

We are the Community. We are the Church.

*Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the First Mass
at Sacred Heart Church at Nelthorpe Street
on September 5, 2015*

19

January 10-11, 2015

“How I long for a poor church for the poor!”

“To love God and neighbor is not something abstract, but profoundly concrete: it means seeing in every person and face of the Lord to be served, to serve him concretely. And you are, dear brothers and sisters, in the face of Jesus.” — Pope Francis, during visit at the homeless shelter “Dona Di Maria,” 5/21/13.

“Poverty calls us to sow hope.... Poverty is the flesh of the poor Jesus, in that child who is hungry, in the one who is sick, in those unjust social structures.” — Pope Francis, Meeting with Students of Jesuit Schools Q&A, 6/7/13)



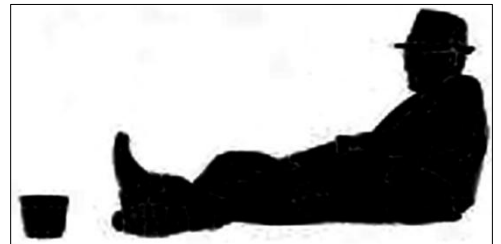
Jorge Bergoglio said these words soon after becoming **Pope Francis** on 28 February 2013. He wants Catholics to devote greater attention to poverty-alleviation.

As a key activity of the year-long celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the First Mass at Sacred Heart Church on Nelthorpe Street on September 5, 1965, our faith community will sponsor a night of **'Feeding the Needy'** on February 24 at the Philippine Bayanihan Community Centre at 1709 Blanshard Street.

There will be two sittings: 5 p.m. for families; and 7 p.m. for individuals. The program involves getting ingredients for the meals donated, half a dozen volunteers to prepare the meal, and a few volunteers to serve the food, clean up and security.

The people who come for the meal are usually selected by an organization that has experience in helping the needy. St. Vincent de Paul Society will issue the tickets for our parish's project. Co-ordinating the event are **Judith Ravai** and **Bernie Shaw**.

The 'Feeding the Needy' program is on its 14th year at the centre and it started immediately after the centre opened in November 2001. Various individuals, families, groups and organizations — including Couples for Christ, the Victoria Fil-Can Seventh Day Adventist Church, and staff of Aberdeen Hospital — sponsor, prepare and serve the meals for the needy and the homeless. From 60 to 120 individuals are served each time. The downtown centre is ideal for them as they find suburban locations inaccessible and discomfoting. The centre provides the venue free of any charges because one of its core values is to show compassion for the needy by feeding them.



Soon after Sacred Heart Church opened at Nelthorpe Street 50 years ago, the Economic Council of Canada concluded in '68, that 27 per cent of Canadians lived in poverty.

Today, while there is still no official measure of poverty, Statistics Canada reports that 14.9 per cent of Canadians have "low income" [i.e. make less than half the median income]. In 2008, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] stated that poverty had been steadily rising in Canada since the mid-1990s.

This was despite the numerous public programs created in the '60s to alleviate poverty, including Employment Insurance, pension programs for the elderly and various child benefits and tax credits.

Poverty is now "urbanized." In '67, 45 per cent of all poor families were rural dwellers, but by '97 this share had declined to 12 per cent. In the larger cities of more than 500,000 people, the proportion of poor families increased from 18 per cent ['67] to 57 per cent ['97].

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Some groups are worse off than others. Aboriginal Canadians — they make about 30 per cent less than the rest of Canadians — lone parents, recent immigrants, people with disabilities and seniors.

Child poverty is high, ranking behind the average of that in rich nations: 13.3 per cent of Canadian children live in poverty compared to 11 per cent across the 35 "economically advanced countries." Half of our First Nations children live in poverty.

National health care costs attributable to poverty is \$7.6 billion.

In '86, the federal and provincial governments set a threshold of housing affordability at 30 per cent of a resident's monthly income. By this standard, a full quarter — or 3.3 million households — are paying more than they should on housing.

Poverty also shortens a person's life with a 21-year gap in life expectancy between richest and poorest neighbourhoods.

Nearly 900,000 Canadians are assisted by food banks each month: 38 per cent are children and youth and 11 per cent are aboriginal [compared to 4.3 per cent of the total population].

As many as 200,000 Canadians experience homelessness each year. On any given night, about 30,000 Canadians are homeless.

Debt levels are on the rise. Last year, Canadian household debt-to-income ratio had climbed to a new high of 163.4 per cent — in other words, the average Canadian owes \$1.63 for every dollar they earn.

Early investment can yield big dividends: reducing child poverty can have huge spillover effects on society. It is estimated that \$1 invested in the early years saves between \$3 and \$9 in future spending on the health and criminal justice systems, as well as on social assistance.



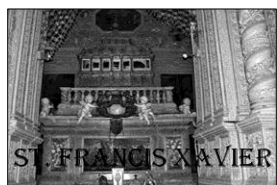


Catholicism in the continents

Focus on Asia

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From 22 November 2014 to 4 January this year, the relics of St. Francis Xavier were exposed in Goa, India. His body, which has miraculously defied the laws of nature of turning into dust, lies in a silver casket in the Church of Bom Jesus Basilica in Goa. He died on 3 December 1552 at the age of 46.



The recently concluded public exposition was the 17th and the expositions are held every 10 years.

The missionary to the people of Asia and co-founder of the Society of Jesus — he was a study companion of St Ignatius of Loyola and one of

the first seven Jesuits who took vows of poverty and chastity at Montmartre, Paris, in 1534 — was canonized by Pope Gregory XV on 22 March 1622 and Pope Pius XI proclaimed him the "Patron of Catholic Missions." He is considered to be one of the greatest missionaries since St. Paul and is known as the "Apostle of the Indies," and the "Apostle of Japan." His feast day is 3 December. St. Xavier led an extensive mission into Asia, mainly in the Portuguese Empire of the time. He was influential in evangelization work, most notably in India.

He arrived in Goa, then capital of Portuguese India, on 6 May 1542. His primary mission, as ordered by King John III, was to restore Christianity among the Portuguese settlers. He devoted almost three years preaching to the people of southern India, converting many, even reaching, the Island of Ceylon [today called Sri Lanka].

In southern India, he visited the tomb of St. Thomas the Apostle in Mylapore, [now part of Madras — or Chennai — then in Portuguese India].

He left India in spring of 1545 for Portuguese Malacca and the Maluku Islands and in January 1548 he returned to Goa to attend to his responsibilities as superior of the mission there.

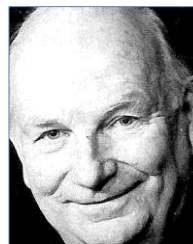
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Our Pastors



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Fr. Donal Lehane



Fr. Donal Lehane encouraged younger priests, such as historian Msgr. Philip Hanley, to study our diocesan history and around 40 years ago he was instrumental, with the Sisters of St. Anne, in establishing a regional office for Catechetics in Nanaimo," Msgr. Michael O'Connell states in his article, *Fr. Donal Lehane a Cheerful and Kind*

Priest, in the March 2006 edition of the *Diocesan Messenger*.

"Later, in Campbell River, he inspired the building of the first parish church, which for unknown reasons, was dedicated to St. Patrick!" writes Msgr. O'Connell about the Irish-born priest.

Fr. William Bill, in his reflection on 3 June 2008 at the blessing of Fr. Lehane's tombstone at Ross Bay Cemetery noted that once, an American-born pastor at Courtenay had commented that he did not like the changes on the church including the new catechism.

"He was sounding off loudly at a meeting one day: 'Of course, all of us here were brought up on the Baltimore catechism!' But Lehane quietly rejoined: 'No, I wasn't brought up on any of the American stuff. We had Butler's.'"

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