

Central Elements of Christian Discipleship – Surrender and Community

By H.E. Bishop John Boissonneau



Whenever the members of the Canadian Association of the Knights of Malta in the Toronto area gather for our seasonal spiritual exercises and for the Mass, we are blessed to come to the campus of the University of St Michael's College and, through the Christian hospitality of the Basilian Fathers, to the chapel of the Cardinal Flahiff Basilian Centre.

It was there this June on the Solemnity of St. John the Baptist we honoured God through the sacrifice of the Mass and sought His blessing through the intercession of our heavenly patron for the Order and for all associated with it. His Grace, Archbishop Collins, was the main celebrant and preached on two central elements of Christian discipleship – surrender and community. Both prompted me to reflect on their respective challenge to our Association. I shall share some thoughts on the first theme.

Whether at video games or in business world, surrender not a popular term. Yet it is the very essence of what a Christian is. Its invitation punctuates the rhythm of our prayer. In the formal liturgy of the Church, three times each day, the Lord's Prayer is recited. At Morning Prayer, at Evening Prayer and at Mass, the phrase given by Jesus is prayed, "Thy will be done". In another three times a day prayer, the Angelus, we proclaim, "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord/ Be it done unto me according to your Word". What we pray is who we are.

Many define surrender as failure, weakness or lack of courage but that does not fit the person and mission of Our Lord or His Mother. Actually, we live surrender as the core of our life.

Continued on page 2

Epistula

Vol.7 No.2 Oct.2009



In this issue:

Christian Discipleship 1

New Chief Chaplain of the Canadian Association 2

Board of Directors Approves Strategic Plan for the Canadian Association 3

IACB International Colloquium 4

Mass for the sick in Mexico 6

Annual pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in Mission, B.C. 6

Archbishop Paolo Sardi Pro-Patron of the Order of Malta 8

President's Message 8



New Chief Chaplain of the Canadian Association



Fr. Andrea Spatafora entered the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Holy Family in 1976 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1983.

After five years of parish ministry in the Notre-Dame-de-Fatima Mission (Portuguese community) and Notre-Dame-de-Lorette parish in the Archdiocese of Gatineau, he began studies in Rome where he obtained a Licentiate in Sacred Scripture from the Pontifical Biblical Institute in

1992 and a doctorate at the Pontifical Gregorian University in 1997. His thesis entitled *From the "Temple of God" to God as the Temple: A Biblical Theological Study of*

the Temple in the Book of Revelation

 was published by the Gregorian University Press.

In 1997 he began teaching at Saint Paul University in Ottawa where he is presently the Dean of the Faculty of Theology. His principal field of research is the Apocalypse of John, and in 2008 he published *Symbolic Language and the Apocalypse* with Novalis Publishing Inc.

Fr. Spatafora was invested as Chaplain of Magistral Grace in 2002 and since that event has supervised the spiritual exercises of the members of the Ottawa region. In February 2009, he was invited to preach the Lenten retreat for the members of the Toronto region. ❖

Continued from page 1

From the moment of our baptism when we died to sin and rose to a new life in Christ, our whole earthly existence is set upon decreasing in ourselves so that Christ can increase in us. This was the motto of that other strong New Testament person, John the Baptist. To surrender in Christ – since we do all in Christ since our baptism – is to discover and grow in all that is best in our humanity and to reflect the life of God that we share.

Most religious faiths are defined as the surrender to someone or something beyond us. Islam means simply "surrender to the will of God".

With the Christian faith we are invited to surrender specifically and solely through Jesus Christ and in fact, through his life as a man. Though he was God, He did not cling to his divinity but became man. Being man, he surrendered to the whole of the human condition, except sin. That surrender leads ultimately to the cross. Why are crosses and crucifixes so central to the symbolism of our faith? The cross is the surrender to the will of God that is forever a triumph and true freedom. The paradox of the cross is that it is what makes us whole; we are never more fully ourselves than when we surrender through the cross of Jesus.

How blessed are we as an Order to have the cross as the symbol and badge that we wear. On the simple robes of the Order there is nothing but a cross. A commitment to surrender. Our medals are essentially crosses. Even the lapel button is such a sign. Remember that when next and every time you wear it. Association in the Knights of Malta which the regalia and pins symbolize is an act of special surrender to Christ.

Our special surrender is to serve our lords the sick. The sick, the dying and all for whom our Association cares know what it means to surrender. Their illnesses, their decline of mental facility, their aging, their poverty are a reality that they cannot escape. To it, even for a short time, they must surrender or live in despair or deep frustration. As we serve the sick, we confront such surrender and learn from them how to surrender. When pushing a wheel chair or serving a meal to a needy person, we confront the power of surrender and then we are closer to our Lord and to our own salvation.

The mission to serve our lords the sick is an essential element of our surrender to the Lord Jesus. This is how He wants to save us; be open to that service. ❖

Board of Directors Approves Strategic Plan for the Canadian Association (CASMOM)



At the request of the President of the Canadian Association, the process of developing a short to medium range plan (3 – 5 years) began January 7, 2009, with the distribution of a visioning survey, distributed to the current and immediate past members of the Board, in essence soliciting input into the “vision” for the Order in Canada following the simple path asking: where are we now, where do we want to go, how do we get there?

Of importance to the preparation of a strategic plan for the CASMOM is that activities that are carried out in the name of the Order are done so in a manner consistent with national and international guidelines; meet the goals and objectives of the Order; set the appropriate level of expectations of the members of the Order; and meet the obligations of the Order to its members.

The plan then, can be broken into three distinct areas of concentration:

- 1) Members
- 2) Spiritual Development
- 3) Structure

The future of the Canadian Association and the strength of the Order in Canada are directly dependant on the strength of the members. This is not limited to numbers but must also focus on the level of involvement. Remembering that this is a two-way street – the members commit to financial and personal support and activity; and the Order commits to provide spiritual development and opportunities for charitable work.

With a view of a stronger and more effective Association, CASMOM will implement a plan of action that includes the following:

1. Develop a program for aspirants in their year of preparation and assign directors of admissions in each Region to monitor and confirm successful program completion.
2. Recruit new members that share our values and goals and are willing to commit

themselves to do the work of the Order through regular, ongoing contribution of their time, talents and resources.

3. Identify and set-up volunteer activities on a regional basis giving members the opportunity to live the charism of obsequium pauperum.
4. Create a database of existing members to identify skills, resources, training etc. that may be useful in carrying out the work of the Order and determine their specific interests for contributing to the work of the Order.
5. Engage the chaplains (and Knights in Obedience as possible) to conduct regular activities dedicated to spiritual development and to the meaning of Knighthood within the context of the Gospel.
6. Enhance communications internally. Use the Epistula to reinforce our mission, our work, and level of expectations of members; encourage attendance at Lourdes and at all of the Order’s activities. We must never lose touch with our members.
7. Arrange for more opportunities, both regionally and nationally, for members to spend quality “face time” together thus getting to know each other better.
8. In conjunction with the Hospitaller, develop specific criteria for national projects along with monitoring and reporting processes.
9. Enhance communications externally to raise the profile within the Church, the Canadian Government, and the public as appropriate.
10. Establish a directed campaign to build a significant, permanent Trust Fund within CASMOM that will generate annual revenues, and find alternative means of fundraising/sponsorships outside of the membership to subsidize overheads. ❖

Contact the Executive Director if you would like to receive a copy of the whole report.

“Obsequium pauperum requires movement. It is not enough for me to distribute generous alms from where I am. I must move, leave my ivory tower, subject myself to the inconvenience of a journey, in order to encounter God and my neighbour. This is why the Order’s Constitution and Code so clearly emphasizes this service as a personal obligation.”

H.E. Albrecht von Boeselager



Caring for Persons Living with Progressive Cognitive Impairments: Ethical Guidance for the Order, the Church and Society

By William F. Sullivan

A man is asked for consent by the doctor looking after his mother, who is at the end stage of Alzheimer's Disease and likely to die within a few weeks, to give medication to manage his mother's anxiety about dying by rendering her unconscious. May he? A scientist is asked by her supervisor to take part in research that produces stem cells

Paul II noted that health care has become one of the "privileged areas for the new evangelization" of society. Yet convincing arguments are needed by Catholics for the public forum and not simply a voice.

In 2003, Catholic bioethicists from nineteen countries and all the continents of the world met in Toronto at a colloquium sponsored by the Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute (CCBI) and the Canadian Association of the Order of Malta. These bioethicists proposed establishing what has become the International Association of Catholic Bioethicists (IACB) to promote cooperation among Catholic bioethicists in education and research. His Excellency, the late Théodore Arcand, then president of the Canadian Association of the Order of Malta, appreciated the importance of such an organization for the Order, the Church, and society. He understood that bioethics has become today the area in which the "defence of the faith and devoted service to the needy" is most acutely needed. Working with His Excellency, A.J. Macken, the president of the Australian Association of the Order of Malta, he energetically assembled support for the IACB from various other associations of the Order in 2004. The Canadian Association's unwavering nurturance of the IACB has continued with His Excellency, Peter Quail, who currently serves as Chair of the IACB Governing Council. In 2009, a report of the Venice Seminar of the Order of Malta endorsed recognizing the IACB officially as one of the works of the Order and a resource for the Order's associations on bioethics.

The IACB has organized regional and international colloquia for Catholic bioethicists to enable them to discuss



using a cloning technique called "altered nuclear transfer (ANT)". May she? In health care and biomedical research today, many ethical issues arise that are unprecedented or complex or controversial. As Catholics, we seek guidance from the Church, but there may not be specific or definitive answers in Church teaching to some questions. There may be disputes among Catholic bioethicists, who study ethics relating to health care and biomedical research, and confusion among the laity on these matters.

Catholics are also called upon to serve the common good by contributing to public debates on such issues as embryonic stem cell research or euthanasia or attention to the health needs of elderly persons and those living with handicaps. Many of these issues touch on core Gospel values like the inherent dignity and worth of every human life and concern for the vulnerable and the poor in society. In his letter for the Ninth World Day of the Sick in 2000, Pope John



“Caregivers grapple, without much guidance, with perplexing and sometimes agonizing ethical issues”

emerging and controversial questions. These have included care of the frail elderly, the provision of artificial nutrition and hydration, the development of business models within health care, the globalization of bioethics that has resulted in documents such as UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights, what is entailed by respecting human dignity in caring for dying persons and those with chronic disabilities, new technologies in stem cell research, and the goals of regenerative medicine. Between colloquia, the Secretariat of the IACB keeps its member bioethicists connected and informed of new developments in the field. The consensus statements and papers emerging from the IACB colloquia are published so that this knowledge is shared and can be the basis for further research and discussion or for the education of Catholic health care professionals and bioethics committees.

This past July, sixty Catholic bioethicists participated in an international colloquium in Cologne, Germany, to discuss ethical issues arising from the care of persons living with progressive cognitive impairments such as Alzheimer's Disease. These issues are among the most pressing concerns of our times and require ethical guidance.

Globally the number of persons living with progressive cognitive impairments is projected to rise, doubling every 20 years from 24.3 million persons in 2001 to 81.1 million in 2040. Most persons with progressive cognitive impairments live in developing countries, which have scarce health care resources, and this proportion will increase to 71% by 2040. Currently, in some Western countries like the United Kingdom, more health care resources are required for the care of persons with progressive cognitive impairments than for patients with cancer, heart disease, and stroke combined. Nevertheless persons living with cognitive impairments and their caregivers still remain among the most

disadvantaged and vulnerable members of our communities. Their needs tend to be overlooked or given low priority in health care, and the amount and quality of the supports that they receive are frequently inadequate or inappropriate.

Often a stigma is attached to being or caring for a person living with progressive cognitive impairments. Caregivers grapple, without much guidance, with perplexing and sometimes agonizing ethical issues, such as how to respond to problem behaviours or safety issues while enabling as much independence and freedom as possible in the person they care for, and what to do regarding tube feeding or life-prolonging treatments.

The first part of the IACB colloquium in Cologne enabled bioethicists to work out a detailed philosophical and theological framework for providing care to persons living with progressive cognitive impairments and their caregivers, not only as a potential guide for Catholic health care providers, but also to counter some prevalent views in society. One such view, reinforced and promoted by some prominent contemporary philosophers and bioethicists, is that those living with progressive cognitive impairments are no longer persons. Another is the view that the ethical obligation of the younger generation to care for the older has no basis. This view



is widely held especially in Western societies that increasingly have become individualistic in outlook, and where, consequently, the positive contribution and the needs of family caregivers also tend to be ignored. Yet another challenge is the still

Continued on page 7



Mexican Association organizes Mass for the sick

By Sandy O'Neill



As you know I have been spending more time in Mexico City. Fortunately, I met Hans Van Luit, KM in Mexico City and I had the honor of being invited to the mass for the sick organized by Hans Van Luit and some other Knights.

It was amazing, more than 200 buses were hired to bring the sick to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The Basilica was full and I heard that over 8000 people attended this mass. It was headed by Cardenal Rivera, Arzobispo Primado de Mexico.

Also, at the altar were the Nunzio Apostolico and 23 priests. The Cardenal gave a Special Plenary Indulgence as well as a blessing sent by the Pope.

Here are some photos I took. In the above right, I am with two knights, the one to my right is Don Angel Velez Canton, Hospitaller.

Hans is planning to have this yearly event in October, next year; it would be fantastic if you could join the Knights of Malta in Mexico.

Muchos saludos desde Mexico.

Annual pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in Mission, B.C.



"We bring a busload of the elderly, sick and handicapped to the pilgrimage each year."

Frank McCullough

Above are photographs from the annual Archdiocesan pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in Mission, B.C., which took place on Saturday, August 15th.

In the picture on the left, shown in front of our first aid tent are members of the Order Enrico and Aline Dobrzensky, and their son Dominic; Frank and Terry McCullough, and their granddaughter Molly; Jim Picornell, and

his wife Ayet; (Gabrielle Komorowska and Alex de Cosson not pictured); and various members of our Order of Malta Guild and some from the Young Adults Group of Sts. Peter & Paul Parish in Vancouver who came as helpers.

In the picture on the right is shown Archbishop Miller bringing Communion to our tent. ❖

predominant model of health care that tends to focus primarily on the physical and mental health care needs of patients with progressive cognitive impairments, while failing sufficiently or appropriately to address their relational and spiritual capacities and needs.

The second part of the IACB colloquium in Cologne enabled bioethicists to discuss various concrete measures for improving the care of persons living with progressive cognitive impairments and their caregivers, and ensure an ethical culture of care provision, beginning with the Catholic community. Seventeen recommendations were agreed upon for inclusion in the consensus statement of the colloquium. Some of these were proposed to individuals to avoid language, attitudes and behaviors that depersonalize, devalue and lead to the stigmatization of persons living with progressive cognitive impairments, and to interact with and befriend persons living with progressive cognitive impairments.

Other recommendations were proposed for families, health care providers, and health care organizations, such as better education on progressive cognitive impairments, on holistic, person-centred and family-centred caregiving, and on Catholic teaching on ordinary and extraordinary means of sustaining life, as well as on the helpfulness and limitations of advance care planning. Examples of particularly urgent concerns that were identified are the need for health care providers to make accurate diagnoses as the basis for appropriate care, and to encourage

care providers to offer hand feeding, whenever appropriate, to persons who cannot feed themselves adequately but are able to swallow and tolerate what is given.

Some concrete measures were also proposed for Catholic parishes to support family caregivers and to provide pastoral care to persons living with cognitive impairments and their families. Other recommendations were directed to policy makers regarding the just distribution of health care resources and research.

The draft of the consensus statement of the Cologne colloquium is now being reviewed by the participants in the colloquium and will be submitted for review in a bioethics journal. The proceedings of the colloquium, which include the background papers presented at the colloquium, also are being edited and reviewed for publication soon. In addition, the main conclusions of the colloquium will be summarized for the Catholic laity and the public and distributed through associations of the Order of Malta, the IACB website, and the media. The bioethicists associated with the IACB hope, by these means, to stimulate thinking, discussion, and action in an area of health care that ought to concern us all. On behalf of them, I thank the Canadian Association of the Order of Malta for its consistent and generous support of the IACB through the years, and also all the other associations of the Order of Malta, including the German Association which was the host of the Cologne colloquium. ❖





Archbishop Paolo Sardi Pro-Patron of the order of Malta



Rome,
8 June 2009

Pope Benedict XVI appointed Archbishop Paolo Sardi pro-patron of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. Italian, Vice Chamberlain of the Holy Roman Church, since 1996 Archbishop Sardi has been Apostolic Nuncio with special responsibilities. He succeeds Cardinal Pio Laghi who died in January.

Born 1 September 1934 in Ricaldone, province of Alessandria, diocese of Aquis, Archbishop Sardi has, since the pontificate of John Paul II, coordinated the Vatican office which edits the Pope's texts and addresses.

Ordained a priest on 29 June 1958, after a licentiate in theology he graduated in canon

law and jurisprudence at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan. He taught moral theology in Turin until 1976, when he was called to the Vatican to work in the Secretariat of State. In 1992 he was appointed Vice Councillor and on 10 December 1996, Apostolic Nuncio with special responsibilities and titular Archbishop of Sutrium. On 6 January 1997, Pope John Paul II ordained him bishop in the Vatican Basilica. On 23 October 2004 he was nominated Vice Camerlengo (chamberlain) of the Holy Roman Church.

Archbishop Paolo Sardi has the task of promoting the spiritual interests of the Order of Malta and its members and its relations with the Holy See. ❖

President's message

By Peter Quail

The first half of the year 2009 has seen numerous activities for the Canadian Association of the Order of Malta.

In January, 4 members of our Association participated in the Order's International Strategy Seminar held in Venice from the 15th to 18th of January. Some 400 delegates took part. We were split up into 12 groups with each group discussing a particular matter. Our group, group 7, considered the "The Order for the Sanctity of Life". Three of our members participated in this group, Luigi Castagna, Bill Sullivan and Peter Quail. A synopsis of our deliberations is available for anyone who wish to see it, (along with synopses for all the papers prepared. Our group presented a recommendation to the Grand Magistracy that it accept the International Association of Catholic Bioethicists as part of the Grand Magistracy's works.

In May, members of our Association participated in the 151st anniversary pilgrimage to Lourdes with members working with the British and French Associations. As always, it was a most happy and holy event.

In July from the 11th to the 16th, a colloquium was held in Cologne under the direction of Dr. Bill Sullivan of the International Association of Catholic Bioethicists and Dr. Ursula Sottong of Malteser Academie. Some 50 delegates from all over the world participated. The subject was "Human Life With Cognitive Impairments, Caring and Giving Hope in a World of Change". The I.A.C.B. was established in Toronto by our late president, Ted Arcand. This was the 4th international colloquium. The others were held in Toronto, Melbourne and London. The next colloquium will be held in the United States in 2011.

A number of younger members have become involved in the work of our Order, such as visitations at Providence House in Scarborough; the formation of Catholic scout groups in Ontario; the establishment of the first Order of Malta Volunteers in Alberta where one of our members, Phoebe Quail-Strain, works with the young people 12 – 24 years of age, helping people in a variety of ways in their community. It is hoped that others will follow their example in parishes across the country.

It is the intention of the Canadian Association of the Order of Malta to intensify its efforts in the coming years Tuitio Fidei et Obsequium Pauperum. ❖