

Beacon of Hope

Light of Christ

Living the Spirit of Vatican II

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For Catholics in the Fox Valley

June 2008

# Fall Speaker - Francine Cardman

### Inside this issue:

- From the President P. 2
- Teen Volunteers Wanted P. 2
- A Mighty Message P. 3
- Concern For Catholic Palestinians Emerges P. 4
- The Church in our Day P. 5

Associate Professor of Historical Theology and Church History, at Weston Jesuit School of Theology in Massachusetts, Francine's teaching and research interests include the history of Christian spirituality, patristics, feminist theology, and ecumenism.

Known for her keynote address at the Voice of the Faithful Leadership Meeting in Indianapolis July of 2005,

Ms. Cardman challenged us to "Re-member" our church. In this hyphenated word, her sense of remembering is about, "minding the members, mending relationships, and keeping the body living, connected, and whole."

Her knowledge and wisdom, born of her scholarly studies, will give us great insight into Paul's obsessive use of "the Body" as analogy of the early church's growth and health. She will speak about the role of the laity in the early church and the abundance of involvement all people had in the formation and

direction of the Catholic Church.

***"Clerical offices only evolved gradually during the second and third centuries, and would not be recognizable to us today as the offices of bishops, priests, and deacons. As offices became more rigidly hierarchical in the fourth century, lay people continued to***



Francine Cardman

***play essential roles in the selection of their bishops and pastors.***

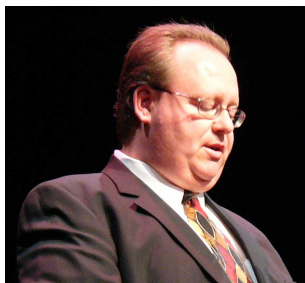
***They continued to engage in the church's ministries of mercy and evangelizing. They provided leadership and momentum for renewal and reform as the times required. They promoted asceticism, they founded and funded religious communities, and they evangelized countryside." July 2005***

Plan to join us at the PAC on November 6th.

**NOTHING is Impossible with GOD**

**Keep the Faith Change the Church**  
VOTF

# From the President



Beacon of Hope – Light of Christ held its third annual meeting on Sunday, May 4, 2008. We began with a prayer service that was very spiritual and had a lot of good discussion about the readings for Accession

Sunday. Following the prayer service we held the annual meeting.

During the meeting, various members of the Board of Directors gave short presentations about activities the organization has sponsored or done during our three-plus years of existence, and each topic was discussed. After each presentation, members were asked to answer a couple of questions about the activity. When all presentations were completed, members were asked to rank their top three activities they thought Beacon of Hope – Light of Christ should continue. They were also asked to add comments about each of the activities if they had further ideas.

The meeting concluded with a short presentation of some ideas the Board has for the future of Beacon of Hope – Light of Christ. Members were encouraged to comment on these ideas and add to them, and a very good discussion followed. After the meeting, a potluck lunch was held.

Although only 12 members attended the annual meeting, discussions were fruitful. Everyone that attended was involved and contributed to the meeting.

As a result of the annual meeting and the answers received by the Board, the Board decided to put together a survey for the full membership to answer so they can get a much broader perspective on what the membership thinks of current and future activities of Beacon of Hope – Light of Christ. This survey notice was sent out via e-mail to all members, but in case you didn't receive it, you can get to it by typing or copying the following into your web browser:

(enter both lines in your browser's address bar)

**[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?  
sm=vkp1q1bJFNUNrsrLYkHprg\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=vkp1q1bJFNUNrsrLYkHprg_3d_3d)**

The survey is only 10 questions long and will take only a few minutes to complete. Your participation will help the Board determine the future activities of Beacon of Hope – Light of Christ. We will publish the results on our website and in our next newsletter.

Thank you, and God Bless!

**Greg Stock**

## Teen Volunteers Wanted!

The Food Pantries in our area are in need of young volunteers. BOH would again like to provide the service of coordinating this service. In the past we used Thursday mornings to go to St. Joe's Food Pantry and Clothes Closet in Appleton. In addition to this opportunity, we will also coordinate an alternate site at the Hortonville Food Pantry in Dale.

We invite all young people who have finished their eighth grade year in school to join us. The time will be during the mornings; however, which days it will be is yet to be decided for the local

pantry. If you or someone you know would be interested in doing some of the required volunteer work for High School graduation, please encourage them to call us so we can arrange the adult drivers, places and times for pick up. Last year we had 15 young people participate and after the first time, they all wanted to come again!

Call us for more information or to sign up for this very important service to the needy. Pat (779-4685) or Anne (779-0691).

# A Mighty Message

As anyone who knows me might expect, the recent years of conservative backlash in my faith, the Catholic Church...no, as I am told, it is the ROMAN Catholic Church, have been a burden to me both emotionally and spiritually.

In my conversations with the Almighty, my euphemism for prayer, I have wondered and asked why the hierarchy of my faith and so many priests, especially many of the younger priests, find so much comfort in their insistence on unquestioned authority?

A few mornings ago, early to be sure, I woke up with a message in my mind calling me to spend a moment in scripture. Obediently, yet as reluctant as a teenager, I arose and went downstairs to "get into the word."

As I opened the bible to read my first passages (had to attempt this twice to be convinced of its necessity), my eyes came to rest on John 18, the betrayal of Jesus and the denial by Peter. My mind raced to the conclusions that today, just as then, one of the chosen had betrayed Jesus and another had denied Him...yet the one who had denied Him was forgiven and became the first leader of the Church.

A message entered my mind that we would now see three popes in sequence, all denying Christ by putting the Church control before the message of our beloved Lord, all denying that the Church of Jesus belongs, by Christ's intention, to all, not just the ordained. Yet eventually, the Papacy would come to the realization that the laity has an EQUAL role in the affairs of the Catholic Church...and just like Christ loves and forgives, we as laity must love and forgive those priests, including the Popes, of their denial of equality as a transgression and denial of Christ.

Another message in mind said to go further, and I was compelled to pray and re-open the bible and my eyes fell to Jeremiah 6: 26-31. Here Jeremiah warns of the way we all can be trapped by the wickedness of men, pulling away from the Lord and His message, foolishly engaging in our own selfishness and not

attending to the needs of the poor. Jeremiah chastises even the priests "who rule at their direction" and those of faith (the laity of that time) who blindly follow.

And a message entered my head saying today is not so different, but a new time will come...a time of witness to the real meaning of Jesus Christ and His church.

I give thanks to the Lord, and to the Father and to the Holy Spirit. Jesus has told us the way to the Father is through active love, seeded by the Holy Spirit in faith. We are to worship the Father in prayer (and

community), in words (teaching) and in deeds (feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the oppressed). We are a Church, not by membership and control, but by active inclusion in Christ's message.

Our efforts as ordained and lay persons must be transparent for our deeds to be effective, both in His church and in the world. As Catholic members of His church, we each can realize His message; to do so completely, we all must be in full, transparent, and equal participation. Ordained and laity, a church of equals...His church.

Through His Love,  
Thomas, J. Wiltzius, PhD



# Concern for Catholic Palestinians Emerges

While their pilgrimage to Israel and the Holy Land was spiritually and emotionally fulfilling, and at times overwhelming, a group of local Catholics from the Green Bay Catholic Diocese found unexpected insights as well.

The March 2008 journey was originally designed by Jim Kampa and the late Father John Zickert to provide travelers with an experience rooted in the Jewish tradition that dates from Abraham to the time of Jesus. Arriving in Ariel, 35 members were treated to a lecture by Menachim and Tova Gilboa, Zionist settlers in the land of Samaria.

Tova had been a journalist in Tel Aviv, and Menachim was the manager of a security company, when they both felt a call to return to the land and create a center for all believers. Through their efforts, which include surviving terrorist bombings, they have established “Eshel Hashomron”, a biblical hotel in Ariel, the capital of Samaria. After a night’s stay, the group traveled to Tel Tamar, south of the Negev in the desert of Arava.

Tamar is cited in early scriptures as a small city and today is one of the most significant archeological sites in all of Israel. The site now called Biblical Tel Tamar is managed by *Blossoming Rose*, the only Christian organization with a government-authorized permanent presence in Israel. Biblical Tel Tamar holds one of the most extensive excavations in all of Israel, with distinct portions of the site attributed to early Roman occupation, with further evidence back to the time of Solomon.

Travelers found their stay to be rustic, providing a first hand experience of desert living, even with more modern amenities. Tel Tamar provided a departure point for visits to the Dead Sea, Masada, Qumran, and Kibbutz Ein Gehdi, a botanical garden established to demonstrate the Israel of the past and the future, with lush green gardens and a variety of trees.

After their stay at Tel Tamar, travelers proceeded to the north, stopping at Jericho on their way to Jerusalem, where they would stay in the “old city” at the Watson House for three days. The journey to Jerusalem exposed travelers to the varied living conditions of the nomadic and semi-nomadic Bedouin and gave a first glimpse at the challenges faced by both Christian and Islamic Palestinians, most of whom are fully Israeli citizens.

Arrival in Jerusalem also signaled recognition of the differences between secular and observant Jews. While the laws, customs, and culture of Israel are shaped by Jewish

faith, only about 25% of Jewish Israeli citizens are observant, practicing any number of historic Judaic sects.

While staying in the old city of Jerusalem, travelers were able to experience the Holy sites of Christianity from an intimate perspective. Walking the Via Del Rosa, experiencing St. Anne’s while singing the Ave Maria, kneeling at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and visiting places like the Upper Room, the Garden of Gethsemane, and the Mount of Olives all created a foundation for the upcoming Holy Week and Easter.



**Mediterranean sea seen through an aqueduct arch**

Travelers also used the Watson House location for visits outside of the old city, including a visit to Yed Vashem (the Holocaust Museum) and to Bethlehem, which proved to be the most surprising. Bethlehem is no longer an easy location for Christians to reach. Today it is almost essential to have an Arab bus driver

and Arab guide, and the travelers had both, and fortunately both were Christian. Entry into Bethlehem became both possible and powerful.

Not that long ago, Bethlehem was made up of between 60 and 80 percent Christian Palestinians. Today estimates of Christian membership range from 10 to 20 percent. However, like many communities that have been historically mixed with Christian, Druse, or Muslim residents, Bethlehem has been walled off from the Jewish sectors of Israel. As such, the isolation has been a negative for Christians, especially Palestinian Christians.

Many such Christian families have sent their children to study in Europe, encouraging them not to return. And many of the young that do remain often convert to Islam, with the promise of better futures, only to find themselves trapped with bleak hopes and no safe way to return to the Christian faith. Spiritual, social, and economic conditions are challenging at best, and untenable at worst.

After Bethlehem, travelers spent much time struggling with this new reality of wanting to continue support for Israel, but recognizing that the Israeli government has done precious little good for the remnants of Christianity in the country. Yet, the value of this learning, mixed within the total experience of Israel, brought to all travelers a special insight.

“The trip was awesome,” revealed Diane Ernst, a member of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish in Greenville. “It exceeded my expectations on what I would learn and the impact it would have.”

**Continued on page 5**

**Continued from page 4** Walter Coyle, a retired Green Bay teacher from De Pere, particularly found his Bethlehem experience to be exceptional, as he had the opportunity to visit a Christian Palestinian family that was celebrating the birthday of an elderly grandmother. "It was the highlight of my trip and an experience I will never forget."

Patricia De Groot, who traveled with her husband Dale and is the Parish Director of St. Rose Parish in Clintonville and St. Mary Parish in Bear Creek, expressed her appreciation for both the spiritual aspects of the trip and the organizational effort that brought it about.

"It was wonderful, well-planned and very fulfilling. It was the journey of a life time," she indicated.

The trip was organized, planned and led by Beacon of Hope – Light of Christ, a Catholic intentional community in the Green Bay Catholic Diocese.

Plans are being considered for another trip for the Spring of 2009 or 2010. Inquiries can be addressed to hosts Jim Kampa at [bereans@new.rr.com](mailto:bereans@new.rr.com), or Greg Stock at [www.bohlightofchrist.org](http://www.bohlightofchrist.org) or by writing: Israel-2009/2010, Beacon of Hope-Light of Christ, P.O. Box 2524, Appleton, Wisconsin 54912-2524.

By His Love,

Thomas J. Wiltzius, PhD

## The Church in our day



At a time when society is becoming increasingly unified in its institutions, more complex and less personal than ever, the traditional doctrine of the local Church, in addition to its positive content,

serves as a welcome counterforce. The theology of the local Church brings the Church of Christ in its fullness into our neighborhoods. Thus, we are members of the Universal Church through the more tangible reality of the local Church. The Church, in its local presence, celebrates the Eucharist and all the other sacraments, proclaims the Gospel, and possesses all the sacramental structures by which the Church is governed and differentiated. The local Church gathers us around one shepherd who shares the proximate concerns of the community of Christians united closely with one another and with him.

Nor is this to suggest in the slightest that the local Church isolates us from the Universal Church or from those other local Churches in communion with Peter where we find our brothers in the faith; if it did so, it might be local but it would cease to be the Church. Collegiality turns us, at one and the same time, to our local bishop, in whom we see apostolicity expressed, and then to the entire episcopate, in whom we see apostolicity manifesting ever-new evidence of its catholicity. In a marvelous manner, collegiality, taken together with the theology of the local Church, proclaims to us the pluralities of traditions within the Church, the diversities of cultures, and the multiplicity of languages and rites, each of these typified in its bishops, all of which harmonize into the sign of a Church properly called

catholic. Thus in one doctrine is revealed the diversity, the universality, and the catholicity within the unity of the Church of Christ.

The episcopate, therefore, is given to the Church not for her division but precisely for her unity. Both bishop and people, contemplating this profound truth, must act in accordance with it. The bishop is commissioned by the Church and called by the Holy Spirit to make the community of Christ concretely present on the local level. He is given the Church's power to celebrate the death of the Lord, to pray and to preside, and to do all the works of love called to mind on the day of his consecration: "to govern, to interpret doctrine, to consecrate, to ordain, to offer Sacrifice, to baptize and to confirm" (*The Roman Pontifical*). He is given these powers not for himself, but to make present and proximate the Mystery of the Church in a local community. As the people of that community gather around the altar of their local bishop; as they assemble to hear from him the Word of God authentically proclaimed and to be formed by it, as they recognize, in accordance with their respective gifts, the institutional and charismatic leadership which comes to them through his apostolic episcopacy; as they do all this, the whole Church of God comes into their midst in an intimate, truly personal, visible, tangible and audible manner.

*(Excerpts from the document *The Church in Our Day* published by the Catholic Bishops of the United States, January 21, 1968, appear on a regular basis.)*

**Beacon** is the official newsletter of Beacon of Hope-Light of Christ and is intended to inform its members by sharing news, ideas, and opinions within the progressive Catholic Church. Beacon of Hope is an intentional community and a tax exempt, not-for-profit 501(c)3. All contributions are tax deductible. Our guiding principles are to inform, support, challenge, and grow. Our goals are transparency and inclusion within the Church. Communications staff include: Joe Uchytel, Greg Stock, Tom Wiltzius, Dave Arent, Anne Thielen, Tom Whittenberger, and guest contributors.