



*"We believe that food is a human right and sharing food makes healthier people and strengthens communities".*

# St. Joe's Supper Table 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala

Thursday September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018

5:30pm – 6:30pm Networking & Cocktails  
6:30pm Dinner

St. Joseph's Parish Hall  
174 Wilbrod St.

\$75 per Ticket (tax receipt available)  
Consider sponsoring a ticket for a Supper Table Volunteer  
Sponsorship Opportunities Available

All tickets, sponsorship and/or donations can be purchased through:

Andrew Pump  
Supper Table Manager  
[apump@st-josephs.ca](mailto:apump@st-josephs.ca)  
(613) 233-4095 ext.240  
151 Laurier Ave. East

*A new heart I will give you, and a*

## NEW SPIRIT

*I will put within you. Ez. 36:26a*

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### BLESSING ONE ANOTHER

*To bless means to say good things. We have to bless one another constantly. Parents need to bless their children, children their parents, husbands their wives, wives their husbands, friends their friends. In our society, so full of curses, we must fill each place we enter with our blessings. We forget so quickly that we are God's beloved children and allow the many curses of our world to darken our hearts. Therefore we have to be reminded of our belovedness and remind others of theirs. Whether the blessing is given in words or with gestures, in a solemn or an informal way, our lives need to be blessed lives. (Henri Nouwen)*

The scriptures for this weekend's liturgies speak of blessings—all kinds of blessings. Too often we are so caught up in the chaos of world events and our own life experiences that we are oblivious to the blessings that surround us and are poured into our lives on a continual basis.

This is especially true, I think, when it comes to church these days. The media is full of accounts of abuse, cover-up, internal politics that seem to be tearing apart the fabric of our church. It is easy to focus on that and forget what happens when we gather as community and who we are called to be as disciples of Jesus and members of the church.

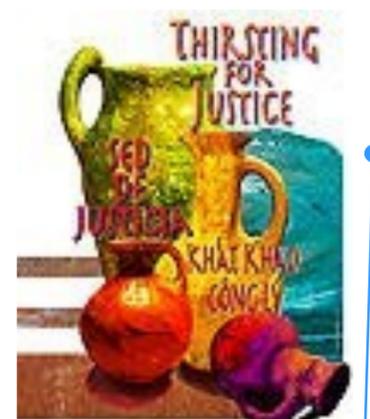
Like Isaiah who spoke words of hope and blessing to a community ground down and almost in despair, we are a sign of hope to each other as we gather. We come together as a community of faith to journey together, trusting that God will always give us life and bless us on the journey. We pray and celebrate together, supporting each other in our struggles and our triumphs. We remember and support our sick and suffering members. We rejoice in one another's blessings and are strengthened and nourished by the sacraments, the Word of God and the community. And then we are sent forth to be good news, to be a blessing to those we encounter along the way.

Just as Jesus opened the ears of the deaf man and loosened his tongue, so he does for us. As we are nourished and strengthened, we need to hear the Good News of God's love for us and experience God's love through the assembled community. We also need to be able to speak clearly to our leaders and encourage (and even demand) reform of our institutional structures in order that we can continue to be a sign in our world of the compassion and care of God for all people. We need to be freed from the bonds of mistrust, shame, anger and anything else that prevents us from living fully our vocation to be Christ's loving presence in our world.

*Richard Beaudette, OMI*

#### Inside this issue:

- Journey to Justice 2
- Opening our Ears 3
- Supper Table 40th Anniversary Gala 4



Once upon a time, when we arrived here, we simply took their land. Then, starting over 150 years ago, we took their children. In 2018, we're taking away the hope of sincere reconciliation.

In 2015 Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) issued its final report on Indian residential schools, relating the "cultural genocide" that took place, along with much physical and sexual abuse. Looking to the future, 94 Calls to Action were recommended. Some of them were specifically directed to the four churches that ran the schools. But all challenged the members of every faith community, all governments, and the entire Canadian public. Reconciliation must involve us all.

It's not at all clear, unfortunately, that all the Canadian Catholic bishops get that. The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops announced two days before Good Friday that the pope will not now come to Canada to offer an apology to indigenous peoples for residential schools. This news has caused more pain to Aboriginal people, deeply saddening those with whom I have talked who remain in the church.

Call to Action #58 is worth quoting in its entirety:

"We call upon the Pope to issue an apology to Survivors, their families, and communities for the Roman Catholic Church's role in the spiritual, cultural, emotional, physical, and sexual abuse of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children in Catholic-run residential schools. We call for that apology to be similar to the 2010 apology issued to Irish victims of abuse and to occur within one year of the issuing of this Report and to be delivered by the Pope in Canada."

When Prime Minister Justin Trudeau had a private audience with Pope Francis in May 2017, he directly invited the pontiff to come to Canada and issue such an apology.

Just before Easter 2018, culminating a lenten season where the faithful have been encouraged to examine our consciences, confess our sins and do penance, it seems the Catholic bishops of Canada have been unable to do the same.

To be clear, the CCCB's March 27 "letter to Indigenous Peoples in Canada" reported that Pope Francis "felt he could not personally respond" after careful consideration of the Canadian invitations. Having worked 11 years at the CCCB myself, I recognize this as code language. The plain truth is that the Catholic bishops will not admit they are divided. They could not agree to issue an invitation to their pope.

Francis is not a "top-down" hierarch. This is a man who, had he been invited, would have come. (Francis issued a

public apology to the indigenous peoples of the Americas in Bolivia in 2015.) But he will never agree to arrive on Canadian soil, or issue an apology to indigenous people here, without the express invitation and agreement of the bishops of Canada.

Not all bishops wanted the pontiff to stay away. In 2017, the bishops of Saskatchewan expressed support for the visit of Pope Francis to Canada. Archbishop Murray Chatlain, who heads the CCCB's Guadalupe Circle, said, "We hope that the Holy Father, coming and meeting with Aboriginal, Inuit and Métis representatives from all of Canada, where he may express an apology and could communicate the whole church's commitment to be in real dialogue with each other, would be a great blessing." There was understandable negative fallout from the bishops' decision.

I belong to an Oblate parish in Ottawa where reconciliation with indigenous people has become a priority. We have organized a half-dozen events in the past two years, and work directly in partnership with Aboriginal ministry leaders of the Archdiocese of Ottawa. Our last event, where we expected 30 - 40 people, attracted over 90 persons. Now our meetings are attended by representatives from five parishes.

Yet, unlike our friends and collaborators in Protestant churches, we have no idea what the reconciliation plan for our church is (if any) on the national or diocesan levels. The CCCB initiative to convene the Guadalupe Circle remains a work in progress, still working on membership and terms of reference.

"Listening circles" (attended by local bishops) have been held or are planned in several places (Thompson, Winnipeg, Moosonee, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Trois Rivières, Halifax, Victoria, and Churchill) in preparation for a pastoral letter on Aboriginal issues, for release by the CCCB this autumn. (The intent of the statement, anything about the content, or how laity might be able to use it has not been publicly released.)

Our local reconciliation efforts, while sincere, cannot replace the need for the Catholic leadership to play their roles in designing educational efforts among our youth and directly inside our parishes and Catholic institutions. Pope Francis could eventually come and might even apologize for our church's role in running the majority of Canada's residential schools. In the meantime, Canadian Catholics must increase our active efforts to reconcile with indigenous peoples. Words are not enough, and leadership alone will not suffice. But unfortunately, this week, the grassroots reconciliation efforts of Catholics with indigenous peoples just got a whole lot harder.

- Joe Gunn

[The Letter of James stands out in Christian literature for its relentless insistence on justice in action as the sign of Christian faith. The vignette James gives us today may be the Christian Scripture's first condemnation of "profiling." James was writing to a community that apparently separated the ins from the outs by their dress, a detail even less revealing about a person than their ancestry, height, weight or color of skin. (Think about that in light of the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve tried to create fashion from fig leaves, they were inventing clothes to hide rather than express who they really were!)

James told his community a story of two visitors to a religious gathering. One is all but dripping with gold, while the other, like Pig Pen of the "Peanuts" cartoon, radiates what we might call a very earthy aura and aroma. The group's reaction is just what would be expected — unless they purported to be Christians.

James reproaches his community for acting like the people in the story he made up. He accuses them of acting like bribable judges by making distinctions among the members of their congregation. James calls them on the carpet for betraying God's priorities. Even as James tells the community to make no distinctions, he points out that God has consistently chosen the poor to be rich in faith.

This Gospel teaching is especially challenging to economically comfortable communities of faith. Since 1968, the bishops of Latin America have been outspoken in their prophetic demands that the church recognize the unique role the poor play in Christianity. In 2007, the bishops published a

document edited under the leadership of future Pope Francis that summarized their international meeting at Aparecida, Brazil. The bishops reminded the church that we meet Christ particularly in the poor and that the poor have a special claim on our commitment. They went on to say that the church's faithfulness to Christ is at stake in our recognition of Christ in the poor. They summarize the prophetic position of the poor by saying, "Our very adherence to Jesus Christ ... makes us friends of the poor

and unites us to their fate." (Document of Aparecida #257). With that in mind, let's imagine James' fictional community as they look over their two unexpected guests. What would they have said if one of their members jumped up, rushed past Goldfingers and the religious leaders to embrace the shabby guest cheerfully shouting, "Dusty! We have been waiting so long for you! You have so much to teach us! Come up to the ambo so you can get started." Can't you imagine a curmudgeon stage-whispering, "If she knew he was coming, why didn't she get him a bath before he showed up?"

James' insistence on the importance of the poor throws a unique light on the Gospel and the selection from Isaiah we hear today. Isaiah proclaims that God's activity among us gives sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf and leads the lame to dance. (Note: There's nothing about bathing or dressing well.) How likely is it that we who dress decently are the blind and deaf and lame to whom Isaiah refers?

We can appreciate today's Gospel story — the miracle of healing the deaf man — as a marvel of Jesus' power and leave it at that. On the other hand, we might ask where we fit in this story. Mark tells us that some unnamed people brought the deaf man to Jesus. Who in our society or world might be trying to lead us to a miracle of more acute hearing?

As we discern how to address societal needs, we can look to Pope Francis and church teaching through the ages. From the time that Jesus looked at his disciples and said, "Blessed are you poor" to the present time, Christianity has taught that the poor and those who work for justice represent the reign of God among us. The people moving the ecological efforts throughout the world

are trying to open our ears to the cry of the earth. Social justice volunteers, pro-life activists, the proponents of Black Lives Matter, the Me Too movement and members of refugee sponsor groups would say they are trying to bring our society to its senses. Perhaps, God is working through them somehow to move us to hear what our faith demands in today's world.

-Mary McGlone, Celebration Publications

