

# THAW

## An unofficial, monthly on-line magazine

Of/for Canadian Anglican and Ecumenical Franciscans

Published by:  
The Highland Shepherd,  
Canon Jim Irvine,  
At

[www.msgr.ca](http://www.msgr.ca)

(Click on the figure of Francis)

Editor: Harold Macdonald

[hgmacton@mts.net](mailto:hgmacton@mts.net)

links:

[www.tssf.org](http://www.tssf.org)

[www.franciscans.com](http://www.franciscans.com)

[www.franciscansinternational.org](http://www.franciscansinternational.org)

### OUR HOST: THE HIGHLAND SHEPHERD

A unique, Christian site, featuring many resources for individuals and for parish study and action. Not without humour! A creation of Canon Jim Irvine, of the Diocese of Fredericton. Cruise the site; it's useful, edifying, fun, original, surprising!

## THIS ISSUE OF THAW –

In this issue, we have a biography of faith written by Marilyn Mincey for last year's newsletter. ( We're a bit late, Marilyn).

Also an article on isolation, "Inukshuk, Northern Faith" based on writings of Barbara Kelcey, Barbara's material appears with permission. Notice of an essay on "The Grace of Eros", and a question of leadership..

Please write to [hgmaddon@mts.net](mailto:hgmaddon@mts.net) about the magazine; letters to the editor may be published. Your reflections on and experiences of, isolation might be helpful to our readers.

## EDITORIAL

Early in June, Mark Kelly did a CBC-TV study of the Muslim community in Toronto which left little doubt that Islamic people in Canada, whether first or second generation Canadians, grip their lands of origin tenaciously. A group unto themselves he suggested. One TV shot was memorable; a row of satellite dishes on an apartment block; people getting their news, not from the CBC but from Al Jazeera..

Like many national groups before them, they will no doubt, "melt down". The process of acculturation has been at work for decades and many Islamic people have surrendered to Superstore, (and Superstore has learned how to supply the Islamic palate). But the rhetoric of others against the degeneration of crass Canadian culture leaves them, for a time at least, unreconciled to life in the midst of a godless, secular, valueless (in their minds), society.

For Islamic people in Canada, the social and psychological dynamics are powerful; the issue is the continuum of exclusion and inclusion in society as a whole; moving from the former towards, but not actually to, the latter.

It was, and is, an issue for some in French Canada. One of those at the exclusion end of the continuum was none other than Pierre Elliott Trudeau. The new biography of his younger years by Monique and Max Nemni gives us a youth no less hostile to Canada than any of the equally young Islamic men to whom the police supplied three tons of fertilizer and who are now being presented to the courts in chains. Trudeau,

once an admirer of Mussolini and Herr Hitler, had ideas about leading a separatist army which would blow up "the enemies munitions factories", of Canada, (without help from the R.C.M. P.) Justifiably or not, the early Trudeau felt an intense hostility towards the impurities of Canadian, (in this case, English Canadian) democratic society.

But consider this: our brother and father, Francis, walked across the sand to actually speak to the Saracen court. In person. Words not war. The medium was just as important as the message - someone bridged the gap; someone turned exclusion into inclusion, if only for a moment. Those Muslim teen-agers and their judges, need a St. Francis.

Not knowing him, there are many Canadians who are having a hissy fit over this real, live, teen-age, Trudeau-esque, moment of terrorism.

Others may be glad that Canadians enjoy a quite decadent, messy culture of inclusion, wherein Pierre Elliott eventually found his way.

## INUKSHUK: NORTHERN FAITH

### Editor

The map of Canada would suggest that we are a population huddled along the U.S. Canadian border, as far from the cold as we can get. Once, flying home to Toronto from Tampa in January, I found this to be eerily accurate: the snow line between brown earth and whiteness, ran just where the engines throttled down and we prepared to land.

In fact, we are more adventuresome. Landed Canadians, Indians, Inuit and Dene, have known the ins and outs of northern communities some for centuries. Isolation is not new to us. isolation comes from many sources, but certainly the environment, or simply put, the vast distances. In the north, down north, our neighbours are almost always far, far away. Even today, in the era of telecommunication, air travel, isolation can be intense and often destructive.

Isolation is a fact of life for Canadian Franciscans, too. In only two regions are we numerous enough to have fellowships. The rest of us are scattered singly over hundreds of miles.

What do we mean by "isolation"? What does it feel like? What causes it? How does one cope with isolation? These are both Franciscan and Canadian questions. Your thoughts would be welcome.

It may help to know that "isolation" and "solace" come from the same Latin root. Simply put, isolation is lack of solace; lack of consolation, lack of the normal kinds of kinship and friendship which bring comfort regularly. Even for inner-directed people, solace needs an actual presence, a flesh and blood reality. Yet people have endured the lack of normal relationships in the north and came to value and find solace in the very loneliness of the life.

Among them were the wives of clergy, Hudson's Bay Company employees and North West Mounted Policemen, the northern "Trinity" prior to WWII. They are studied by Barbara Kelcey in her book "Alone in Silence". We will not be surprised to read that faith carried the women through the trials of northern isolation. Kelcey writes:

"Along with transiency, religious faith was the most constant theme throughout the sources, for all these women, not just the missionaries. It is their Christian faith that stands out above all else. It was their faith that made the experience tolerable, even exciting. Those with a strong faith saw the good in the situation, no matter how difficult it all seemed. Those whose lives are controlled by more secular forces might find such faith incomprehensible, even alarming, and difficult to appreciate that like *Inukshuk*, this faith was solid and tangible and symbolic of optimism. For them, their God's presence was almost palpable in the northern emptiness. In *North to the Rime-Ringed Sun*, Isobel Hutchison echoed other Arctic writers when she declared:

*We are alone in silence here  
Here ample footsteps throng –  
The Peace of God breathes all around,  
And fills this place with song."*

I think these women were sustained also by their intellectual interests. They wrote journals, letters. Their minds were inhabited by descriptions, observations and local knowledge. They kept busy, too, with the daily round. It took a lot of energy to keep up the standard of English social manners. In all their years of northern separation they never changed their recipes!

Those days have long gone. Isolation and the search for solace has taken on new and destructive power in modern times, when the emptiness of the north has been filled with images of consumer overabundance on the TV. One sees and learns to desire conveniences and distractions available in the south. One needs solace. One seeks comfort in commodities easily shipped by air cargo. One loses the ear to hear the peace of God in the land or in the chill night air, or in the shimmering northern lights. "Alone in silence" is a forgotten resource. Then where will we find solace?

## "THE GRACE OF EROS" – A REVIEW

The second paper about theological concerns relating to Christian marriage has been presented to the Primate's Theological Commission by the Rev. Paul Jennings, of Montreal Diocesan College; "The Grace of Eros". Comments here do not constitute a "review" but an invitation to download the article from the Anglican Church of Canada site, or write Church House. .

Paul attempts to recover the term "eros", or its likeness, "falling in love" from the garbage dump of Christian phobia where fear of "need-driven" sexuality has placed it over the centuries. Since, in fact, S. Paul thought that it would be better to marry than to burn (with desire). Making fine distinctions but not separations, between eroticism, agape, romantic love and physical expressions of love, he finds in "falling in love" graceful acts corresponding to the actions of God. The doctrines of election, of justification by grace and of the Holy Trinity are all reflected in his descriptions of the essence of "falling in love". He finds the church woefully silent in recognition of the love between two special people who come, already "en-graced" to the liturgy. He has suggestions how the liturgy needs to be changed in the light of a more celebratory attitude towards "erotic love".

Germane to our current disputes on same sex relationships, Paul finds "falling in love" just as possible between persons of the same sex as in heterosexual relationships, and despite other questions which might be asked of same sexual relationships, this central same-ness would argue for the Church's blessing and liturgy of celebration of homosexual unions.

## NO CANADIAN FRANCISCAN LEADERSHIP

Now that the ECUSA has crossed through the vale of decisions on same sex issues at its recent General Convention and as we approach our General Synod in 2007, what discussion, what directions, what voices will Canadian Franciscans hear to guide them? How will we witness to our second aim; "to spread the spirit of love and harmony" and "to reflect openness to all"?

### Marilynn Mincey, Novice (in 2003) Dogwood Fellowship, New Westminster

I was born in New York into a Christian mostly Protestant large extended family. I attended school in New York and University. God has always been a driving force in my life. Even though there were times when I was not a faithful Christian. My Husband and I met in New York as counselors of a Summer Camp. We married in the fall of 1960 and moved to Germany where he was stationed with the 7th Army. Our son David was born in Germany.

We returned to the USA in 1962 where I began teaching in a local elementary school and my husband began his career in the scientific research community. We moved to Massachusetts after the birth of our daughter Karen in 1965. While there it became evident that my husband needed a PhD in order to continue moving forward in his chosen field.

He was accepted at Purdue University in Lafayette Indiana and we moved with two small children to student housing which would be our home for the next three years.

The next move was to St Louis Missouri where we found work and what a turning point that was in our lives. God works in mysterious ways and this was one of them. While working in research in St. Louis my husband discovered a new Thyroid function test which was under clinical trials at Vancouver General Hospital in B.C. After several trips to Vancouver to oversee the clinical work he was offered a job on the Faculty of Medicine at UBC and within the Endocrinology Department of VGH.

We immigrated to Canada with 2 children and one young Airedale Terrier in 1972. We have been here ever since.

We found a home next to a Baptist church. Began showing dogs as after a few years we had three Airedales. However as is always the way if you wait on the Lord, God kept knocking on the door of my heart. I attended Bible studies at the Baptist Church and even though my theology and theirs were not the same God was there with us.

Years went by where I did not attend church as dog shows which we now attended regularly were held on Sundays.

We moved from Richmond, to Surrey and then finally to Langley. Our son was married by then and we had our first grand daughter. Our daughter attended Law school at UBC after an under graduate degree at Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington.

Besides dogs I had always had a love for horses and it is through the owning and showing of horses that our daughter met her husband Daren. His family was involved at the time in showing Morgan horses. When they decided to marry they wanted a country wedding with horses and dogs involved. The local Fort at Fort Langley was chosen as a wedding site however the province does not allow weddings there. To my pleasant surprise Karen and Daren announced one day that they decided to marry at the Anglican Church in the Fort and that they had met the priest Pam Worthington.

After the wedding I began attending Church there, I was drawn by the Spirit of God in that place. I have worshipped there ever since. I was confirmed four years ago. After the confirmation service at the Cathedral in Vancouver something wonderful happened. Our daughter had a religious experience. She decided to have her son baptized and is now and has been since that day a regular member of the church. She was confirmed last year in the same cathedral by the same Bishop.

Through my relationship with St Georges and the priest Pam Worthington I was asked to become Stewardship chairperson. I have held that post now for almost 6 years. Through Stewardship I met Br. Robert Hugh SSF. He was my introduction to St Francis and the rest is history. Using one of the TSSF leaflets that Br. Robert brought to a quiet day I sent in my first request to be accepted as a postulant in the Third Order. I am now finished my Novitiate and have all the paperwork completed for Profession.. This should occur sometime in November this year.

The journey of the spirit has many ups and downs as we go through life but like the movie A River Runs Through It, Gods Spirit Runs through our life and our relationship with God is the thread that keeps life from unravelling.