keep up with the constant flow that takes up this theme. Here are just a few:

- Jonathan Anderson and William Dyrness, *Modern Art and the Life of a Culture: The Religious Impulses of Modernism*, IVP Academic, 2016.
- Ned Bustard, ed. *It Was Good: Making Art to the Glory of God*, Square Halo Books, 2006.
- William Dyrness, *Visual Faith: Art, Theology and Worship in Dialogue*, Baker Academic, 2001.
- Richard Harries, Bishop of Oxford, *Art and the Beauty of God: A Christian Understanding*, Mowbray, 1993.
- Robert K. Johnston, *Reel Spirituality: Theology and Film*



- Rowan Williams, *Grace and Necessity: Reflections on Art and Love*, Morehouse, 2005. TAP

in Dialogue, Baker Academic, 2000.

- Letter of His Holiness Pope John Paul II, *To Artists*, Pauline Books and Media, 1999.
- Neil MacGregor with Erika Langmuir, *Seeing Salvation: Images of Christ in Art*, Yale University Press, 2000.
- Rod Miller, *C.S. Lewis and the Arts: Creativity in the Shadowlands*, Square Halo Books Baltimore, 2013.
- Chaim Potok, *My Name is Asher Lev*, Fawcett Columbine Books, 1972.
- Calvin Seerveld: *Bearing Fresh Olive Leaves: Alternative Steps in Understanding Art*, Tuppence Press Toronto, 2000.
- W. David O. Taylor, ed. *For the Beauty of the Church: Casting a Vision for the Arts*, Baker Books, 2010.

Christian Artists & their Art

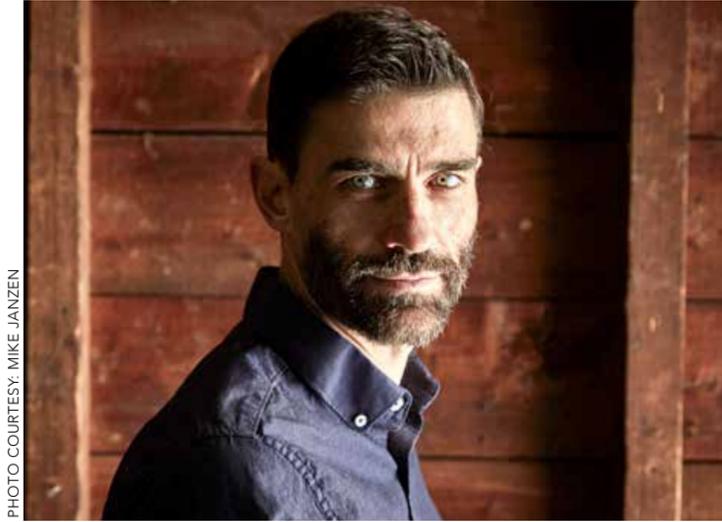


PHOTO COURTESY: MIKE JANZEN



PHOTO: WORD BY HEART

Although the faith-based charity is non-denominational, 'Imago was birthed out of an Anglican community.'



PHOTO: MOTUS O

From top left: Mike Janzen and Bruce Kuhn. Below: The *Prisoner of Tehran* presented by Motus O, a contemporary dance theatre that took off with Imago's help.

the board of Imago to apply to be its CEO. There were nine applicants but he got the job. He has been Executive Director for the past 22 years.

Wilbur Sutherland

Franklin succeeded Wilbur Sutherland who had founded Imago in 1972 and been its executive director for 25 years, until his death in 1997.

Since the late 1940s Sutherland had been on staff with Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship Canada and was appointed its General Secretary in 1952. His wife Barbara was a trained ballet dancer who performed with a Christian drama group called Creation 2. Wilbur supported his wife's passion for dance and drama, and had a growing interest in a variety of endeavours, especially among Toronto's artists.

He decided to leave IVCF in 1969 and with several other Christians started to explore how to affirm Chris-

tian artists. The Sutherlands were parishioners at Little Trinity on King Street and its rector Harry Robinson and member Paul Gouch, for many years President of Victoria College, sat on Imago's first board of directors. (Today Harry's son, David Robinson, is an accomplished sculptor based in Vancouver.)

So Franklin says that although the faith-based charity is non-denominational, "Imago was birthed out of an Anglican community." Today the Franklins attend Little Trinity and the chair of Imago, Liz Downie, is also a parishioner.

Practical help

How does Imago's objective to affirm Christian artists and their art actually play out in practice? The charity engages this mandate in several ways including events, performances, discussions, one-on-one conversations, study groups and the adoption of projects.

Initially an artist approaches Imago with a specific project in mind. Franklin meets with the artist and discusses their concept, then asks them to submit a written proposal that must include a financial plan.

Their work needs to be of a high artistic calibre. To judge this, depending on the media, a CD or a video of their work is sent to be peer reviewed by someone in the same field. Finally, based on the artist's proposal and the peer review, the board decides whether to adopt the project and grant it charitable status.

When a project has charitable status, the artist can then apply to various agencies and foundations for grants.

"Though we do not fund projects we adopt them and seek to facilitate their funding by profiling those projects," explains Franklin. "Our acceptance means that as an Imago project it has the benefits of charitable status and donations to the project are received by Imago."

Its website states that "Imago is a registered charity committed to facilitating the realization of initiatives in the creative arts in Canada.... Specifically, we are advocates for artistry done out of a Judeo-Christian faith perspective."

The projects can be in any area of the arts and need not be specifically Christian in their content. "Our concern is for artistic integrity and high calibre work."

Imago has supported not only the visual arts and music but also poetry and drama such as Bruce Kuhn's one-man show, *The Gospel of Luke*, which is currently in performance in Vancouver. Ins Choi, the creator of *Kim's Convenience*, said in a video created to celebrate the 40th

anniversary of Imago: "I consider Imago my artistic and spiritual home."

Some artists that have taken off with Imago's help and not looked back include: Motus O, a contemporary dance theatre that will celebrate its 30th anniversary this fall, and *Against the Grain Theatre*, an award-winning Canadian opera collective that presents classical music in innovative ways and unusual venues.

The making of a high-quality CD, however, can easily cost \$25,000 to \$30,000 so even established musicians like Mike Janzen may return to Imago for charitable assistance.

None of the artists have disappointed Franklin. He only regrets that a few were not able to raise the funds that they needed or that they struggled to find a good venue to display their work.

Exposure & Discussion

Imago also profiles the work of Christian artists in various venues. For its 30th anniversary in 2002, Imago sponsored a national art competition *A New Heaven and a New Earth*. The thirty finalists exhibited at the Painted City Gallery in Toronto and \$18,000 worth in prizes from a private sponsor was awarded at the Glenn Gould Studio in Toronto. The exhibition later travelled to Regent College in Vancouver.

Two or three Imago events are held each year, sometimes in collaboration with other organizations and institutions. In 2017 they held a small conference at TIFF Lightbox called *Opening Frames – on Faith, Film and the Media*.

They have also collaborated with the Canadian Bible Society, the Institute for Christian Studies, Ryerson University, the Henry Nouwen Society, Wycliffe College, Trinity College and the Toronto School of Theology.

Sometimes Imago hosts international speakers at these events such as Britain's Jeremy Begbie who specializes in the interplay between theology and the arts, particularly music. Other international speakers have included British script and screenwriter Murray Watts, American professor of theology and film Robert K. Johnston and British poet Malcom Guite.

Twice a year Franklin publishes a newsletter and has begun emailing *Imago Reflection* to Imago friends and supporters. Both profile Christian artists and upcoming events and offer some thoughtful reflection on faith and art.

For the past year and a half Franklin has been responsible for keeping art on the walls of Leonard Hall at Wycliffe College in Toronto. Currently the work of Brian Johnston is on display. Franklin has also curated visual art exhibits at Toronto School of Theology and continues to curate exhibits at Ravi Zacharias International Ministries located at the CBC building in Toronto. All the exhibitions feature the work of Canadian artists.

John still lives in his childhood home but now the Franklins have filled it with thousands of books. Where its walls aren't lined with volumes, they are graced with icons, paintings and prints. A small version of the sculpture *Homeless Jesus* by Canadian artist Timothy Schmalz rests on Franklin's desk while music fills the air.

Marion practices the gracious art of hospitality, and for many of the Imago events prepares a generous spread of delectable hors d'oeuvres and desserts.

What has been frustrating for Franklin who denies being a born optimist?

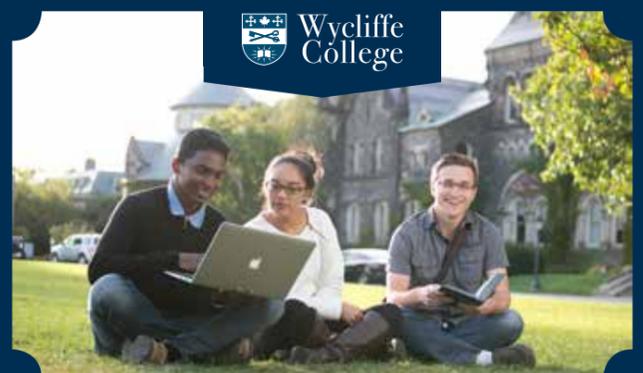
"I think of myself more as inherently hopeful which, of course, is part of the fabric of Christian living.

"What is difficult is keeping up with all the possibilities. I'm not a natural administrator – more a visionary – so that is a challenge but the rest is a joy ride. It's an honour, a delight meeting all the artists and experiencing all their work." TAP

Crossings Lent 2021

Imago is planning its most ambitious project ever for Lent 2021. The public will be able to visit distinctive art works created specifically to capture the meaning of the Scriptural Stations of the Cross, set in an urban context. Canadian artists will be invited to create works for the fourteen Stations as well as the Triumphant Entry and the Resurrection – under the title *Crossings*. Music, poetry, drama, dance and film will accompany the visual art.

Over twenty downtown churches, twelve Christian organizations and several seminaries will be participating. As part of the huge project Imago will host panel discussions, lectures and conversations that will explore how to apply the Good Friday biblical narrative to such urban issues as poverty, racism, refugees, the environment, and ethnic and religious diversity. Imago is hoping to raise \$200,000 to support the massive project, with a significant portion of these funds going to the participating artists. TAP



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Sex-abuse allegations against L'Arche founder, Jean Vanier

(Staff) JEAN VANIER, the revered founder of L'Arche, the world's leading network of communities for cognitively disabled people, has been found to have engaged in sexually abusive relationships with at least six women.

A 10-month investigation found the Canadian had "manipulative sexual relationships," many of them coercive, between 1970 and 2005. Some of the women were lay assistants, some were nuns.

The women had all come to Vanier seeking spiritual guidance.



PHOTO: L'ARCHE CANADA

Jean Vanier

The internal report doesn't rule out the existence of more victims.

In a statement published in France on Feb. 22nd, L'Arche International said nothing in the investigation suggests people with disabilities were affected.

Vanier, a Roman Catholic layman, died last May at the age of 90.

The independent inquiry, commissioned by L'Arche but conducted by GCPS Consulting, found that the six women, all of whom are non-disabled adults, had no connections with one another, but all reported that Vanier initiated the sexual relationships with them usually in the context of "spiritual accompaniment."

They all described being very vulnerable. Some had difficult family backgrounds or were looking for a father figure.

One of the unnamed victims said that Vanier would say to her, "This is not us, this is Mary and Jesus. You are chosen, you are special, this is secret."

When one nun protested Vanier's sexual advances, telling him she was consecrated to Jesus, he replied, "But Jesus and myself, this is not two but we are one.... It is Jesus who loves you through me."

"The relationships were found to be manipulative and emotionally abusive," the report revealed, "and had a significant negative impact on their personal lives and subsequent relationships."

The document also notes the women described significant barriers to raising concerns about the relationships, given Vanier's "charismatic personality" and his dominant position within L'Arche.

"We are shaken by these discoveries and condemn without reservations these actions that are in complete contradiction with the values that Jean Vanier espoused, at odds with the elementary rules of respect and personal dignity and contrary to the fundamental principles of our communities," Stefan Posner and Stacy Cates Carney, who lead L'Arche International, wrote in a letter to members of the

organization's communities in 38 countries. They also recognized the "suffering and courage of the women" who came forward.

The organization also committed to ensuring that its "154 communities around the world are places of safety and growth for all its members – with or without disabilities." There are 29 L'Arche communities in Canada alone.

In 2015, L'Arche International was shaken by revelations of sexual abuse against 14 women by its cofounder, French Dominican priest Thomas Philippe. Last year, following the broadcast of a documentary on ARTE, the organization once again condemned his "unspeakable" actions.

Vanier responded to those findings in a 2015 letter, saying he was "overwhelmed and shocked, absolutely unable to understand how this could have happened."

The recent L'Arche statement says GCPS' report reveals:

"As early as the 1950s, a decade before the founding of L'Arche, and contrary to what he publicly stated, Jean Vanier was aware of the key reasons for the canonical trial and condemnation of Father Thomas Philippe by the Catholic Church in 1956. The reasons lay in his theories, which were described as 'false mysticism', and the sexual practices that stemmed from them. Jean Vanier described Father Thomas Philippe as his spiritual father.

"The historical research suggests that in the 1950s, Jean Vanier was a member of a small clandestine group which subscribed to and participated in, some of Father Thomas Philippe's deviant sexual practices, which were founded on so-called 'mystical' or 'spiritual' beliefs that had been condemned by the Catholic Church. This group was made up of Father Thomas Philippe, Jean Vanier and a few women."

In 2016 a woman claimed to have had a sexual relationship with Vanier at his instigation. He admitted the affair but claimed it was consensual. Then in March 2019, as Vanier lay dying, another woman testified that she too had had a sexual affair with him, one that involved the same "mystical and spiritual" sexual practices that Philippe had been accused of. Vanier said he could not remember.

As a result, Posner, the international leader of L'Arche, commissioned an independent inquiry. He also commissioned an historian to study the newly unsealed Vatican files, as well as Vanier's correspondence. While he is no longer alive to defend himself,



Vanier has been found, on the "balance of probabilities," to have had at least six relationships over 30 years with women working at L'Arche, some of them abusive and all of them coercive and non-consensual.

Vanier, son of former Governor General Georges P. Vanier, worked initially as a Canadian navy officer and taught philosophy for a year at the University of Toronto.

A visit to a huge, overcrowded psychiatric hospital near Paris prompted him to found L'Arche in 1964 as an alternative housing where those with developmental disabilities could be full-fledged participants in the community instead of patients.

These core members would live in small family-like homes. Assistants would live with them for a year or two, although some have stayed for decades. Unlike caregivers in similar facilities, L'Arche assistants do not leave at the end of a shift but live day and night as equals with the core members and all share at least one communal meal together. Core members even take yearly holidays, often at other L'Arche communities.

The L'Arche philosophy is that people with intellectual disabilities should be seen as teachers, rather than burdens. Core members had much to teach their assistants about friendship and empathy.

Among the countless honours Vanier received were the Companion of the Order of Canada (1986), the French Legion of Honour (2003) and the Templeton Prize (2015). He wrote several best-selling books, including *Becoming Human*, which was published in 2001.

The report has been distributed to the head of each of the L'Arche communities, so they can prepare clear, simple and non-verbal ways (such as pictograms) of spreading the news to the core members. They will not try to keep it a secret.

L'Arche says it is "undertaking a thorough and independent evaluation of its current safeguarding policies and procedures" and has "created a centralized whistleblowing procedure, available for all its members." Any information received will be dealt with by a team partly made up of people outside L'Arche.

In the same letter the two International Leaders state: "For many of us, Jean was one of the people we loved and respected the most. Jean inspired and comforted many people around the world ... and we are aware that this information will cause many of us, both inside and outside L'Arche, deep confusion and pain. While the considerable good he did throughout his life is not in question, we will nevertheless have to mourn a certain image we may have had of Jean and of the origins of L'Arche."

In Canada there are at least 13 elementary and secondary schools named after Jean Vanier. Their students also will need to be taught the full truth about him.

Michael Higgins, a biographer of Vanier, said L'Arche International is to be "applauded" for "prioritizing justice for the victims over safeguarding the reputation of the founder." **TAP**

Ottawa Diocese:

New Bishop-elect of Ottawa

(Staff) ON MARCH 14th The rector of Christ Church Cathedral in Ottawa was elected as the tenth Bishop of Ottawa. There were six candidates and the Very Rev. Shane Parker won on the fifth ballot. He received 69.9% of the clergy votes and 51.7% of the lay vote. Election requires 50 percent plus 1 vote in both houses.

Parker succeeds Bishop John Chapman who has held episcopal office for the past 13 years.

The election was held on the last day before all Anglican services in the diocese were suspended to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

After his election Parker told the synod: "I am very conscious that tomorrow morning we will not be gathering in our churches. We are called in this unusual time to be love in a world that is now filled with fear. This is our time. We are called to give

the compassion and wisdom of God in Christ to care for those who are afflicted, who are isolated, who are terrified."

Parker was born to Irish parents in Edmonton and grew up in western Canada. He worked as a labourer for several years before undergraduate and graduate studies in sociology at Carleton University, and was a professional sociologist prior to studies in theology at St Paul University. He was ordained priest in the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa in 1987 and was appointed Dean of Ottawa and Rector of Christ Church Cathedral in 1999. Prior to his appointment as dean, he served as a parish priest and as a diocesan archdeacon.

He has served as a sessional professor in pastoral theology at St Paul University and currently chairs its Anglican Studies Advisory Committee. He has been for many years a member of Carleton University's Research Ethics Board. Following a



Shane Parker

long period of writing for the Ottawa Citizen's "Ask the Religion Experts" column, a collection of his essays was published by Novalis in a book called *Answering the Big Questions*. In 2010 he was the recipient of the Interfaith Ottawa Award, for promoting interfaith dialogue and cooperation.

Parker is an associate member of the Ontario Association of Family Mediators. He has established close connections with Coventry Cathedral in England and its ministry of reconciliation known as the Community of the Cross of Nails, and with Saint George's Anglican Cathedral in Jerusalem, which is committed to interfaith dialogue and reconciliation. He has led several pilgrimages to the Holy Land.

Parker is married to Katherine, who practices family law. They have three children and two grandchildren. On the cathedral website Parker is quoted as saying:

"We find our true nature when we locate God's love within us and allow ourselves to be guided by it in all we endeavour to do. To grasp this, however tentatively, is to receive a sense of hope and purpose that is alluring, affirming and life-changing."

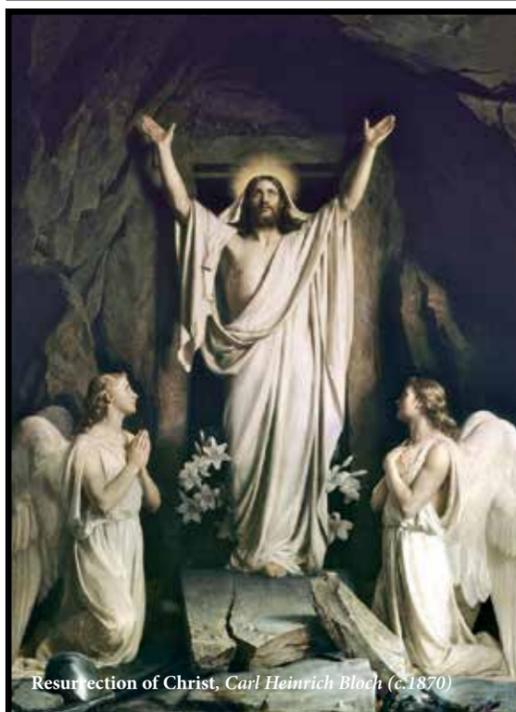
If the social isolation measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 are lifted in time, Parker will be consecrated at the end of May.

The Diocese

The Diocese of Ottawa straddles the Ottawa River and spans 46,620 km. It sits on traditional Algonquin and Mohawk territories and since 2015, Parker has encouraged the Cathedral to host events that would build new and meaningful relationships with Indigenous People – especially with the local Algonquin Nation.

The diocese is comprised of 111 congregations with 19 churches in the national capital itself. Other urban centres include Cornwall, Perth, and Renfrew, as well as Aylmer in Quebec.

Many diocesan clergy serve in small farming and forestry communities and cottage country, as well as in towns through eastern Ontario and western Quebec. While church services are primarily in English, there is a French-speaking congregation at St. Alban's near the University of Ottawa and an Inuktitut-speaking congregation at St. Margaret's, Vanier. **TAP**



Resurrection of Christ, Carl Heinrich Bloch (c.1870)

**CHRIST BEING RAISED
FROM THE DEAD DIETH NO
MORE; DEATH HATH NO MORE
DOMINION OVER HIM. FOR IN
THAT HE DIED, HE DIED UNTO
SIN ONCE: BUT IN THAT HE
LIVETH, HE LIVETH UNTO GOD.**

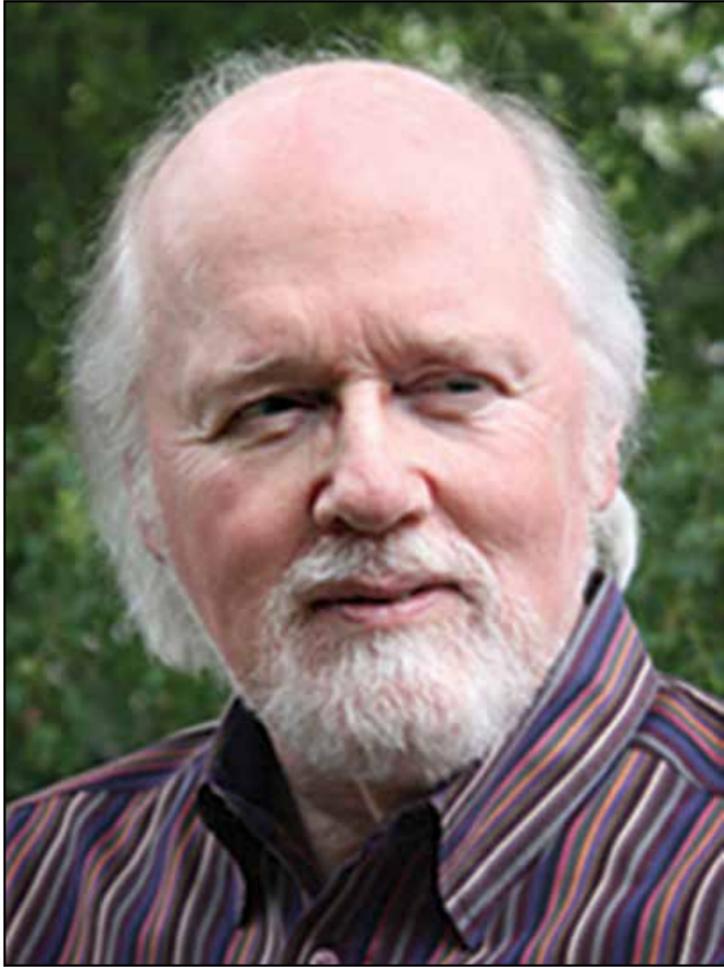
ROMANS 6. 9
ANTHEM FOR EASTER DAY, BCP



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John Franklin



SUPPLIED PHOTO

John Franklin, Executive Director of Imago, talks with **Sue Careless** about the faith-based charity and the interplay of faith and art.

TAP: Why was the name IMAGO chosen?

JF: I don't know the actual history of how the name was chosen. However, Imago comes from *Imago Dei*. We are made in the image of God and we are called to image forth who we are as creatures of God, as human beings.

TAP: What biblical doctrines speak to the interplay of art and faith?

JF: I look at this from a Trinitarian perspective. First, the Doctrine of Creation: we are in God's image as creative beings. We have this ability to create. Second, the Doctrine of the Incarnation. The invisible becomes visible so God did not reject embodiment and the arts are deeply embodied, sensual. Creation tells us we are all human and the Doctrine of Redemption makes us fully human. Then the Spirit. All art is inherently eschatological. It provides a glimpse into the world that is different from our normal experiences – it opens possibilities for our understanding and hints that our ordinary experience is not the whole picture – and so takes you from the present moment into the future. It is sign and symbol that suggests fresh perspectives and so through it we catch a glimpse of that time when all things will be made new. When there will be a new heaven and a new earth. And what is art if it isn't newness? In art the world you experience isn't the final world. There are hints, traces of the transcendent, of the coming Kingdom in art whether the artist is a believer or an unbeliever.

TAP: But what about stuff that seems very sacrilegious?

JF: It might seem sacrilegious but it may not be. It seems offensive. Take the *Chocolate Jesus*. Could it be saying, "What's the Church done with Jesus or with Easter? Has it made Christ into this saccharine figure?" When something seems offensive, we need to ask, "Is it blasphemous or prophetic and insightful?" You've got to give art time to interpret it. The artist may not have intended it to be prophetic but art can take on a life of its own beyond what the artist intended. The work may be "sacrilegious" but even then, it expresses a truth about how the artist experiences the world.

TAP: While beauty can suggest hints of the transcendent it can also deteriorate into sentimentality.

JF: Yes. Beauty can easily deteriorate into sentimentality especially in the context of faith. Sentimentality is a real danger. Artists need to be truth-tellers. Even if the truth is dark, tell it. Don't be afraid to tell the truth. Art can be disruptive and prophetic (and in that way is akin to the gospel). There is a negative side to sentimentality and that is when it becomes a matter of emotional self-indulgence. North American culture is – I believe – sentimental ("If it feels good, do it") and the Church doesn't escape. Much of our art and worship music is sentimental, emotionally self-indulgent.

Beauty, at its best, has power. It can move us inwardly and capture our attention. However, I carry a suspicion about beauty because beauty can be deceptive, misleading and superficial. We need to distinguish between aesthetic experience and the experience of divine presence. You might have an aesthetic experience in an art gallery or at a concert. You might sense a divine presence there too but it is different. What I'm interested in beyond beauty is glory. In Scripture there is very little about beauty but lots about glory. We need to discuss what the difference is between beauty and glory.

TAP: Isn't glory more about God?

JF: Yes, but as Christians we are to reflect that glory somehow. Paul tells the Corinthian Christians in his second letter to them: "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3:18). However, both beauty and the divine presence are elusive. When you try to possess and manage them, you diminish them. In our culture we want to possess things.

TAP: Fr. Raymond de Souza has observed that the super-rich today, unlike in the past, are not patrons of the arts. "They collect, but do not commission. They curate what previous generations have produced but are not ambitious about creating something new. Instead of visiting artists' studios to sponsor new talents, they head to the auction house to purchase the famous names of the past."

JF: There is some truth to that in broad strokes but some people have given thousands, millions of dollars in support of the arts. They do commission works – music, theatre, or visual art – but this is more common in Europe. The impact could be very significant if there were more Christians who would encourage and support younger artists.

TAP: When Christians are deciding where to donate their money, it would be easy to give priority to the poor and destitute and to missions that evangelize.

JF: What we don't understand fully is the humanizing influence of art. It reminds us of who we are. It's hugely powerful. It's not just "I appreciate art." It's important for the culture, for identity, for hope and for human flourishing. The cultural mandate is expressed in Genesis 1:28 where humanity is called to "be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth and subdue it ...". Simply put, this is an invitation to create culture – whether cultivating the land, building cities or making art. Humans are invited to engage the givenness of God's good world and exercise our creative gifts to give new shape to what we have been given.

TAP: De Souza has also said, "We need art in the spaces that mark our daily life, places where we work and meet and play and pray. Not just quarantined in museums and art galleries." Are you trying to get art by Christians out into the world?

Yes. We need not just decorative art but rotating fine art shows in not only colleges but also in coffee shops and restaurants, homes and work environments. Art should be woven into life, not simply objectified in gallery and concert halls. This is a win-win for everyone: artists, owners and patrons. We hope that *Crossings* will take art in its many forms into the streets of downtown Toronto next year. And there will be opportunities to discuss the works and engage with the artists. [See p. 4 for more on *Crossings*.]

TAP: What can individual churches do to encourage faith and art in their congregations? Should more visuals be used in the pulpit or will they just be distracting?

JF: Art should not be just an appendage, a frill; it needs to be integrated. If you do it, do it well. It can be distracting but it can be enriching. You need to have people who have good artistic sensibilities to help in the planning. Liturgy in its own way is art that serves to tell a story. One key thing a church can do is provide a space where you could have an art show or a poetry reading or a musical presentation. And be sure to have a conversation afterwards so there is more participation and involvement.

A major problem in some Christian communities is that we think of ourselves as Christians first and forget we are humans. We stress the doctrine of Redemption but forget the Doctrine of Creation, that we are all created in the image of God. As important as it is to be a believer, we are human beings who are redeemed. Sometimes we are

so busy being Christians we forget our humanity. We feel we have to preach in our art. Yet art can act as a bridge that opens a space for conversation about faith in a non-threatening environment.

TAP: Yes. Dr. Janine Langan has said, "Great art makes you shudder. Yet it makes you human."

JF: Yes, I believe Janine is right.

TAP: Christians in one tradition and age often need help interpreting art from another tradition or era, to grasp motifs and symbols not part of their own spiritual heritage. Protestants need help reading icons. We need to let Christians from other cultures and denominations minister to our imaginations and souls if we are to mature as Christians.

JF: It's all too easy to write something off that you can't connect with immediately. Instead we need to ask ourselves, "What's happening here? What emotion does this provoke in me?" That's where an aesthetic education is so important, whether obtained in college courses or through good books – or through a faith community that takes the aesthetic side of life seriously and so fosters a deeper sense of our humanity.

TAP: In 1999 I viewed *Under the Sign of the Cross: Creative Expressions of Christianity in Canada at the Canadian Museum of Civilization*. But generally speaking, there appears to be little or no place for religious sensibility in our secular art institutions.

JF: There are some hopeful signs: *Seeing Salvation: Images of Christian Art* in the National Art Gallery in London in 2000 was an outstanding exhibition centred on Jesus and it drew one of the largest crowds in the museum's history. And there have been many other highly successful exhibitions with a focus on the spiritual or religious. More recently there was *Mystical Landscapes* at the Art Gallery of Ontario (2016-2017).

It is the most successful show that the AGO originated. During the five-year preparation for the exhibit, its AGO Curator, Dr. Katharine Lochnan, met in consultation a number of us associated with the Toronto School of Theology. There were varying views about the subject of mysticism but that diversity served to enrich the discussions about its relationship to art. Katharine later invited a number of us to contribute one of the twenty essays in the catalogue.

After the exhibit closed in Toronto, it moved to the Musée d'Orsay in Paris. I would advise you to buy the English language catalogue, which is much more than a mere catalogue, because the French version published in Paris excised much of the theology.

TAP: Canadian theologian James K. A. Smith has recently been making the claim that we are liturgical beings. Do you agree?

JF: Yes. Call-and-response is at the heart of liturgy. And it is a good way to live, listening to God's call and responding. Smith argues in *Desiring the Kingdom* that we

See **JOHN FRANKLIN** p. 7

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