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**DIOCESAN CIRCULAR – November 2009**

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**PHILOSOPHY AND THE CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN – 25**

**St Thomas Aquinas**

**(Part Three – The Nature of God and His Creation)**

*'God is the perfect poet,*

*Who in His person acts His own creations'*

Robert Browning (1812 – 89): Paracelsus, Part II'

The Nature of God

It is very unsatisfactory to know that a necessary Being exists without knowing precisely what sort of being this is. The greatest difficulty facing human beings in this earthly life is that, left to ourselves, we can have no perfect natural intuition of the divine essence. St Thomas was very well aware that the nature of God infinitely transcends the range of sense-experiences available in the world of creatures. This basic understanding prevented him from indulging in any undue reliance upon the power of human reason to penetrate the mysteries of God.

When he said that we cannot come to know what God is (*quid sit*) but only that He is (*quod sit*) this was not the statement of an agnostic but rather indicated that 'the divine substance exceeds, by its immensity, every form which our intellect attains: and so we cannot apprehend it by knowing what it is, but we have some notion of it by coming to know what it is not.' (Summa contra Gentiles i, xiv) This is easily recognizable as the famous '*via negativa*' so dear to earlier Christian writers, especially those who had been influenced by neo-Platonism.

Thomas Aquinas added to this a very important further observation: in the case of a definable created substance we can first assign it to its genus, which informs us of what it is in general, and then we can add the differences by which it will be distinguishable from all other things. In the case of God, however, we cannot assign Him to a genus, for He transcends all genera and cannot be distinguished from any other beings by way of such positive differences. Nevertheless, we can attain some notion of His nature by a succession of negative differentiations - and thus we are able to proceed until we obtain an idea of God which may be said to belong to Him exclusively and which will suffice to distinguish Him from all other beings.

As the cause of all sensible objects, He transcends them and so is not, and cannot be, a sensible or precisely nameable, object Himself. According to St Thomas the most appropriate name of God is the name by which He identified Himself to Moses at the burning bush, '*Qui est*' (He who is). Every other name is in some way inadequate. For example, when saying that God is infinitely 'just', although we are speaking the truth, our finite human intelligence necessarily continues to distinguish between 'justice' and 'mercy', even though we know that they are identical in God. Such, therefore, makes the former statement an entirely inadequate expression of the divine essence. The terms we employ when speaking of the characteristics of God are, of course, derived from our own limited experience of determinate forms - and so must primarily express these forms. The name 'He who is', however, signifies not a determinate form but 'the infinite ocean of substance'.

## God's Creation

All finite beings are contingent and they owe their existence to God who created them out of nothing. If they had been made from a pre-existent material this would have either been God Himself, or something other than God. God, however, is simple, spiritual, and unchangeable and, furthermore, nothing can be independent of the first Cause. God, being absolutely prior, must therefore have created the universe *ex nihilo*. Creation is not a movement or a change and so there can be no succession in the act of creation.

Every creature, by the very fact that it is created, has a real relationship to God as its Creator. It cannot be argued contrariwise, however, that God has a necessary relation to the creature, for He cannot be dependent in any way upon creatures for His own existence. This in no way means, of course, that God has no care for His creatures but it is an entirely logical conclusion that derives directly from St Thomas's metaphysics and doctrine of the nature of God. What the Saint did say, however, was that it is possible for there to be a mental relation, of reason alone (*relatio rationis*) attributable to God, by the human intellect which legitimately enables us to speak of God as though He were related to His creatures.

Aquinas deduced that the power of creation is God's alone. Although intermediary beings had been introduced by some earlier philosophers (e.g. Avicenna), because they had held that He created by a necessity of nature, St Thomas concluded that this was not so and thus He could create a multiplicity of creatures directly. If the power of creation had been communicated to another creature, thereby enabling it to act as an instrument of God, this would have involved it using its own power and activity - an act demanding divine power to bridge the infinite gulf between not-being and being.

God loves Himself necessarily (because He is Himself infinitely good, perfect, and self sufficient). Created objects that are apart and distinct from Him are not necessary to Him. His will can, therefore, be said to be free in their regard. Nevertheless, we human beings are forced to speak anthropomorphically about God and His creation, since it is the only language available to us if we are to make it clear that the divine act is understood by us as good (and yet not a good necessary to God).

As infinite perfection it cannot be said that God created in order to acquire anything for Himself, but only to diffuse His goodness. He Himself must always be regarded as the end of His act of will in creation, and His divine goodness is therefore represented in all creatures. His rational creatures themselves, however, can have God as their own end - in a manner that is peculiar to themselves - by consciously appreciating and loving the divine goodness who made them.

St Thomas believed that the universe was created in time, and not from eternity, but he firmly maintained that this can only be known through revelation (and not from unaided philosophical reasoning). It can be seen that he saw no contradiction in the notion of a series having no beginning. Any suggestion then that the universe would have had to pass through infinite time did not arise since there is no first term in the series. For him a series can be infinite from the beginning, and yet finite in (and capable of being added to) at its finite end. Thus, in general, there is no contradiction between being brought into existence by God and existing from eternity. In '*De Potentia*' he concluded that: 'We must hold firmly, as the Catholic faith teaches, that the world has not always existed. And this position cannot be overcome by any physical demonstration.' God's creative act is undoubtedly eternal, but the external effect of that act will follow in the way willed by God.

In willing this universe God did not will the evils contained in it. God cannot love what is opposed to His divine goodness, that is - that which is evil. If evil were a positive entity then it would have to be ascribed to God as the Creator - but it is not 'creatable' and so it can only exist as a privation. St Thomas was not suggesting, of course, that evil is unreal, in the sense of being an illusion, but that it exists only as a very real privation in the good.

## Aquinas and Psychology

While St Thomas emphasised the close union of soul and body in human beings, he nevertheless always distinguished clearly between the soul and its faculties - and between the faculties themselves. Only in God is the power to act and the act itself identical with the substance - for in God, he said, there is no potentiality.

In men, however, there are faculties (powers to act) which are in potentiality to their acts. Some of these powers



## **New astrophysical discoveries leave little to no room for Atheism, expert says**

Father Robert J. Spitzer

Denver, Colo., Sep 30, 2009 / 03:35 pm (CNA).- Contemporary astrophysics hold the scientific key to prove the existence of God, but unfortunately very few know the scientific facts, said Fr. Robert J. Spitzer, S.J, PhD, during a conference delivered on Sunday at the John Paul II Center for the New Evangelization in Denver, Colorado.

The Honolulu-born Jesuit is the past president of Gonzaga University and is also well-known philosopher and physicist who is involved in bringing science and theology together.

Fr. Spitzer is currently engaged in an ambitious project to explain the metaphysical consequences of the latest astrophysical discoveries, mainly, the existence of a Creator.

The conference in Denver was sponsored by John and Carol Saeman as well as the California Catholic philanthropist Timothy Busch.

"The arguments of Fr. Spitzer are addressed to every honest human being who is trying to reach to God through science," said Mr. Busch, during the introduction.

"Atheism and pop culture have had a significant impact on Theism and it has to be confronted especially because Secularism and the negation of God are becoming pervasive," began the 57 year-old priest.

"Theism, in fact, can be better explained by contemporary science and modern philosophy better than ever before, but particularly interesting is what is happening in the field of astrophysics ... to the point that I can't imagine why agnosticism and Atheism are still popular," Fr. Spitzer said.

"That is why we need contemporary 'translators' that are capable of bringing today's science to regular people, and especially, to bring the astrophysical response to atheism," he added.

Fr. Spitzer explained that, since science is based on an empirical model, it can change at any time. Nevertheless, as science develops and the so called "Big Bang" theory of the origin and existence of the universe becomes more refined, "it becomes less and less possible for other explanations (of the universe) to be scientifically viable."

The theory, developed by the Belgian Catholic priest and astronomer Georges Lemaître, proposes that the Universe has expanded from a primordial dense initial condition at some time in the past (currently estimated to have been approximately 13.7 billion years ago), and continues to expand to this day.

The model, according to Fr. Spitzer, has been revised, refined and scientifically established to a point that any other theory of the origin and existence of the universe has become harder and harder to defend.

Fr. Spitzer explained that, what we know from the most recent scientific evidence is that "the universe is not the universe of Mr. Newton anymore, it is not infinite, it is finite, it started at some point, and is in constant expansion."

He then explained the complexity of the universe, saying it is based on "an incredibly delicate balance of 17 cosmological constants. If any of them would be off by one part of a tenth at a forty potency, we would be dead and the universe would not be what it is."

"Every single Big Bang model shows the existence of what scientists call a 'singularity,' and the existence of each singularity demands the existence of an external 'element' to the universe," Fr. Spitzer said.

The priest physicist then proceeded to explain the different, complex versions of the various Bing Bang theories.

He quoted Roger Penrose, the world-famous English mathematician and physicist, who corrected some of the theories of his friend and colleague Stephen Hawkins to conclude that every Big Bang theory, including the one known as Quantum theory, confirms the existence of singularities. Therefore, said Spitzer, the need to find an explanation to the universe's existence drives us to seek "a force that is previous and independent from the universe."

Fr. Spitzer also quoted the 2003 experiments by three leading cosmologists, Arvin Borde, Alan Guth, and Alexander Vilenkin, who were able to prove that any universe which has, on average, been expanding throughout its history cannot be infinite in the past but must have a past space-time boundary.

"The concept at this point is clear: nothing is nothing, and from nothing, nothing comes, since nothing is... nothing!" Fr. Spitzer said, to explain the fact that contemporary astrophysics demands "something with sufficient power to bring the universe into existence."

"It sounds like a theological argument, but is really a scientific conclusion.

"There is no way to ignore the fact that it demands the existence of a singularity and therefore of a Creator outside space and time," he added.

According to Fr. Spitzer, "this theory has become so scientifically solid, that 50% of astrophysicists are "coming out of the closet" an accepting a metaphysical conclusion: the need of a Creator."

The Jesuit priest explained that this theory is not what is currently known as "Intelligent Design."

"Intelligent Design is a biological theory, this is an anthropic universe theory, based on the question: Can our universe sustain forms of life no matter what, without any external energy?"

According to Fr. Spitzer, Professor Penrose "has provided a mathematical model in which the possibilities of a universe that would not be gobbled without the existence of a Creator are simply improvable, to a point of mathematical impossibility."

"What can we conclude of this? First that the Creator is really smart... and second that it must be a loving one, because He could choose so many more violent and chaotic alternatives, that it really has to make you wonder."

Fr. Spitzer explained to CNA that "all this information must be conveyed in a simple manner to our seminarians, our college and high school students, who are mostly ignorant of the powerful Theistic message of today's astrophysics."

The Jesuit physicist, with the help of some Catholic philanthropists, is working on a project to create a 90-minute curriculum, divided into three 30-minute segments, that will offer the astrophysics-based response to atheism. "It will be a high quality production that will involve 12 physicists, as well as dynamic and engaging graphics," he explained.

"The idea," he told CNA, "is to make not only DVDs that can be distributed to all Catholic high schools or Newman centers around the U.S., but to make it available for free via the Internet."

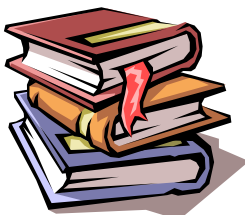
Fr. Spitzer is working in another three more 90-minute curricula: "The historical evidence of Jesus," "Suffering and the love of God" and "Contemporary philosophical responses to Atheism."



### FATHER BOB'S BOOKS

*"...in [St. Jean-Marie-Baptiste Vianney] we can see the power of grace working through human limitations"*

Pope John Paul II



Last month, following a discussion with a friend, I was looking for an icon of Christ the Eternal High Priest. A web search brought up the lovely, powerful, and challenging icon of *Christ the High Priest* by Marek Czarnecki. This icon is being used for the Year of the Priest by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops and by the National Federation of Priests' Councils and has been reproduced as a poster.<sup>1</sup>

The icon is of *Christ the Pantocrator*—Jesus is shown full-faced and from the waist up holding the Gospels in His left hand and His right hand raised in blessing. He is vested as a Priest in a gothic chasuble. The Gospel pericope shown is "I am the Good Shepherd. I know my sheep and they know my voice. The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." In the gold raised border of the icon are three smaller

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.usccb.org/yearforpriests/icon.shtml>

images. Below is an altar with the words “He is worthy”; on the left is a very small full figure of Melchizedek; on the right is a similarly sized figure of St. John Vianney.

I commend this icon for prayerful contemplation by the priests, most especially in this “Year for Priests”.

Years ago I came across a little biography<sup>2</sup> of St. John Vianney, the Curé of Ars. This diminutive French priest who lived in troubled times and served God and his parish faithfully has been an inspiration for me as also for many others.

Recently I read Fr. George Rutler’s *The Curé d’Ars Today: Saint John Vianney*.<sup>3</sup> Rutler is a Roman Priest, formerly an Episcopalian who was one of the keynote speakers at the Congress of St. Louis in 1977. He is a parish priest in New York and is often heard on EWTN. (Bonuses in this book are the appendices containing a study *Church and State in Vianney’s Youth* and a set of Meditations of a “Retreat at Ars for Priests, Deacons, and Seminarians” given in 1986 by Pope John Paul II.) In his own inimitable way, Fr. Rutler reviews and interprets the life of the Curé of Ars.

By the time I was finished reading the book, I had bits of paper sticking out all over. Of those, here are a couple of things that I had flagged. They hint at reasons that Vianney should be the Patron of Priests.

“Vianney blessed the sick frequently, but with reluctance. He was no more a professional healer than was his Master. Healing of the sick had the urgency of compassion in counterpoint to the salvific mystery of suffering, but not as an end in itself; the crookedest bodies often seemed to him to have the most upright souls. It would be an awful thing to release from pain while remaining captive to pride. “The worst cross is not to have a cross.”<sup>4</sup>

“Not by authority or the privilege of authority did the Curé command such attention. Anyone there was a witness to the trust he engendered, and he won the common trust by winning individual hearts. His vehicle was the priesthood; any priest could have done it by being a priest, and it was only when priests failed to be priests that they betrayed the popular confidence. The love of a priest is the unbounded love of the priest for his priesthood, which is what he meant when he called the priesthood the love of the heart of Jesus. By showing the people, even the youngest of the people, himself, he displayed the universal love of which the priest is mediator. In a world of rusty and broken clericalisms, he restored a shining sacerdotalism; if a clericist is a man who uses the priesthood, a sacerdotalist is a man who is used by the priesthood. And thus the hierarchical constitution of the Church is a bureaucratic artifact to the clericist, while it is charismatic to the priest. The clericist pursues a career of which mediocrity is the safeguard, while the sacerdotalist pursues a mission of which ardent love is the token. Consequently, the priestly soul is in the world but not of it, as the clericist caste is of the world but not in it. By being a true priest, the Curé engendered the trust of souls who had come close to losing the very sense of place in the world. ...”<sup>5</sup>

*The Curé d’Ars: St. Jean-Marie-Baptiste Vianney* by Abbé François Trochu<sup>6</sup> is a classic about St Jean. Pope John Paul II<sup>7</sup> wrote of this book, “From my seminary years I had been impressed by the figure of the Curé of Ars, especially after reading his biography by Monsignor Trochu. Saint John Marie Vianney astonishes us because in him, we can see the power of grace working through human limitations.” *The Little Catechism of the Curé of Ars*<sup>8</sup> is an edited collection of St. Jean’s own writings.

God bless! More next month,

Fr. Robert S.H. Mansfield, SSC

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<sup>2</sup> *The Curé of Ars: Patron of Parish Priests*, O’Brien, Bartholomew J.; 1994; T A N Books & Publishers; ISBN 0895553244; Pbk; pp134 + x

<sup>3</sup> *The Curé d’Ars today: St. John Vianney*; Rutler, George William; 1988; Ignatius Press, San Francisco; references, John Cardinal O’Connor. Includes bibliographical <foreword by>; pp 273 p; ISBN 0898701805

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*, p. 149

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*, p. 154

<sup>6</sup> *The curé d’Ars, St. Jean-Marie-Baptiste Vianney (1786-1859) according to the Acts of the process of canonization and numerous hitherto unpublished documents*, Trochu, Abbé François; Tan Books and Publishers, Rockford, Ill. 1977 Graf, Ernest <trans> pp xxiii, 586 p; ISBN 978-0-89555-020-0; Notes: Translation of *Le curé d’Ars*. Reprint of the 1927 ed. published by Burns, Oats & Washbourne, London. Bibliography: p. vii-xii. Includes index.

<sup>7</sup> p. 57; *Gift and mystery: on the fiftieth anniversary of my priestly ordination*, John Paul, II, Pope, Doubleday, New York ; Toronto, 1996; ISBN 978-0385489638; pp 128

<sup>8</sup> *The Little Catechism of the Cure of Ars, Vianney, John*; TAN Books & Publishers; 1994 ISBN 0895553236; Pbk, pp139 + xxxvii



### A Splendid and Important Suggestion

Although evil has always been a part of the human landscape, Father Christopher LePage of St Thomas More, Prince Edward Island, observes that it has made great inroads into our current society. From children growing up with little moral and ethical guidance; to social stress; liberal humanism and permissiveness; and disrespect for life, especially the aged and the unborn; and the wanton destruction of the earth and the atmosphere through greed and lack of respect, we, as Christians should be engaged in constant prayer for our own protection and for the good of those around us. Although a number of our parishes already do this, Father suggests that we all might conclude our daily prayers (the Daily Offices of Mattins and Evensong) and at the end of each celebration of the Holy Eucharist, with the Prayer of St Michael:

Holy Michael, Archangel,  
defend us in the day of battle;  
be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil.  
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray:  
and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host,  
by the power of God,  
thrust down to hell Satan and all wicked spirits  
who wander through the world for the ruin of souls.  
Amen.



*Michael the Archangel, Guido Reni, Santa Maria della Concezione, 1636*



### DIOCESAN NOTES AND NEWS

- Although we have yet to deal with the formalities of oaths and declarations, and official licence, we welcome (or should we say, “Welcome home!”) Fr Byron Woolcock to the Anglican Catholic Church of Canada. Father is the son of our second Bishop, Alfred. His particulars:  
The Rev. Byron Woolcock (Susan)  
363 Mill Road, R.R. 1  
Madoc ON K0K 2K0  
613-473-0707  
Email: sbwoolcock@sympatico.ca
- Fr Christopher LePage of Prince Edward Island has requested that we include his winter (October to May) telephone number for dissemination. It is 902-367-9459. Please make a note in your Diocesan directory.
- Correction! In last month’s Circular, we had posted a new address for Bishop Robert Crawley, as 2589 Selwyn Road, Victoria. It should be 2689 Selwyn Road. Apologies for any confusion.



In past newsletters, we have mentioned the existence of an order of women, with the Sisters of the Servants of the Sacred Cross, an international, ecumenical religious sisterhood of laywomen, married and single, living and working in their own homes and communities. The current membership is made up of TAC women (Canada and Australia), Roman Catholics and Orthodox. Mother Superior is Wendy James, SSC, a member of Bp Craig Botterill’s parish of St Aidan in Halifax. Until earlier this year, their Episcopal Visitor was a bishop from the Anglican Church of Canada; however, with his “retirement”, the sisters have elected our Diocesan, Peter Wilkinson, OSG as their new

Episcopal Visitor. During the interim, I had the privilege of joining the sisters at their annual Chapter meeting at the Carmelite Convent in Niagara Falls in September. (Bp Carl)

- The October / November issue of the Traditional Anglican, the newsletter of our four parishes of the lower Mainland, British Columbia included a reminder message from the Rector, Fr Michael Shier, concerning our National Synod to be held next July in greater Vancouver. Last month, this newsletter also reminded us all. Please do begin to plan, and save, now.



**Pray for those who despitefully use you – a cautionary tale.**

I was chatting to Father Howard Patterson (Medicine Hat) and chanced to tell him of an incident in our parish which occurred in the late summer. Father David Skelton (Edmonton) received a telephone call from a ‘newcomer’ who wanted to attend our midweek Morning Prayer service which is held in a parishioner’s home. We arranged to meet him and take him with us in our car. He was a tall man, middle aged, and with some missing teeth. He was a French Canadian and said that he had attended the ACCC parish in Montreal. He was forthright, liked to talk about himself and before long we knew that he had served in the Afghan war, had been recalled when his wife was dying of ovarian cancer and he had left the army to look after his four girls, twins aged 9 years and two older girls. He had been transferred with his firm to the Airport in Edmonton but shortly after arriving here, the firm had ceased operations. He has spent all his money on upgrading to a Masters in Engineering at the university and now had a job in a town within close reach of Edmonton.

He then told us how he had to walk for three hours to get to the job location, and walk back home again. He told us that he and his four girls were used to worshipping with older people and they did not object to this at all. He told us his name was Pierre Carron. Our hearts went out to him. He never asked directly for money but before the morning was over he had received over \$100.00 from our generous folk to buy a bus-pass to get to his place of work. He said he would be attending the Midweek Mass service but could walk there as it was in a different location.

We duly met him there and again, he was talkative and told us that, that morning, his washing machine water pump had broken and he needed to get to spare parts which cost \$55.00 (he had called around to enquire). Once again, cash was given him for this purpose. He had enjoyed going to work in a bus. He was desperate to buy some food for his girls and it was a few days to the end of the month. One of our parishioners took him in her car and gave him some money for food and again, some money was given to him for the new pump. He used his cell telephone a lot during our time with him. He seemed to be in constant touch with ‘his boss’ via this instrument and he showed us photographs of his daughters stored on it.

And so, we expected to see him on Sunday complete with his girls who would help us set up our church in our rented space as he had promised. But he did not come and we have not heard anything else from him. Father Slattery in Montreal does not remember him at all.

Father Howard had also had a very similar experience with a French Canadian, a widower and who had lost his job at the airport but, in this instance, came from Vancouver. And we believe Father Dennis Dickson (Moose Jaw) also knew of this man. Apparently, he had also introduced himself to a Lutheran Church in Medicine Hat.

We share this story in case you meet this man. He must browse the Websites of the various parishes to know the midweek service times. He never attended a Sunday service.

And so, we pray for him who did, as it appears, despitefully use us.

Mary Skelton

*(I daresay that many of our other parishes have experienced similarly “compelling” tales. We certainly have here in Ottawa on many occasions; and, even after having been similarly “used”, we still pray for the lost. Bp Carl)*



**FROM MAGGIE’S KITCHEN**



The dinner table conversation drifted (as it will with clergy) to spotty attendance at Sunday Mass. Although we are ACCC, we carry the baggage of previous existences, which baggage includes some excellent training, like the ability to recognize sound Biblical teaching (why else would we be here?), and some not so excellent, like the down-putting of duty -- the duty, for example, to be in the Lord’s house on the Lord’s day for the Lord’s Supper regardless of our frame of mind that

day. We sure aren't proof against the popular notion that worship exists to make us feel good -- or that response to duty can't really be worship!

There's lots about being a Catholic Christian that doesn't involve feeling good. Sometimes it's just the duty to get things right. If I'm at the altar rail but not receiving Communion, what difference does it make which arm is crossed over which? Emily's mom explained to her the other Sunday that the right arm goes in place first, against the heart. "Oh!" Emily exclaimed. "The right arm is right!" And with that she was satisfied. Would that we grownups were as happy with mere rightness!

Duty isn't the four-letter word we've made it. It gives us a shove to get us past our excuses. How many of us took to heart the Gospel for Trinity Two, the parable of the wedding banquet? We all have our versions of fields and oxen and new wives, and many of our versions are far more trivial. Like visitors or overload. I can't imagine any guests at our house, whether family or long-lost friends, who would expect us to stay home from church on a Sunday morning for their sakes. (Though Sunday duty notwithstanding, I *can* imagine staying home with a sick child.) I can't imagine being too tired to make it out to Mass, regardless of how late I rolled in the night before, though I *can* imagine taking the rest of the day off to recover -- in our house, it's called the "rectory nap". In the end, for me, the once-for-all decision to honour my Sunday duty to worship God (made years ago) has made short work of those pesky weekly decisions of whether or not to get my body out of bed and to church.

Other honourings of duty can place us in the right place at the right time. It was duty, not desire, that caused my husband and me to put our names down for a couple of Thanksgiving Day hours on the Forty Days for Life prayer line. The wind didn't help the fact that it was already a cold day, but we had said we would fill in empty time slots. So we did. I donned what warm clothing I could find (winter outerwear is still packed away), put a copy of the *Saint Augustine's Prayer Book* in my jacket pocket, and hung a "Pray for an End to Abortion" sign around my neck. The lined leather mitts proved both welcome and clumsy. However, the wind graciously turned the pages for me as I proceeded from litany to litany, in each one focussing on a particular group of people: those babies who would lose their lives the next day, their mothers, their fathers and grandfathers (often the ones who bring the mothers to the "clinic"), the abortion workers, the law-makers, courts and police, the witnesses for life. This wasn't planned in advance. It's just what happened in circumstances over which (in the cold wind!) I had little control -- and it was a gift. If duty hadn't put me there, I wouldn't have had the opportunity to see these various people as persons for whom I could pray with equal charity. Or, as St. Paul would say, "not I, but Christ in me", since on my own I'm incapable of that charity. God gives freely, but one has to be there to receive.

According to my dictionary, "*duty* refers to the general conduct required by one's sense of justice, morality, etc. or by the dictates of one's conscience." Lest, however, I be tempted to see duty as a purely subjective matter, the dictionary offers the synonyms "responsibility", which "refers to a particular task, trust, etc for which one is accountable or answerable", and "obligation", which "refers to what one is bound to do to fulfill a particular contract, promise, social requirement, etc." The *St Augustine's Prayer Book* is not amiss in pointing out that there are certain days (including all Sundays) when "the faithful are expected, as a matter of Christian duty and obligation, to worship at the Eucharist."

Why does the very idea make us cringe? I'm sure the Saints didn't waste energy rebelling against their Christian duty, which for many of them included the duty to witness to Christ unto death. That duty, offered to God, became infused with love, and in the end was a response of love to Love, a work of God's grace. For All Saints' Day:

#### MONT BLANC

Chestnuts are featured in Italian menus for All Saints' Day. Since I have a couple of cans on my shelf of Chestnut Purée with Vanilla (picked up out of a sale basket), I will skip the *Joy of Cooking* directions for making the puree and go directly to the topping: Whip 1 cup whipping cream until stiff, then fold in 1 tsp vanilla and powdered sugar to taste (about 2 Tbsp). Combine and mound the contents of two cans chestnut purée and top with the whipped cream, letting the cream flow down the sides like glaciers. Chill well. *The Joy of Cooking* suggests the possible addition of grated sweet chocolate, but then the image of Mont Blanc would be somewhat obscured.

**THE ANGLICAN CATHOLIC  
CHURCH OF CANADA**

*invites you to join her in worship*

**ALBERTA**

**Calgary** – Christ the King  
The Rev. Dr. Colin O'Rourke  
(403) 258-3329

**Calgary** (Renfrew Drive) –  
All Saints Renfrew  
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(403) 220-0305

**Claresholm** – Holy Redeemer  
The Rev. Dr. James Schovanek, SSC  
(403) 625-3392

**Edmonton** –  
Our Lady & St. Michael  
Dr. The Rev. David Skelton  
(780) 435-1511

**Medicine Hat** – Holy Trinity  
The Rev. Keith Kirkwood  
Home: (403) 487-4846  
Cell: (403) 866-4846  
Church Tel.: (403) 526-0957

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The Rev. Rudolph Rohim  
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The Rev. Michael Shier, SSC  
(604) 951-3733

**Matsqui Village** -  
St. Michael and All Angels  
The Rev. Michael Shier, SSC  
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**Mayne Island** –  
Mission of Our Lady and St. Martin  
The Rev. Canon Edward S. Gale  
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The Rev. Peter Sandercock  
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**Pitt Meadows** – St. Patrick  
The Rev. Michael Shier, SSC  
(604) 951-3733

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The Rev. Michael Shier, SSC  
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The Rev. Robert Short  
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The Rev. George Fizzard  
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**St. John's** –  
St. Stephen, Proto Martyr  
The Rev. Glen Ollerhead, T/OSA  
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The Rt. Rev. Craig Botterill  
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(902) 547-2328  
E-mail: fatherv@ns.sympatico.ca

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St. Francis' Mission  
Contact: Mr. Charles C. Hubbard  
(902) 661-4006

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