



## Pet Memorials to be Studied

Two churches begin pilot project

BY SUSAN DOWN

Pet owners delight in the old joke about the difference between stereotypical dog and cat personalities. The dog looks at his owner and thinks, “You pet me, feed me, love me and give me a home. You must be God.” The cat thinks, “You pet me, feed me, love me and give me a home. I must be God.”

Whether godlike or God-fearing, these animals are beloved members of many families, deeply mourned by owners after the pets die. While many parishes schedule a blessing of the animals in the fall to celebrate the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi (patron saint of animals), two Anglican churches on Vancouver Island – St. Mary, Nanoose; and the Parish of Central Saanich – are studying the demand for pet memorial garden services.

They have been authorized by the Diocesan Council and received support from the Vision Fund to start a pilot project on the subject. What the two churches are proposing are not cemeteries, but memorial gardens. The difference is that cemeteries have buried remains in receptacles whereas, in memorial gardens, ashes are spread so that the area is a communal memorial place that may feature seating and plaques to commemorate the pets. The proposed venues at both the churches are not part of human cemeteries.

Selinde Krayenhoff, incumbent at St. Mary, recognized the importance of pets when she joined the parish three years ago. The blessing of the animals was a fall tradition, and people were invited to decorate a tree with notes inscribed with the names of their beloved pets that had died. “We have a predominantly elderly congregation with people whose kids have moved away, so their cat or dog



Selinde Krayenhoff, relaxing with her rescue cat, Peekaboo, is working on a pilot project for a pet memorial garden at St. Mary, Nanoose.

Faith in Action

becomes part of the family,” she said. The pet connection also brings in people who aren’t connected to church. “It’s a way of supporting people in the community through their grief and loss.”

Lon Towstego, incumbent at the Parish of Central Saanich, said the community is

considering all of the options for a location suitable for their two church properties. The parish holds its popular animal blessing in August each year.

Both ministers say the gardens would provide a much-needed service for humans grieving for their pets. A recent study found

that more than 40 per cent of Canadian households own a dog (38 per cent own cats), so it is no surprise the pet aftercare field is growing. There has yet to be complete theological agreement on whether we will see our pets in heaven, but regardless, they make our lives richer here on earth. ■

## Action Against Human Trafficking

BY ELIZABETH WELCH

“What could I do? Who could I turn to? He owned me.” These were the words spoken to me by the first trafficked person I encountered while working as a chaplain in a large hospital. Like many persons who are trafficked, this individual had been targeted because she was

vulnerable. The intersection of urban poverty, racism and sexism meant that she lived in a world of extremely few options. When a “recruiter” made promises of economic stability, safety and belonging, she believed it was her way out. Instead it led to years of further exploitation. Unfortunately, since that initial experience over 10 years ago, the number of trafficked persons has increased.

Human trafficking or modern slavery is the buying and selling of human beings – usually to exploit them for sex or labour. It exists right here. Now the third

most profitable global criminal enterprise, trafficking involves an act (recruiting, transporting, harbouring), a means (deception, coercion, force, threat) and a purpose (financial or material benefit for the trafficker).

The Anglican Church of Canada is raising awareness about human trafficking and collaborating with other organizations to act against it. As part of this effort, I attended the *Engage Freedom* conference held in locations across Canada, this one in Nanaimo in April this year. We gathered to increase our

knowledge of the problem and discuss meaningful actions we could take against trafficking.

The overwhelming majority of persons trafficked in Canada are born in Canada, particularly when it comes to sex trafficking. Who is most vulnerable to being trafficked? Margo Franssen, board chair for the Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking, states, “The biggest risk of being trafficked in Canada is just being a girl. Any girl. Anytime. Anywhere.” However, Indigenous women and girls are disproportionately targeted. Why? When systemic racism

and sexism violate one’s dignity, when food and safe housing are not accessible, when economic stability and advanced education are not within one’s grasp, when society subtly and explicitly treats one as a worthless object rather than a worthy human being, these realities render one more vulnerable to exploitation.

Our baptismal covenant asks us each this question, “Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?” We respond, “I will with God’s help.” I believe this

Continued on page 7

# Actions and Reflections



BY J. BARRY FOSTER

Jesus taught his first disciples a model of formation that we would call action-reflection. He sent them out to do things and when they returned, they talked about how it went, prayed about what they had done and then went out to try it all over again using new things they had learned.

1. When I was a parish priest many years ago, I wrote a reflection piece that appeared on the back page of the bulletin every Sunday. I shared my own reflections about faith and life in order that members of the parish might do the same thing and encourage new ways of being. Here are two of those “back page” pieces from long ago. This past week I reread Fredrick Buechner’s book, *Now and Again: A Memoir of Vocation*. It is a deeply personal reflection on the movement of

his life from pre-seminary days to mature adulthood. In the introduction, he says something profound: “If you tell your own story with sufficient candor and concreteness, it will be an interesting story and a universal story.” Particularity enables a kind of universalizing that transcends time, geography and even culture. When you think about it, the Bible is, in many ways, a memoir of vocation; a love story between God and humans who frequently have a hard time together.

This larger story is comprised of many smaller ones, deeply personal accounts of encounters with and responses to God: Abraham and Sarah, Joseph and his brothers, David and Bathsheba, Moses and Aaron, Joseph and Mary, Jesus and many other characters. Because it is so particular to them, we can enter the story, collapsing the distance between then and now, realizing that God meets us in the everyday occurrences of our lives. If we believe that God meets us in the concreteness of our daily lives, in the events and people that engage us and move us, then taking time periodically to listen

to our lives becomes a means of encounter with God. To listen to our lives, to use Buechner’s phrase, is not to simply recall things that have happened to us. Listening to our life is to strain to hear the voice of God, most often heard as a faint whisper. Whispers are hard to hear during the push and pull of daily life, but when we find some solitude, we will discover moments when we have heard and responded.

2. Recently I was reading an article about the unspoken wisdom of body movement. We are all familiar with body language; a raised eyebrow or arms folded tightly across the chest say things just as surely as words do. Paying attention to that helps us communicate more effectively. We may be less aware of how certain body movements teach us things about our faith life. A couple of years ago (so that would have been 1995) I was doing a course at St Stephen’s College in Edmonton on matters of “soul.” Our presenter for two days was a Jungian therapist. She gave us a variety of windows to look through to our topic. One of these windows was kinesthetic. She taught the class a form of circle dancing. Most of the students, comfortable living in their heads, were reluctant

## Bishop’s Calendar

### October

1	Inaugural Indigenous council meeting, synod office
4-6	How We Heal, First Nations Teaching House, Port Hardy
7	New clergy orientation day, synod office
10	Clergy day, St. Mary, Saanichton
13	Parish visit, St. Andrew, Sidney
17	Finance committee, synod office
18-12	Diocesan women’s retreat, Camp Pringle, Shawnigan Lake
24	Transforming Futures presentation, St. Barnabas, Victoria
26	Diocesan council, Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria
27	Parish visit, St. Philip, Oak Bay

to get out of their chairs and move around. We formed a large circle linked arm in arm. She demonstrated the movements, turned on the music, which had a Middle Eastern flavor, and we began to move. At first we were pretty clumsy, and there was great laughter mixed with a healthy dose of embarrassment.

After moving through the routine a few times, we started to get the feel of the footwork, body postures and directional changes. By the end of the second day we were quite good at it. What fascinated me was

this: the movements of the dance were about life, first moving in one direction then turning to move in another, a few steps forward then a couple steps back. Life is like this. Faith development is like this dance too. From wherever we start there is progression and regression. Most importantly the dance taught us that whichever way we move, we are not alone.

*J. Barry Foster is the executive officer for the Anglican Diocese of British Columbia. ■*

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January issue - November 25  
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Volume 53, No 8

# Learning to Read the Book of Nature Again: The Wisdom of Christian Ecotheology

BY JOHN J. THATAMANIL

Christian thought has always been shaped by a feeling for time: the time of Incarnation, the time of the church's life under the Spirit after Ascension, and now the time of waiting in hope for the Lord's return. While there's nothing inherently wrong about Christian concern with time, it has led to the notion of place, indeed our entire planetary home, receiving short shrift. Our earthly home has been cast in the meagre role of the stage upon which the great drama of history plays out. We look for God only in history, not in nature.

It has not always been so. Early and medieval Christian theologians were concerned

to read two books, the Book of Scripture and the Book of Nature. All generalizations are falsifications. Nonetheless, it is fair to say that many Christians in the west after industrialization stopped reading the Book of Nature. Indeed, we have forgotten the very idea that Christian life calls for such reading. Nature was reduced to "natural resources," mere matter subject to the fixed operation of the law of cause and effect. We live in a billiard-ball universe in which nature is a dead mechanism not spirited organism.

Where is God in a mechanistic universe? Certainly, nowhere within it! God becomes the watchmaker

who winds up the gears and sets the clockwork in motion but is no longer required for daily operations. The Deist God, safely exiled to a heavenly transcendence, is no longer present as the animating life and spirit of the universe itself. Within such a framework, the Book of Nature doesn't make for particularly interesting reading.

*Ecotheology is about far more than the climate crisis.*

*Rather, the field and its practitioners want to know how we came to be in this predicament in the first place.*

Vancouver Islanders, and many other Christians, cannot be conscripted into so reductive a vision of nature. Surrounded as we are by the breathtaking beauty of our island, we cannot assume nature is inanimate. The Garry oak trees, the whale sightings, our majestic mountains, our love for gardening—all make us aware of the vitality of nature. Our challenge lies not in how we

experience nature but rather in how we think about nature: our theologies do not accord with our felt sense of our island home.

So, what then must be done to right Christian reflection? We must turn to ecotheology: a Christian reflection that allows us to read the Book of Nature in the light of the divine life. Ecotheologians are committed to rethinking every aspect of life in a way that centers on nature rather than marginalizing her—and yes, that includes what it means to think of nature as an "it." For example, Christian ecotheologians are compelled to redressing the imbalance with which this column began: what would it mean to learn to think of human beings as creatures of place as well as creatures of time? Might it lead to a greater commitment to care for our local habitats? Might congregations use our lands and properties to enable congregants who don't own homes to get their hands back in the dirt? Might our commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples lead us to learn from them how to see nature as animated, attaining a vital spiritual skill that they never lost? Might we acknowledge that God comes to

save the whole world and not just human beings? What would that mean for our relationships with plants and animals?

Ecotheology is about far more than the climate crisis. Rather, the field and its practitioners want to know how we came to be in this predicament in the first place. Answering that question requires reconfiguring the Christian natural imagination from root to branch and living accordingly. That is what it means to become genuine followers of the God who became an earthling so that all earthlings might become divine.

*John J. Thatamanil is associate professor of theology and world religions at Union Theological Seminary in New York. He is the author of The Immanent Divine: God, Creation, and the Human Predicament and the forthcoming book, Circling the Elephant: A Comparative Theology of Religious Diversity. His opinion pieces have appeared in the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times and a variety of sites online. He worships with Kate Newman, his wife, at Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria. ■*

## Transforming Futures Update

BY BRENDON NEILSON

Just over one year ago, representatives from across the diocese assembled for the 98th Synod of the Diocese of British Columbia. It was a wonderful gathering of our people for the purposes of determining our direction into the future. It was decided emphatically that we wanted our future to be transformed and with the unanimous passing of the motion

to approve and adopt Transforming Futures (TF) as a collective project.

We have told the story of Trinity + Lutheran, Port Alberni taking visionary steps to make the phrase "everyone welcome" so much more than a slogan for the church. Members have decided to remove some of the barriers that made it impossible for some people to participate in their community. In doing so they have renewed their commitment to the community

and have revitalized their hope for what their ministry can be.

Many other parishes are amid the most important phase of TF, which is the discernment and development process of listening and dreaming about what God is calling them to be, and what transformative journey they will embark on. TF is not simply a fundraising initiative. If it were, each parish would be given its financial goal and a collection date and that would be that. Instead, TF is designed to allow each parish to determine how our collective ministry and

vision will take shape in each local community. The future of our diocese will take shape through the renewed hearts and spirits of our people.

As we remember the commitment we made just over one year ago, we need those of you who were delegates, and who see the potential of TF to help lead the conversations in your parishes. Collectively we look with hope to the goodness that will come about through our faithful witness in this way.

Many of our parishes are in situations that make TF seem

daunting. If you are considering getting TF going in your parish, I encourage you to assemble a team to pray and talk about what God is calling you toward.

We believe in the future that we are being called towards. The money raised will be a concrete example of this. We anticipate with hope what God will bring about in our midst. Be encouraged as you begin this journey together.

*Brendon Neilson is the diocesan vision animator and staff lead on Transforming Futures. bneilson@bc.anglican.ca ■*

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# Camino de Santiago Reflections

*UVic Anglican chaplain Ruth Dantzer co-  
led a student pilgrimage group, supported by the Vision Fund, on the Camino de Santiago in April and May. Here are some reflections from the participants*

## Laura Tkacsik

Three months ago, I strapped on my pack, stepped into my boots, and boarded a flight to Spain with nine fellow pilgrims. With me I carried 15 pounds on my back, carefully packed, repacked, and packed again. I cycled through my handful of intention words: unlearning, relearning, clarity, wonder.

I wanted every part of this trip to be intentional, and to not let the experience slip away into the inevitable disappointment of unmet expectations. I was lucky enough to be a part of a group that walked together through a process of pairing intention with expectation, and the product was a trip in which every step, from booking the tickets to parting ways in Santiago de Compostela, was imbued with meaning, growth, and self-reflection. For me, it was time to sift through the ashes of my faith deconstruction and find my place in spirituality. What better way than to follow in the footsteps of pilgrims walking their own holy expeditions?

It was only a few days into the trip that I began to see my vague intentions actualizing. Unlearning, relearning, wonder, clarity. I walked alone through a valley in the misty morning, in the shadow of tree-filled mountaintops jutting far above me on either side. I watched the light dance in the mist as I

looked on with complete awe at the majesty. For a few moments, the ache of longing for resolution to my spiritually dissonant heart (and the ache of my feet) fell away. It was simple. It was impossibly beautiful. The Divine was in those mountains for me that morning. And in my swollen feet, and in my fellow pilgrims, and in my little heretic heart. It was somehow a reminder that even though I am searching, I am not a lost cause.

## Maya Bridger

The Camino was one of the most intense and transformative experiences of my life, both physically and emotionally. Moments of intense beauty and peace were interspersed with periods of frustration, physical pain, and restlessness. In a sense, it was like all the highs and lows of life compressed into a 10-day trek, without the comfort of familiarity: thrilling and draining at the same time, and a journey that I will certainly never forget! And just like in life, the takeaway I got was that the only thing to do was keep walking, one foot in front of the other, because you never know what is waiting for you just around the bend. I was very humbled to walk along the old routes that so many others have travelled before me, and grateful for the opportunity to do it in my own unique way that no one other than me could experience. It served as a reminder to me that the lifelong journey of faith is both a deeply personal experience and something that we share and strengthen with those around us.

## Jessie Paterson

My experience was marked by what I have come to call Camino Magic. By this I refer to the ability of the Way to provide exactly what you need when you need it. I had heard about this mythical nature of the Way before and began to investigate by asking other pilgrims about their experience.

I experienced this lovely synchronous magic several times myself. Once, I had just been telling my friend Toby about graciously accepting the gifts you are offered. Suddenly, a man walked over to us on the country road, and without saying a



UVIC walkers and their feet were relieved to reach the end of the Camino de Santiago.

word, offered me a bouquet of wildflowers. Initially stunned by the coincidence, I reached out and accepted the gift, my friend Toby nodding encouragingly, grateful to practice what I had been preaching.

I'm letting go of my definition of coincidence as mere chance circumstance. I have developed an increasing fondness for the word coincidence after learning about its etymology. I learned recently that it comes from the Latin *coincidere*; "co" meaning "together," and "incidere" meaning "to fall upon." Essentially translated to "falling together."

Our Caminos are different. Yet when we walk together, our individual stories overlap, and this is what makes them significant. Coincidence? Magic.

## Ann Marie Hak

What I expected:

- To rebuild my relationship with God.

- To make peace with the spaces in me that are like my father.

What I didn't expect:

- To make love to food and have that experience celebrated with my pilgrim family.

- To learn what it feels like

to be in an unlimited, loving relationship with people who feel honoured to witness you every day.

- To leave Spain with confidence, knowing I am capable of having the tough, uncomfortable, confrontational conversations that come with being clear about what I want and what works for me, and also realizing my value.

In the last two decades I have explored my faith from different lenses, trying to understand the spiritual integrity that I believe in. The faith I practice now was developed over the last five years through this understanding:

God is in me, and so God is every experience.

Rebuilding a relationship with God on the Camino was about experiencing God from others. Understanding that you can be a part of other religious practices and feel just as deeply connected and committed to your faith, even though you choose not to identify yourself to any religion, mimics the motif of the lost sheep now found. I believe lost and found are perspectives, and that it is the existence of the sheep that represents the always existing connection to God. ■

## Journeys in Faith: Jerusalem

The next pilgrimage offered through Anglican Campus Spirituality will be to Jerusalem April 25 - May 9, 2020. A group of students will attend the course Footsteps of Jesus, offered in Jerusalem at St. George's Anglican College. The Vision Fund is generously supporting this year's pilgrimage by helping to lower student trip expenses. This pilgrimage is open to any student or young adult in the diocese (ages 18-35). Monthly sessions for those interested will be held on October 16 and November 27 at 7 pm at UVic Interfaith Chapel. Each session is devoted to building community, planning logistics, and fundraising. The program will also explore pilgrimage tools and topics to enable participants to enter fully into the experience. For more information contact Ruth Dantzer at [anglican@uvic.ca](mailto:anglican@uvic.ca). ■

-Ruth Dantzer

**DIOCESAN POST WELCOMES LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

# What is the Christian Wisdom Lineage?

BY HEATHER PAGE

In April 2019, Heather Page attended a Wisdom School at the Lake Cowichan Education Centre, led by The Rev. Cynthia Bourgeault, PhD and sponsored by The Contemplative Society. Bourgeault is a modern-day mystic, Episcopal priest, author and retreat leader based in Maine. She is a founding Director of both The Contemplative Society and the Aspen Wisdom School.

When I first began attending contemplative retreats the emphasis was on creating a monastic hermitage type experience. Retreats ranged from weekends to 10 days, typically in

full silence except for teaching and minimal communication during Benedictine work periods. Some silent sits were as long as 90 minutes with only a couple of short breaks for meditative walking. Custody of the eyes was practiced (no eye contact) and held throughout the retreat.

A shift has occurred over the years in the contemplative community. Wisdom schools have fewer meditation periods and more emphasis on the question of how I as a contemplative will manifest outwardly in daily living. Are the fruits of the Spirit (gentleness, patience, forbearance, humility) finding their way into how I relate to my family and my neighbour? How does the contemplative stance express itself in my interactions in the world? And how might this contemplative stance affect world consciousness and find its identity in the cosmic Christ? This is an important development that is still being processed by the contemplative community. Meditation however, remains central and participants are encouraged to share in this intentional practice. Meditation

is a daily practice in the art of laying down identification with our personal agenda and letting go of wants and needs. It is only through deepening surrender that genuine altruistic outpouring becomes possible.

Bourgeault's blend of Wisdom teaching was formulated over 20 years ago with The Contemplative Society on Vancouver Island and Salt Spring Island. During this time these contemplative teachings began to take root within the Anglican community. Under the leadership of Bishop Barry Jenks, The Contemplative Society received a generous annual donation of seed money for three years to help establish this teaching and life practice within the Diocese of British Columbia.

Wisdom teaching has roots in both mystical and monastic traditions, particularly the Benedictine emphasis on a daily rhythm of work and prayer, and in the teaching of G.I. Gurdjieff which blends orthodox christianity, Sufism, and Middle Eastern influences. Central to the teaching is work with attention, self-observation,

and non-identification combined with inner practices which aim to support work on the stuck places where we are asleep to the subtle ways our unconscious and automatic self manifests that are obvious to others but frequently hidden to us.

Cynthia pointed out the basics of Wisdom teaching. It is founded on a daily practice of sitting meditation, predominantly but not exclusively centering prayer; it emphasizes mindfulness and conscious awakening; and it sees contemplation no longer as monastic, prioritizing silence and repose, but as a way of honing consciousness to fully engage the world.

Wisdom teaching affirms the primacy of the language of silence and its life-giving connection with the subtle realms, and of scripture and tradition as cornerstones of Christian life. It incorporates teaching from the greater Christian mystical and visionary tradition, the Desert and Hesychast traditions, Christian Advaitic traditions, Sufism, and people such as Rumi, G.I.

Gurdjieff, and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.

Cynthia contends that "Christianity has never looked at why the material world is so important." Within this dense realm, laying down one's life becomes the activation of the spiritual path. It is easy to be tempted to view this dense and coarse realm as inferior and to desire an escape to "climb out of the pit" in Cynthia's words. The aim is not self-realization but love. As she says in her book, *The Wisdom Jesus*, "Could it be that this earthly realm, not in spite of but because of its very density and jagged edges, offers precisely the conditions for the expression of certain aspects of divine love that could become real in no other way?"

This teaching offers hope to the world and a possible way forward in the church that at times may appear to resemble the orchestra on the sinking Titanic. All generations long for authentic expression and practice, as well as guidance in living integrated and fully embodied lives. I see the Christian Wisdom teaching in part, as the way forward. ■

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# On Not Walking Away



## Reflections

BY HERBERT O'DRISCOLL

### A reflection on Luke 24: 13-35

In July I shared a fascinating week in the Sorrento Centre on Shuswap Lake. About 50 of us from across Western Canada explored one of the most vivid incidents in the gospels.

It's the day after the horror of Jesus' crucifixion. Two people (we think they may have been husband and wife) decide to get out of Jerusalem and go back to where they live, the village of Emmaus. Everything they had hoped for has ended. They've had

all they can take. They set out on the two-hour walk home.

About halfway, a stranger catches up with them. They get talking as they go along. Somehow this stranger makes it possible for them to open up about what they have been through. Then, in a strange but rather wonderful way, he puts what has happened in a new perspective. This affects them so profoundly that they don't want to part with his company, so they ask him to share a table in the village inn.

What happens there changes their lives. This stranger takes a piece of homemade bread and a drop of wine and suggests they share. In their lives only one person had ever done this, their friend Jesus. In that moment their world is up-ended. A flood of emotions engulfs them both. They don't know what to say. When they do gather their wits, the stranger has slipped away as mysteriously as he came into their lives.

Instinctively everything in them wants to share this extraordinary moment. They set out to walk back to the city to find the community.

In Sorrento, looking at this scripture closely, we found ourselves drawn to this couple's departure and return to Jerusalem.

That long-ago couple walked away because of an overwhelming sense of loss. Our generation is experiencing an increasing loss of the world, the structures and the assumptions that have shaped our lives, including the forms by which we have expressed our Christian faith.

We are all responding to this sense of loss in different ways. Many of us are tempted to walk away from the increasing complexity of our world to seek a simpler world.

However, there is in Christian faith a mysterious influence (dare we call it a spirit?) that encourages us to reconsider walking away.

Many of the older generation are walking away from community at a time in their lives when community is becoming all important.

To our surprise we find that sometimes being part of a Christian

community can take us out of our personal agendas of anxiety, loneliness, loss, depression or sickness. To be part of something bigger can make all the difference.

There is another good reason for not walking away from the world around us. Our families, our adult children, grandchildren, have no choice other than to live and study and work in a complex world of relentless change.

As our Emmaus couple came back to Jerusalem long ago, we need to consider staying in our contemporary urban world of Facebook and iPhones, driverless cars, cannabis and gender enhancing surgery. Far from walking away in defeat and despair, we need to be there for those whom we love, even if it is only to be a supportive presence in their lives.

Let's check back with that Emmaus couple. They found that being given a meaning for our sense of loss makes all the difference between being overcome by it and moving through it. They found that community means too much to walk away from it, and that companionship around a table can be a gift beyond price.

But to discover these things, they had to return from walking away. They had to go back to the city, find their community, share the meal.

For me, the finest way of summing up these few thoughts is to share something a Jewish theologian, Judith Plaskow, wrote: "It is as we join with others in a way that only human beings can, in shared engagement in a common vision, that we find ourselves in the presence of another presence that is the final source of our hopes and intentions, and that undergirds and sustains them."

NOTE: By the way, the fact that you've just read this could mean that you have decided not to walk away. You probably know old friends who have. Why not ask them back, maybe to some special occasion you think they might enjoy? The Spirit always has a few surprises up her sleeve!

*Herbert O'Driscoll is a retired priest, the author of a number of books, hymns and radio scripts as well as a conference leader. ■*

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# Q&A



## My Journey

BY THE REV. GRANT CROSWELL

*The Rev. Grant Crosswell was ordained Aug. 18 at St. John the Divine.*

### What made you decide on the priesthood?

I was born in Victoria, BC and at a very early age I played at being a priest. Growing up I had an altar in my room with a wine glass and bread and I gave “communion” to my friends. I would invite my friends to come

to my church and I would give a sermon. My earliest religious influences were my mother and the Catholic school I attended where all the faculty were nuns from Hollywood, California. They were very enthusiastic about their faith and I caught their excitement.

### What route did you take for your studies?

I did my BA at St Patrick’s College in Ottawa and completed my theological training at Newman Theological College, Alberta. I join the Oblate’s of Mary Immaculate, a Roman Catholic men’s community and was ordained to the Roman Catholic priesthood in 1977. I later completed a master of continuing education at the University of Saskatchewan.

### What is your employment background?

I served as a RC priest for 17 years in Kitimat and

Merritt. During these years I was involved in continual ecumenical collaboration with the Anglican church. I also served in Edmonton, preaching missions, serving as part of a retreat team, and getting involved with the worldwide marriage encounter movement. In 1992 I chose to marry the love of my life, Colleen, currently completing her M.Div. at Vancouver School of Theology. We started a career counselling business and raised our son, now 23, in Saskatoon. We were married in the Anglican Chapel of Emmanuel St. Chad, on the University of Saskatchewan campus where we were both students.

My journey towards becoming Anglican was a long and carefully considered process. An ongoing conversation with Bishop Logan from the time he was the incumbent at St. George, Cadboro Bay and up to the present time led me to consider

the Anglican church as a place of inclusivity and welcome, where critical thinking was important while still honouring a rich tradition.

The first Anglican church that we attended was the Church of the Advent in Colwood where we experienced a great sense of welcome and hospitality. At the Eucharistic table the words “all are welcome and encouraged to come to the table” had a profound effect on me. We were invited to participate in the life of the parish right from the beginning, and I experienced a great sense of belonging. At a certain point along the journey, Bishop Logan invited me to consider becoming an Anglican priest and I took that invitation very seriously.

I bought a counselling practice and returned to Victoria in 2000. I also worked for 10 years as the social concern manager for the St. Vincent de Paul Society in Victoria with

responsibility for the food bank, helping street people, the poor and the marginalized. My life took a change in direction when I met the then incumbent of St. George the Martyr parish, the Bishop Logan McMennamie who invited me regularly for coffee for several years and encouraged me to consider priesthood in the Anglican church.

### What do you see as the greatest challenge to the church?

I see the greatest challenge in the church as outreach to the next generation whose needs and challenges are dramatically different. Many of them consider themselves to be spiritual but not religious and do not identify with the institutional church. I am excited to be part of the Anglican Church of Canada, which is continually growing and evolving, invites discussion and wrestles authentically with differences and issues. ■

# Action Against Human Trafficking

Continued from cover

promise must be our guide. Resolution A204 recently carried at General Synod encourages dioceses to build relationship with local and regional networks combatting human trafficking, slavery and exploitation as well other important work. However, beyond connecting with agencies, we need to connect with and stand in solidarity with vulnerable persons. Do we seek to understand something about the life and experience the young woman who gives us a manicure at the nail salon? Do we do more than turn our gaze away when we drive by a young Indigenous woman holding up a sign asking for money for food? Do we do anything in our context to build protective community around young women and LGBT2Q+ youth? Do we teach men and boys to respect the dignity of women, girls and gender-diverse persons as beloved children of God?

Most often we respond to help those who’ve already been victimized. We need to look upstream as well. The Rev. Alistair Hunting and elder, Richard

George, who is active at St. Columba, gave an excellent presentation at the Nanaimo conference about initiatives in their community including highlighting the support of the Moose Hide campaign, decolonizing liturgy, and standing in solidarity with an Indigenous community member whose daughter is one of the many murdered Indigenous women.

We likely feel disheartened and overwhelmed when we learn about how prevalent human trafficking is, but we are not helpless before this evil. The woman whose story began this article eventually escaped the clutches of her trafficker because a stranger noticed her crying on a bus, and instead of turning away drew near and said, “I’m worried about you. Can I help you?”

*The Rev. Elizabeth Welch is the incumbent at St. George, Cadboro Bay.*

**Resources:**  
BC Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons: [www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/victims-of-crime/human-trafficking/about-us](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/victims-of-crime/human-trafficking/about-us)

Anglican Church of Canada: [www.anglican.ca/issues/human-trafficking/](http://www.anglican.ca/issues/human-trafficking/)

Canada has a new 24-hour hotline: [www.humantrafficking.hotline.ca](http://www.humantrafficking.hotline.ca) ■



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# Questions to Ponder

BY MALCOLM READ

Ten years from now who will be sitting in your pews? That's just one of the questions we need to ask as we evolve as a community. A decade ago, I saw a startling Globe and Mail headline: "Anglican Church Facing Threat of Extinction."

Despite the gloomy forecast, there is much to love in the Anglican Church of Canada: maintaining traditions with pride, looking for middle and integral ways through difficult issues, and aiming for excellence in worship, to name a few. Yet we continue to operate in close resemblance to our Church of England mentor, with its 500-year-old history and cultural reflection of state power and patriarchy. Is this appropriate in an increasingly secular society, in post-colonial times, as we work to reconcile with Indigenous communities and others on "Turtle Island?"

At Christ Church Cathedral, our congregation has been meeting

in small groups to envision what we can accomplish in the future. It seems to me that an essential part of a church community is to create and sustain communities of disciples. What resources are needed to nurture discipleship? What cultural changes may help us support the people of God wherever they are – at home, at work, at play and at church?

### Business No Longer as Usual

A first step may be to deconstruct, decolonize and reconstruct church operations. Should we divest ourselves of hierarchical structures and some buildings? What does it mean, in practical terms, to belong to the ministry of all baptized? Are the roles of clergy and lay people complementary? Is the traditional, one-priest/one parish the only or the best model? If so, for whom? What are the other models available to us? Are worker-priests more appropriate in some cases, for example?

A practical theology of lay ministry will be critical. Where does it connect with the challenges and joys for working folk, parents and grandparents, youth and children and how can the church support them? A

teacher commented to me, "I teach Sunday school 45 minutes a week and they haul me up to the front of the church to pray for me. I teach in a school 45 hours a week and the church has never prayed for me."

### Harnessing Technology

In a time of social media and online communities, is the church missing an important opportunity to communicate with the people for whom it exists? Christianity has come to us in part because of the wisdom of authors and church leaders in using the latest communication techniques of their era. Today, we toy nervously with social media, yet it engages people in ways that were impossible just a few years ago.

### Confidence

Finally, I wonder about our confidence as a church community, perhaps eroded by worrying about buildings, finances and declining membership. Change is upon us and we need not drift into oblivion but have the confidence and courage to act. Change involves risk and risk requires confidence.

*Malcolm Read is the animator of community life at Christ Church Cathedral. ■*

## Faith in Foundation

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### PRESENTER: ANN GARRIDO

Ann Garrido has been a catechist of the Good Shepherd since 1996. She is the author of several books including two on CGS: Mustard Seed Preaching (LTP, 2004) and A Year with Sofia Cavalletti (LTP, 2017) [www.anngarrido.com](http://www.anngarrido.com).

## Personnel Updates

### Ordinations

Dyan Davison to the priesthood on Friday, November 1 at 4:00 pm at St. Mary the Virgin, Oak Bay

Ruth Dantzer to the priesthood on Saturday, November 16 at 3:00 pm at the UVic Interfaith Chapel, Victoria

### Resignation

Thomi Glover resigned as priest associate at St. Margaret of Scotland (Galiano Island) and St. Mary Magdalene (Mayne Island), effective September 30, 2019.

## Correction

Alvaro Moreno and Andrea McCoy replaced Rebecca Siebert as staff with the Refugee Sponsorship Program, not Tom Currier as stated in the September issue (p.8).



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