

UPDATE

MICAH HOUSE

ACT JUSTLY + LOVE TENDERLY +
WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD

April, 2010

The refugee ministry of Hospitality House

One day when Ahmed was six years old, he sat next to his father Mohamed in a car driving through their hometown of Mogadishu in Somalia. Suddenly the car was stopped by armed men wearing some kind of a uniform. They came to the car and requested money. Mohamed answered that he had none. Military groups had raided and destroyed his house and Mohamed had nothing left.

One of the armed men started shouting at him and when Mohamed still did not give him any money, he shot Mohamed in the head.

A few years later Ahmed's sister was kidnapped and raped. Then after years of struggling, the family decided to take the risk to flee to Kenya. After a two month dangerous journey by foot and in crowded trucks they arrived in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

Ahmed is now 18 years old. He will never have a chance to build up a good life in the camp. Mogadishu is far from peace. Today his cousin Hassan sits in front of me. He fled Somalia, and arrived two years ago in Winnipeg after living

for years as a refugee. Now Hassan wants to help his cousin start a new life, too and Canada is the only country in the world where he has a chance to do so. Under the Private Sponsorship Programme, agencies like Hospitality House are able to sponsor refugees. Immigration Canada processes the applications and makes the decision as to whether a person may come to Canada. Hospitality House, which has acted as a sponsor, has the responsibility to take care of these people and integrate them into society. Because his cousin Hassan applied to Hospitality House to sponsor Ahmed, Hassan inherits the care of his cousin from Hospitality House although Hospitality House continues to act as back-up.

Since this programme has worked so well for years the government has decided to provide new resources and raise the Canada-wide quota for privately sponsored refugees to 6,000 for the next year. To put the work of Hospitality House into perspective, last year it initiated sponsorships for 1,525 refugees. We are grateful for all the help all of you have provided.

The Way We See It

The documentary on the experiences of four families that are dealing with a mentally ill member may be making a difference in the care for the mentally ill. It was produced jointly by the Provincial Council of Women and Micah House. Excerpts from it will be used by Manitoba Human Rights. It has come to the attention of a number of people who are using it for Mental Health week. Places which either have used it or will be using it include Brandon and Flin Flon. If any of you are interested in showing it or having it shown, please contact Sister Johanna at 589-5393. The video can also be viewed on the Archdiocese of Winnipeg website at www.archwinnipeg.ca by following the Micah House link on the homepage.



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"...on the third day He rose again." Alleluia

Organ Donation: A Catholic Perspective

Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains a single grain, but if it dies, it bears much fruit." (John 12:24)

The Catholic Church for years now has encouraged organ donation. Pope John Paul II as well as Pope Benedict XVI have expressed the importance of organ donation.

Transplanting organs has advanced greatly and the chances of saving or recapturing a productive life are high. What is missing out of this equation is the donation of an organ. Many people all over Canada die before

an organ becomes available. If you want to donate your organs it is critical to share your wish with your family because they will be asked for final consent after your

death. In addition to that you have to sign a donor card to confirm your wish. The card and more information are available at www.transplantmanitoba.ca

Passion for Theatre Benefits a Good Cause

The House of Hesed, a hospice home for people infected with HIV/AIDS, greatly benefits from the proceeds of the House of Hesed Dinner Theatre. This year marks the third dinner theatre performed by the volunteer troop from St. Charles Parish. Fifteen volunteer actors, producer Denyse Turnbull, director David Turnbull, plus an army of volunteers that is required to put the show on, are passionate about raising funds to further the work at the House of Hesed. Rehearsals start in September and take place once a week at the House of Hesed. Proceeds raised from the last two years' dinner theatres totals \$42,000.

Prayer Vigil For Trafficked Persons

On Fri. March 26 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Charleswood, the Winnipeg Diocesan Catholic Women's League held a prayer vigil in the form of the Way of the Cross reflecting on the tragedy of human trafficking. A copy may be obtained by contacting Sister Johanna at Micah House, phone 589-5393.

The reflection between the stations were on the true life story of one young woman's experience of being exploited and abused. Her name is Liliana.

Monsignor Maurice Comeault led the praying of the stations which were beautifully linked to the experiences and suffering of both Jesus and the trafficked.

The story of Liliana was told by four voices, two female and two male, two younger and two older.

This interplay reflected the reality of who is affected by the issue of human trafficking, which is all of us.

The summary at the end of the service included excerpts from the Palermo Protocol, a paper written by the Western Bishops Conference, which included

statistics on the sexual exploitation of young people in Winnipeg.

It was a very powerful experience and shone a bold light on the situation these women find themselves in.

There were approximately 70 people in attendance.

Submitted by

Judy Albiani

Communications Chair

Winnipeg Diocesan CWL

Bits and Pieces

- 1. Thank you to the people who have sent bus tickets anonymously to Micah House. They are much appreciated.**
- 2. Our Tuesday afternoon group for mental health continues to meet and build bonds of friendship while participating in activities. If anyone would like to become a part of this group all are welcome, both those who are recovering from mental illness and those who would like to be part of a welcoming community.**
- 3. The *Winnipeg Free Press* published an article declaring that the Sharon Home now renamed as River Point will not have the funding to convert the building to an addiction/mental health residence. A call to Minister Rondeau may help to keep this project on track.**

Taizé Prayer

Twenty one people gathered in the Chapel at Holy Ghost Parish on the last Sunday of March. They were there to pray, chant sing and reflect in the manner of the Taizé Community. Organized by the youth of the parish, Taizé prayer takes place on the last Sunday of each month. Everyone is welcome to join in the prayer time. English, Latin and some Polish is used to praise God.

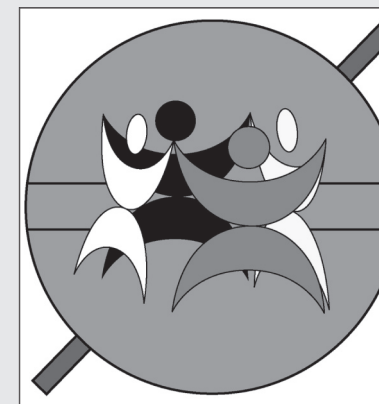
Returning to Spirit: Residential School Reconciliation Program

On February 26, twelve people from Minnesota, North Dakota and Manitoba arrived at Light of the Prairies in Lorette, Man. to begin a session of Returning to Spirit.

One of the trainers for the session asked, "What masks the Spirit in your life? What strategies have we developed to survive, cope or fix our lives?"

There followed five days of intensive work and reflection to bring participants to a personal awareness of how our past can be carried into the present and future unless we come to terms with it.

The unwillingness to carry



what happened in the past creates a space for something new to happen in our relationship with ourselves, our family, co-workers and community.

How does this workshop help in reconciliation between aboriginal people from residential schools and non-aborigi-

nal people?

Because the program consists of three workshops, one for non-aboriginal people, one for aboriginal people and one for the grads of the two programs, understanding of our own lives facilitates listening and dialogue with others who also face challenges.

Although I was challenged by some of the process as being simplistic (letting things go and surrendering them is difficult), the program uses some very good strategies and the workshop is well worth attending.

For more information check www.returningtospirit.org.

Are you eligible for welfare?

Welfare rates in Manitoba continue to lag well behind the amount of money necessary to live with dignity. At present there are two programs which can supplement the monthly allowance for people with a mental illness. One is geared to volunteerism. Eight days of volunteering increases the basic allowance by \$200. It is encouraging for people on disability to be involved in something worthwhile.

Another program, specifically for people with a mental illness, increases the rental allowance by \$200 so there is a better choice of accommodation. Although neither program is perfect, it improves the life of individuals who suffer from the lack of having their basic needs addressed.