

LIFE AND DIGNITY FOR ALL

Social Justice Conference Nov. 26-27

More than 200 people gathered to participate in a social justice conference at St. Paul's High School in Winnipeg Nov. 26 and 27. Of that number, 138 were Grade 11 and 12 students. The intergenerational conference was entitled, The Life and Dignity of the Human Person.

It opened with the proclamation of the creation story: "and God saw that is was very good"

In very different ways, Jerry Goebel and Archbishop James Weisgerber challenged the participants to live a life of witness, to do what we believe.

The workshops included one on aging in which Teresa Campbell and Barbara van der Vis pointed out that asking the elderly what they needed was a way to honour their dignity and Kevin Bissell and Kevin Bruce spoke about aboriginal culture that was quite alien to most people in attendance and invited participants to become aware of some of the things important to aboriginal youth. Seeing an eagle in flight was considered a good omen and moose and deer hunting were activities of choice.

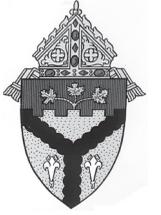
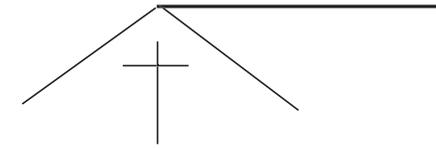
Phil Chiappetta, co-director of Rossbrook House, a safe place that is an alternative to gangs, spoke about the culture of violence



From left, committee member Michele Garlinski, Archbishop Weisgerber and Sr. Johanna Jonker, coordinator at Micah House, the Archdiocese of Winnipeg's Catholic Centre for Social Justice.

and how young people were pulled into gang life. Kathy Downs a community development worker, spoke of how the community in which she worked marched together to counter the fear induced by a shooting death in the neighbourhood. The last workshop was presented by Bonnie Snow from Adoption Option.

Each workshop focused on the issue of life and dignity. It was well worth attending. In this time of Advent, the seeds planted at the conference may begin new growth.



MICAH HOUSE

ACT JUSTLY + LOVE TENDERLY +
WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD

UPDATE

December, 2010

We can do Something

There is a refrain sung constantly by all levels of government: freeze or cut taxes without losing services. What are the mathematical principles by which this works? It would be a magical solution for ordinary citizens who face a situation where

receipts are outstripped by expenses. How can governments maintain the same services with less money?

Daily, people experience long waiting lines. Agencies do their best by hosting endless fund raisers so they can provide services. Their number is legion: the Firefighters Burn Fund, Child Find, Little Sisters Home, NEEDS, Winnipeg Harvest, Mental Health Housing, hockey for

As an alternative to gift shopping and giving, make a donation to a charitable organization in the name of a friend or loved one.

youngsters who cannot afford to register for hockey because equipment and ice rentals are too high, and the list goes on.

Is Micah House joining the list of organizations soliciting funds? No. Your generous donations to Sharing

God's Gifts are keeping Micah House going as are gifts from individuals, CWL or parishes. Instead of soliciting funds, Micah House is suggesting an alternative to gift shopping and giving. Make a donation to a charitable organization in the name of a friend or loved one. That way, your gift is given twice and a project dear to the heart of the recipient can survive another day.

The Jubilee Fund

Congratulations are in order to the Jubilee Fund, a non-profit organization that grew out of the collaboration of like minded people who formed an ecumenical group with a dream of establishing a fund in the year of jubilee.

The Jubilee Fund provides loan guarantees and bridge financing to community development initiatives in Manitoba that are unable to access financing from traditional financial institutions.

This year the Jubilee Fund has been designated as a Recommended Charity by Charity Intelligence Canada because of its mission, the efficiency with which the fund is administered and the volunteer base in-

JUBILEE FUND
ETHICAL INVESTING IN MANITOBA

involved. The Jubilee Fund was one of 204 charities that were so designated.

This is a good organization in which to invest your money which in turn secures funds for groups such as daycare centres, affordable housing and small community-based businesses. The return on your investment will not be large in dollars but it is huge in community development. That indeed is a wonderful return on your investment.

SMA International Day ‘Thanks be to God’

“Thanks be to God.” The words rang out at the Eucharistic Celebration at St. Mary’s Academy’s International Day. The chaos encountered in the scriptural story of Babel was somehow reversed – at least during the Mass.

Malo, malo, obrigado, gracias, kam sa ham ni da, thanks be to God. Si Yu’us maa’sese, terima kasih, maraming salamat, danke schon, dsiekuje, thanks be to God. What a change from the Babel story where lan-

*Not only did we sing
with one voice, we sang
to the same God in
many languages.*

guages divided people who thought they could build a tower reaching to heaven on their own.

Mesi bokou, xie xie, arighato, grazie, cam on, thanks be to God. This was a truly inspiring start to the

day. Not only did we sing with one voice, we sang to the same God in many languages. We were, if only for a short while, a united people of God.

Let us continue to be united before God and with one another.

Human Trafficking, And Why It’s So Important To Get More Youths Involved in Prevention

Human trafficking and its consequences are not only far away and other peoples problem! It is a problem in our daily lives and happens right here in Winnipeg and in almost every other city in the world.

Before combating human trafficking it is necessary to have a closer look at the definition of human trafficking. The United Nations gives the following definition:

“The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of a threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.”

The three most important things about this definition

are: the description of the act of trafficking, the different ways of trafficking and the purpose of exploitation. Most trafficked persons are doomed to forced labour or sexual services, sometimes for ridiculously low pay but usually for no pay at all.

The main sectors where victims of trafficking can be found are commercial sex or prostitution, domestic caregiving, sweatshop factories, construction or farming.

This is a nightmare happening all around us everyday. Each year about 800 people are trafficked into Canada and between 1,500 and 2,000 are trafficked through Canada to the United States. The number of trafficked human beings in Canada is increasing rapidly and has to be stopped!

Because young people are the victims of human trafficking it is very important to get young people involved in the fight against

it. Unfortunately it is often the case that teens will tell their friends more than they tell their parents. Friends should raise the alarm if they detect something suspicious. Young people must be aware of human trafficking so they can react quickly if necessary.

Do you want to be a part of combating this evil? Become a founding member of an organization that does exactly that. Spread the word amongst your peers, sign up and prevent trafficking in our neighbourhoods. Do something instead of watching! Anything is better than doing nothing. I am sure together we can help!

Our next newsletter will provide a more in-depth look at this reality.

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