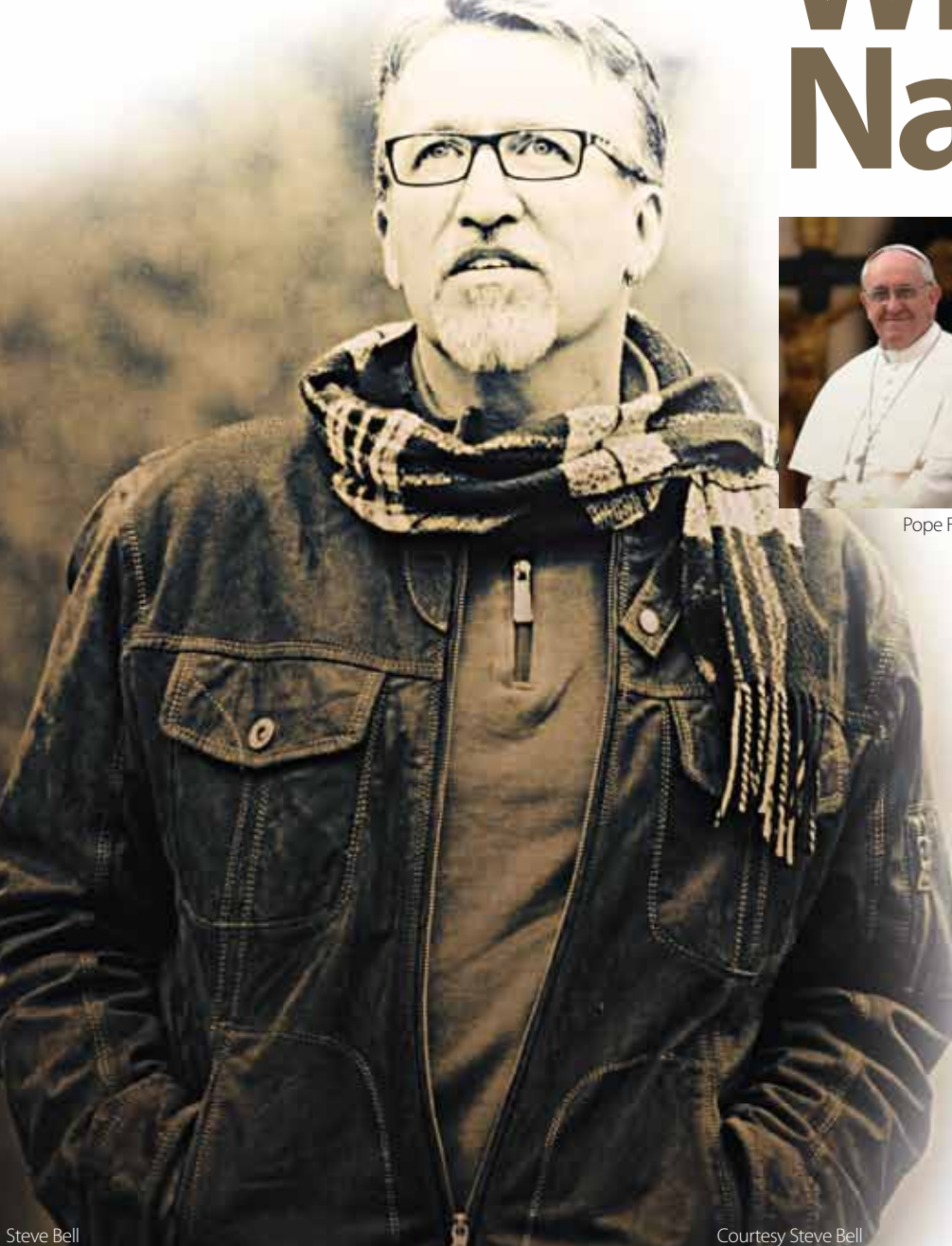




# kolbetimes

Faith, Arts & Justice

## What's in a Name: Francis



Steve Bell

Courtesy Steve Bell



Pope Francis I

What's in a Name: Francis  
by Steve Bell

Like so many others, I was staggered when Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio chose *Francis* for his Papal name. It's hard to describe, but when I heard the news, a breeze blew through my soul leaving me in a momentary state of awe-filled silence, accompanied by a strange sensation of serene happiness.

I'm not the only one. Gregory Wolfe, editor of Image Magazine wrote, "Francis, the perfect name: simplicity, poverty, reform. I am stunned and profoundly happy." At the same time, from across the ocean, English poet Malcolm Guite rhapsodized:

You woke to Christ and Christ awoke in you  
And set to work through all your love and skill  
To make our ruin good, to bless and heal  
To wake the Christ in us and make us whole

Of course, this enthusiasm is primarily for Francis, as Jorge Mario Bergoglio's story is yet to be written. But cause for hope may be taken from his inaugural homily when the Pontiff presented a clear message of his vision for the church: to work to protect God's creation and the world's poor.

However, one wonders at the wisdom of his name choice, which, more than anything else, will now be the metric against which his life will be measured and remembered. But I think he already knows this, for every time he breaks into the crowds to touch and be touched, he repeatedly begs, "Pray for me."

Evidently, Jorge knows well what *Francis* means.

Even as this choice of name could be considered spectacularly courageous, it could equally be considered foolish. But that is part of the charm. In an elegant biography of St. Francis of Assisi, G.K. Chesterton describes the man as a "festive figure" whose life was one "riot of rash vows" which turned out right.

continued on page 3

### This Issue: Beauty

<b>Architecture &amp; Design</b>	<b>3</b>
On Beauty Carmel Gatt	
<b>Living Faith</b>	<b>4</b>
To Evangelize Through Beauty Fr. Robert Barron	
<b>Visual Arts</b>	<b>5</b>
The Artist as Pilgrim Guide Michael O'Neill McGrath	
<b>Theatre</b>	<b>6</b>
The Final Taboo Val Lieske	
<b>Dance</b>	<b>7</b>
Hope and Grace Corps Bara Dance Theatre	
<b>Books</b>	<b>8</b>
Book Review: J.R.R. Tolkien Laura Locke	
Books That Changed My Life Dr. Gerry Turcotte	<b>9</b>
<b>Music</b>	<b>10</b>
Captivated by the Chorus Joseph Lara	
<b>Film</b>	<b>11</b>
Film Review: Sister Helen Bill Locke	

## Audrey Assad Coming to One Rock



Audrey Assad

Courtesy Audrey Assad

Audrey Assad Coming to One Rock  
By Laura Locke

Aristotle once said, "Change in all things is sweet", and the folks behind this year's One Rock Christian Youth Music Festival seem to agree. Big changes are afoot behind the scenes, and special musical guest Audrey Assad is happy to be along for the ride. Her own story is an ongoing tale of change and growth.

One Rock was born in 2009 as the brainchild of Fr. Krystian Golisz, SDS, a priest in the Catholic Diocese of Calgary. When he was transferred to the small community of Rockyford, 80 km east of Calgary, Fr. Krystian was so taken by the beauty of the landscape that he envisioned young people gathering there every summer to enjoy good music and receive a message of hope.



For three years the festival was successfully staged in Rockyford, attracting almost 1500 happy festival-goers each year. But after talking to many participants, it was decided to move the 2013 festival closer to Calgary – namely, the grounds of the Mount St. Francis Retreat Centre near Cochrane, a short fifteen-minute drive west of the city.

One Rock's Project Manager, Joel Looyis, has trouble containing his excitement. "This One Rock feels entirely new," says Joel. "It's a big change in size and scope. We're anticipating double the numbers of people, up to 3000 each day, though we could handle even more than that. It's a gorgeous location and the Franciscan community here at the Retreat Centre has been so amazing and accommodating. They're as excited as we are."

The date for this year's One Rock, July 26 to 28, was chosen to coincide with World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro, when Christian youth from around the world will

meet in the name of faith, hope and unity. Enthusiasm has been growing since Pope Francis I confirmed that he will be leading the celebrations in Rio.

The 2013 One Rock Music Festival is being dubbed "World Youth Day at Home", since both recorded and live feeds from World Youth Day in Rio will be broadcast on giant screens.

"I think people are excited to see our new Pope and hear what he has to say," says Joel. "And if you aren't able to go to Rio, what could be better than sitting with friends and family and watching World Youth Day together at One Rock?"

Other highlights of this year's One Rock Festival include a pilgrimage walk, break-out sessions with speakers on issues of faith and modern life, a drum circle, a variety of musical guests, an Adoration Vigil, Stations of the Cross, two Masses with six Bishops from across the province – not to mention a much-anticipated soccer game between the Roman Collar United team, made up of priests, against a team stacked with top players from Catholic High Schools across southern Alberta. Services such as free babysitting and frequent shuttle buses to the festival site from the Crowfoot LRT Station will be offered. As well, exhibition booths to

continued on page 2

## Audrey Assad Coming to One Rock continued from page 1



Courtesy One Rock

browse and a sample of Calgary's popular Food Trucks will be on hand. Camping out at the festival site for the weekend is especially encouraged.

Excitement is also growing about popular singer/musician/songwriter Audrey Assad from Nashville, who will be headlining Saturday evening's time of praise and worship. The evening will also feature Dan DeMatte, inspirational speaker and author of *Holiness Revolution*.

In a recent interview, Audrey spoke about her early musical influences growing up in New Jersey – artists like Paul Simon and James Taylor due to her mom's love of pop tunes, and Middle Eastern music thanks to her father's Syrian heritage. A big life change came when she and her family moved to Florida when Audrey was 18.

It was there that she started composing songs, performing in coffee shops and leading worship concerts in churches. In

2007 Audrey joined the Catholic Church, and soon after moved to Nashville to focus on her musical career.

"I love Nashville," says Audrey. "It's a great city for music. I moved away once but had to move back – I can't seem to stay away."

Things started popping for Audrey in Nashville. She recorded a five-song EP called *Fireflies* that drew the attention of record producers, and also began working with other musicians such as Matt Maher. In 2009 Audrey signed with Sparrow Records, and released her critically acclaimed 2010 album *The House You're Building*. The album became Amazon.com's "Best Album of 2010" in the Christian Music category and "Christian Breakthrough Album of the Year" on iTunes. Her second full-length album, *Heart*, was released in early 2012. It beautifully showcases Audrey's pure-toned voice and profound, poetic lyrics as she accompanies herself on keyboard.

She is now getting ready to record an independent album of worship songs for the Church that she hopes will also be a helpful accompaniment during times of personal devotion. Her goal is to create music in a contemporary fashion that exemplifies the reverence and orthodoxy of the Church – music she likes to describe as "gently passionate".

For Audrey, it's all about sharing her faith by crafting works of beauty, a responsibility that she doesn't take lightly.

"The world has a fascination with beauty, even though people tend to get all warped about what they idolize," says Audrey. "But true beauty, one of the three great transcendental qualities of God, can convert people who idolize a lesser beauty. Music and art done well can be amazing vehicles for truth and goodness. For where true beauty goes, she carries truth and goodness within her. And I think that can change the world."



Audrey Assad

Courtesy Audrey Assad

Joel Looyis agrees. "In the end, One Rock is all about celebrating and building our faith," says Joel. "We want to reach out especially to anyone feeling disconnected, and invite them to come and experience Christ in a beautiful and meaningful way. We want people to know they are not alone."

For more information about tickets, or how you can support or get involved with One Rock, visit [www.onerock.ca](http://www.onerock.ca) or call 403-218-5516.

For more about Audrey Assad: <http://audreyassad.com>  
Twitter: @audreyassad  
<http://facebook.com/audreyassadmusic>

## Kolbe Times: Faith, Arts & Justice



Kolbe Times is a Christian media ministry that offers print and online content focused on faith, arts and justice. As a forum to both inspire and challenge, Kolbe Times supplies fuel to connect the Church and the modern world, drawing on the rich history and living culture of our faith.

Kolbe Times was founded in 2010 by a small group of Secular Franciscans committed to living out the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi, celebrating beauty and compassion in a spirit of joy. Our goal is to give voice to the arts and social action as a catalyst for transformation, with a vision of spiritual renewal. Our hope is to create a meeting place for artists and social innovators to share their ideas and spur collaborative action.

Maximilian Kolbe (1894-1941) is the patron saint of journalists. A Polish Franciscan priest, he shared his faith and spoke out on behalf of the oppressed through the use of the modern media



St. Maximilian Kolbe

of his time. He and his fellow Franciscans also provided shelter for refugees and Jews in their friary at the beginning of WWII. Fr. Kolbe was later arrested and imprisoned in Auschwitz where, in July 1941, he volunteered to die in the place of another man. Locked in a cell with other condemned prisoners abandoned to die a slow death of starvation, he led the men in song and prayer. Maximilian Kolbe was canonized by Pope John Paul II on October 10, 1982 in the presence of the man whose life was spared due to his sacrifice.

Maximilian Kolbe's faith, courage and use of communications media to promote God's love are the inspiration that shapes Kolbe Times.

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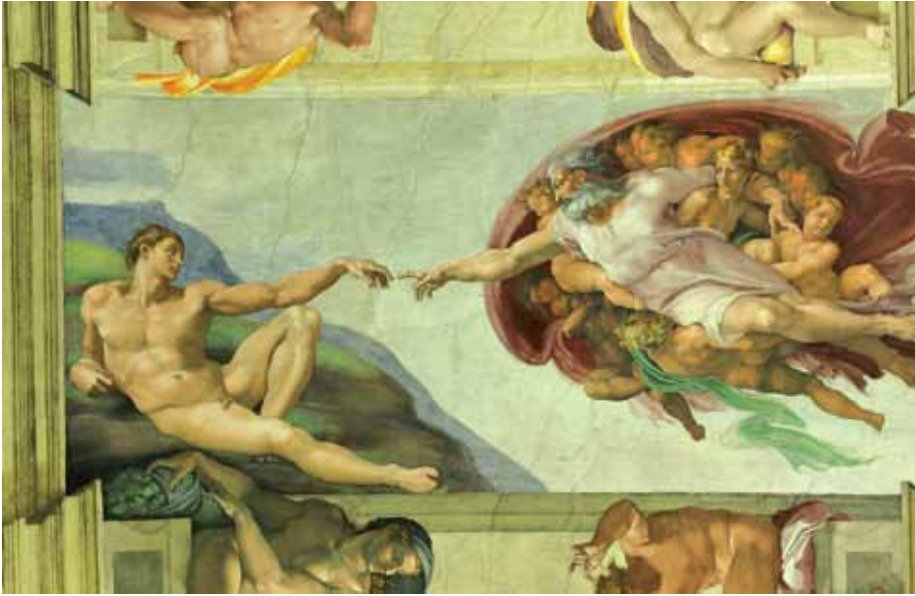
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## On Beauty: Yearnings of the Human Heart



Detail of Sistine Chapel ceiling, Vatican City, painted by Michelangelo, 1508-1512

Beauty is not a trend or fashion. Beauty is an attitude. It transcends time.

On Beauty: Yearnings of the human heart  
By Carmel Gatt

Society venerates vanity. We live in a world of make-believe beauty, in cosmetics, fashion, automobiles, etc. Design magazines flaunt the latest 'must have' objects by the latest golden boy designer. Every purchase we make is a vote towards this subjective expression of beauty.

But beauty is absolute. It is not in the eye of the beholder. Something is either beautiful or it is not. Beauty is a quality that is inherent in the object. It is not an attribute that is endowed on the object by the viewer.

Can beauty be quantified? St. Thomas Aquinas names three essential conditions of beauty: clarity, harmony and integrity. We experience clarity through the senses when we notice the distinctiveness of the object, whether they be brilliant colours, form or some other characteristic. Secondly, we experience harmony, or the right relationship of the parts. Thirdly, we experience integrity. The object elicits a response of pleasantness, rest, contemplation and oneness of being.

Research by Dr. Margaret Laracy, Psychologist and Assistant Professor at the Institute for the Psychological Sciences in Arlington, VA, found empirical studies showing that exposure to natural beauty improves physical and mental health. There are also health benefits of exposure to artistic beauty, as expressed in painting and music. Various forms of beauty can help to heal the human person, particularly in terms of psychological healing. Beauty is essential to human existence.

Beauty cannot be appreciated by reasoning. In a society that only believes the tangible, it is no surprise that our society relegates beauty to the superficial. It is something that can be entertained after all the other "rational essentials" are provided. Beauty is something that is nice to have.

Beauty can be an expression of reason. It transcends aesthetics. The fit between clarity, harmony and integrity appeals more than to just good looks. It can be equally applied to a mathematical formula, to the motion of the stars, to the flight of the bumble bee. Beauty is always clever.

Beauty is not a trend or fashion. Beauty is an attitude. It transcends time. The Sistine Chapel is as awesome today as it was five hundred years ago. Can we say the same thing of the objects, art, buildings and environments that we are producing now? We are producing far more but with far less attention to quality. We rely on technology to explore the depths of our existence, but miss the beauty it uncovers. We have become dependent on machinery to manufacture cheaper objects, but with no soul.

In the words of Harriet Beecher Stowe, "In all ranks of life, the human heart yearns for the beautiful; and the beautiful things that God makes are God's gift to all alike." God's beauty is everywhere around us. We just need to open our eyes.

Humanity has shown that it can create awesome beauty. But it seems that we have lost the yearning in favour of cheaper product and experiences. We must vote for beauty in what we buy, in what we use, in where we live, in what we drive. Beauty is achievable in everything that we do. We must teach the appreciation and creation of beauty in our schools.

Let us venerate beauty.



Carmel Gatt Courtesy of Carmel Gatt

Born in Malta, Carmel Gatt is an award-winning architect and is the Principal of Carmel Gatt Architect Ltd. He has a special interest in the connection between spirituality and architecture.

continued from page 1

## What's in a Name: Francis ...but in those days movie-going was frowned upon by the faithful.



St. Francis (detail) By Giovanni Cimabue, 1280

I think a Papacy marked by a "riot of rash vows that turn out right" is exactly what we need right now. So I will not be joining the ranks of the cynical chic, but have decided to take him at his word and to do what he asks: I will pray for him.

Not surprisingly, these events sent me to my bookshelf to pull out the several books I've read on the life of St. Francis. Soon I found myself happily on my couch, dog in lap, re-reading Chesterton's grand biography of the saint. An early sentence caught me off guard and propelled me back into my childhood: "...when, long ago in those days of boyhood my fancy first caught fire with the Glory of St. Francis of Assisi."

I was in grade two or three when, having just returned home from school, Mom and Dad whisked my sisters and I

into the car, surprising us with the news that we would be making the sixty mile trek to Calgary to go and see a movie. It's not that there wasn't an available theatre in our little town of Drumheller, Alberta, but in those days movie-going was frowned upon by the faithful. And so to avoid scandal, the few movies I saw as a boy were always preceded by a clandestine journey.

You might imagine how my initial excitement was dashed to learn that the movie we were about to see was called *Brother Sun, Sister Moon*, which told the story of a 13th century saint named Francis. I would have much preferred something involving a car chase, a heroic battle scene, or, more secretly, a romance involving a bosomy beauty. But alas, it was already risqué enough that we Baptists would be engaging a dubious Catholic legend.

That being said, my disappointment was soon disappointed. The cinematography, story and music (by Donovan, no less) overwhelmed and became one of my earliest remembered spiritual experiences where I knew I was encountering something utterly beyond. And from that day on, when some kindly man or woman would ask me what I hoped to be when I grew up, I might have answered boyishly: policeman, fireman, etc., because what I was too shy to say (and what would have been more truthful to say) was that I wanted to be... a saint.

Years later, after a concert, a friend was waiting backstage to shove a book into my hands before she ran to catch a ride home: *Love Poems From God* by Daniel Ladinski. It was a book of mystical poetry, which included several obscure poems attributed to Francis. One, in particular, took my breath away. A song soon followed which I recently posted online to commemorate the Inauguration of Pope Francis – March 19/2013. May he (and we) be fertile ground for the seed of Christ, and a new flowering of love and grace.



Steve Bell Courtesy Steve Bell

Steve Bell is a Juno Award winning singer/songwriter/storyteller who, when not on tour, lives in Winnipeg with his wife Nanci. [www.stevebell.com](http://www.stevebell.com)

Excerpt from 'Francis, Rebuild My Church'; a sonnet for the Saint and for the New Pope, by Malcolm Guite [www.malcolmguite.wordpress.com/2013/03/18/francis-rebuild-my-church](http://www.malcolmguite.wordpress.com/2013/03/18/francis-rebuild-my-church)

EVER PRESENT NEED  
Music by Steve Bell. Lyrics adapted by Steve Bell from Daniel Ladinski's translation of St. Francis' poem "Our Need for Thee."

Darkness is an unlit wick  
A single spark would vanquish it  
Truly I could burst to flame  
Every time you call my name

Do I do for you the same?

God is like a honey bee  
Penetrates the soul of me  
Dearly draws the sweetness in  
Nectar of the meek, love is  
He in me and I in him.

In our ever present need of thee  
Grant we fathom peace  
Fashion instruments of souls set free  
For don't the caged ones weep.

Sometimes sober, sometimes bliss  
Every union knows of this  
But I have stood here in his rain  
And bear the marks of fertile plains  
Swelling streams and swollen grain.

So will I console the fall  
Of cheerless creatures great and small  
What of sadness can endure  
When love divine makes insecure  
The crowing claims of shame's allure.

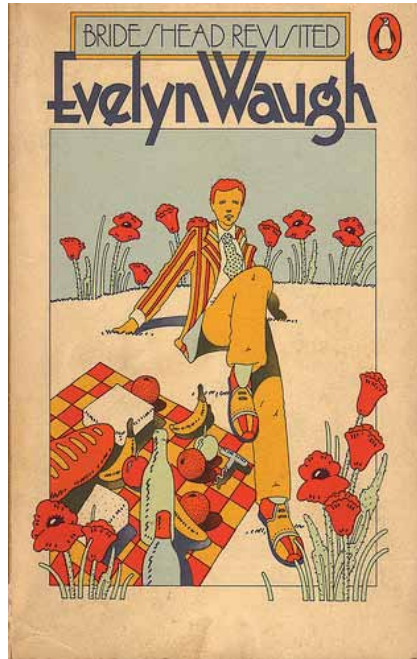
In our ever present need of thee...

(This song can be heard at [www.soundcloud.com/steve\\_bell/ever-present-need](http://www.soundcloud.com/steve_bell/ever-present-need))

# To Evangelize through Beauty



Fr. Robert Barron Courtesy Word on Fire Ministries



Cover Art by Bentley/Farrell/Burnett Design

To Evangelize Through Beauty  
By Very Rev. Robert Barron

In his masterpiece *Brideshead Revisited*, Evelyn Waugh implicitly lays out a program of evangelization that has particular relevance to our time. "Brideshead" refers, of course, to a great manor house owned by a fabulously wealthy Catholic family in the England of the 1920's. In the complex semiotic schema of Waugh's novel, the mansion functions as a symbol of the Catholic Church, which St. Paul had referred to as the "bride of Christ." To Brideshead comes, at the invitation of his friend Sebastian, Charles Ryder, an Oxford student, devotee of the fine arts and casual agnostic. Charles is overwhelmed by the sheer majesty of Brideshead's architecture and the sumptuousness of its artistic program, which includes magnificent painting and sculpture, as well as a fountain of Bernini-like delicacy, and a chapel that was a riot of baroque decoration. Living within the walls of the manse, Charles mused, was to receive an entire artistic education. The beauty of the place would entrance Charles for the rest of his life, drawing him back again and again.

In the course of his many visits, Charles came, of course, to know the inhabitants of the house, Sebastian's strange and beguiling family. Especially through Sebastian's mother, the aristocratic and devoutly Catholic Lady Marchmain, he became familiar with the moral demands of the Catholic Church, especially as they pertained to Sebastian's increasing problem with alcohol. For many years, Charles joined Sebastian in his friend's rebellion against these strictures, but in time, he came to appreciate their importance, indeed their indispensability. Finally, at the very close of the story, we learn that Charles, the erstwhile agnostic, had come to embrace the coherent philosophical system of Catholicism and to worship the Eucharistic Lord who was enshrined in the beautiful chapel at Brideshead. Many years after entering that chapel as a mere aesthete, he knelt down in it as a believer.

This brief and utterly inadequate summary of Waugh's narrative is meant simply to highlight a rhythm that obtains, I would argue, in effective evangelization. The best evangelical strategy is one that moves from the beautiful to the good, and finally, to the true. Especially within our cultural matrix, so dominated by relativism and the valorization of the right to create one's own system of meaning, commencing with either moral demand or the claim to truth will likely raise insuperable blocks in the person one wishes to evangelize. (Who are you to tell me how to behave or what to believe? How can you be so arrogant as to think that you should impose your thought patterns on me?)

This is precisely why moralizing and intellectualizing are often non-starters in regard to persuasion. But there is something unthreatening about the beautiful. Just look at the Sistine Chapel ceiling or the Parthenon or Chartres Cathedral or Picasso's "Guernica"; just read *The Divine Comedy* or *Hamlet* or *The Wasteland*; just watch *Mother Teresa's* sisters working in the slums of Calcutta or Rory McIlroy's golf swing or the movements of a ballet dancer. All of these work a sort of alchemy in the soul, and they awaken a desire to participate, to imitate, and finally, to share. Hans Urs von Balthasar, one of the great advocates of the aesthetic approach to religion, said that the beautiful claims the viewer, changes him, and then sends him on mission.

The pattern is more or less as follows: first the beautiful (how wonderful!), then the good (I want to participate!), and finally, the true (now I understand!). A young man watches a skillfully played game of baseball, and it awakens in him a profound desire to play as well as those whom he admired; and then the actual playing of the game teaches him, from the inside, the rules and rhythms of baseball. A completely inadequate way of drawing a kid into the world of baseball would be to start with a clarification of the rules or with a set of

drills. Rather, show him the beauty of baseball, and he will want to play, and having played, he will know.

The same applies, a fortiori, in regard to religion. I might suggest that the evangelist start with the Sainte Chapelle or the life of Francis of Assisi or the Little Flower's *Story of a Soul* or Thomas Merton's *Seven Storey Mountain* or Gregorian chant, or perhaps best of all, a carefully executed liturgy of the Roman rite. These would function in the manner of Brideshead, captivating even the most bored agnostic. Then, the wager goes, the captivation would lead to a desire, perhaps vague at first, to participate in the moral universe that made those artistic expressions possible. And finally, the participation would conduce toward a true and experiential understanding of the thought patterns that undergird that way of life. First the beautiful, then the good, then the true.

I wonder whether this winsome aesthetic approach might prove more fruitful in a postmodern culture so instinctively skeptical of dogma, either intellectual or moral.

Father Robert Barron is the founder of the global ministry, Word on Fire, and the Rector/President of Mundelein Seminary in Illinois. He is the creator of the award winning documentary series, "Catholicism." Word on Fire will be releasing "The New Evangelization" documentary this year. Learn more at [www.WordonFire.org](http://www.WordonFire.org)



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## The Artist as Pilgrim Guide My idea of pilgrimage is grabbing my pens and sketchbooks and hitting the road



Camden at Dawn

Monastery Bell, Abiquiu

Brother Michael O'Neill McGrath

Courtesy Brother Michael O'Neill McGrath

The Artist as Pilgrim Guide  
By Brother Michael O'Neill McGrath

Prior to my moving to Camden, New Jersey, I'd always sensed that the real purpose of my role as an artist is to be part healer and part pilgrim guide. Now that I have lived here for almost four years, I no longer sense it - I know it, deep in my heart. Living and working in the most dangerous city in the United States, and one of the poorest, I have discovered new meaning for my talents and gifts: the revelation of unexpected beauty which crosses paths with the pain and challenges that I see before me every day.

Henri Nouwen, the great spiritual writer and priest who spent his last years in Canada, once wrote, "My deepest vocation is to be a witness to the glimpses of God I have been allowed to catch." These glimpses of God that we are allowed to catch are with us every day, everywhere. It is our job as artists to make note of them, create something from them in whatever form we are inclined to do so, and to share the outcome with others - not only because we have no choice, but because it is our calling: to help others see and hear with the eyes and ears of their hearts. And nothing prepares my own eyes for glimpsing God more than pilgrimage.

My artist's soul thrives on travel to exotic and sacred places. My idea of pilgrimage is grabbing my pens and sketchbooks and hitting the road (or airways). I have made sketching pilgrimages to many far-flung places over the years - from Ireland and Italy to Israel and India - so the drawers of my studio file cabinet are filled to overflowing with the creative results of these exotic and holy pursuits. (One place I've not yet been, but long to see, is western Canada! The beauty of vast, wide-open plains beneath a big sky has been calling my name for years.)

Right before I moved to Camden from Philadelphia, just across the Delaware River, I went on a sketching pilgrimage to New Mexico. I visited Georgia O'Keeffe's homes and the Christ in the Desert Monastery, and spent lots of time and ink sketching the incredible beauty of the desert scenery. Ever-changing light and racing clouds highlighted the brilliant colors and deep shadows of each mountain and canyon at every turn in the road. I felt immersed in a mystical, spiritual world that I'd never known before. I took some pictures with my camera for future painting reference, but I always prefer to record what I see in my sketchbook. It helps me connect better to the world before me and grounds me in the present moment.

Were it not for that experience of glimpsing God in the brilliant sunshine on pink and yellow-orange cliffs, or the purple and blue shadows of canyons and gorges or the green brush on the desert floor, I could never have settled into my new home in Camden with my eyes so well attuned to beauty. Here, my glimpses of God are very often found in the sad beauty of weary people or abandoned buildings in all their faded glory. But guess what? The same golden color of sunrise and sunset that brings magic to the southwest desert, floods the skyline of Camden city and reminds me that all the world is brimming with the splendor of God.

Brother Mickey O'Neill McGrath, Oblate of St Francis de Sales, is an artist, author and popular speaker who loves to explore the relationship between art and faith. He presently lives and works in Camden, New Jersey within the parish of The Sacred Heart. Visit his website at [www.beestill.org](http://www.beestill.org)

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## The Final Taboo I believe in taking care of our planet, that everyone has rights, that you shouldn't judge a book by its cover...



Val Lieske Courtesy Fire Exit Theatre



The Savannah Disputation Tara Whittaker

Jason Hildebrand and Mike Janzen

Tara Whittaker

The Final Taboo  
By Val Lieske

I believe in God. There I said it. I'm out. I believe in God and I am not homophobic and I don't picket abortion clinics. I believe in freedom of speech—even when I don't like what I hear. I believe in taking care of our planet, that everyone has rights, that you shouldn't judge a book by its cover, and that theatre can change the world.

I am the Artistic Director of Fire Exit Theatre, now finishing its 11th season performing at the EPCOR CENTRE for the Performing Arts in downtown Calgary. We have performed 27 shows including nine by local playwrights and four world premières. We have hosted guest performers from Toronto, Vancouver, Seattle, and Los Angeles. We have members and sponsors and even some sell out crowds. We pay our bills on time and give back to the community in any way we can.

Now here's the rub.

We have been turned down by granting agencies, foundations and corporations alike. Why? Because we are "religious." I'm not sure what that means. We've worked with Catholics, Baptists, Muslims, Evangelicals, Agnostics, Atheists, and people who aren't quite sure. We try to foster an environment where anyone who wants to explore the idea of belief is welcome. Although I would define myself as a Christ-follower, I don't do "Christian" theatre, mainly because I don't know what that is any more than I know what Christian bread or Christian plumbing is. I simply create theatre only I like to talk about faith, beliefs, and yes, sometimes God. We work hard to create theatre about relevant issues and current events, reassuring people that there is hope without glossing over the real darkness in the world.

Fire Exit Theatre has been accused of having an agenda. We do. Like any theatre company, we have a mandate. Ours is hope-challenge-change. I want to challenge belief systems, everyone's. I want people to leave my theatre different than when they came in and, yes, I want to offer a little hope in this often depressing world. Everyone starts a theatre company because they want to talk about something. We all have an agenda, a message we want to get out. So when did God become the final taboo that we are not allowed to discuss? A 2007 poll actually revealed that 60 percent of Canadians believe that God had a role in creation. 60 percent! We can dialogue through theatre about rape, incest, abuse, addictions, politics, money, discrimination, hate crime, and bestiality, but talking about God might be too offensive? Are you kidding me?!

So do I feel discriminated against? A little. Pre-judged? Absolutely.

I challenge you to come out and see one of our shows before you write us off as bible-thumping fundamentalists. We may offend you, but don't take it personally—we've offended Christians and non-Christians alike. Before you judge us, come see us. Oh, and if you like what you see, consider a small donation... it's hard to get funding when you're talking about hope. Sigh.

I'm an Artistic Director and I believe in God.

Val Lieske is the founder and Artistic Director of Fire Exit Theatre in Calgary and the Director of Theatre Arts at Centre Street Church and the co-chair of the Theatre Dept. with Rocky Mountain College.  
[www.fireexit.ca](http://www.fireexit.ca)

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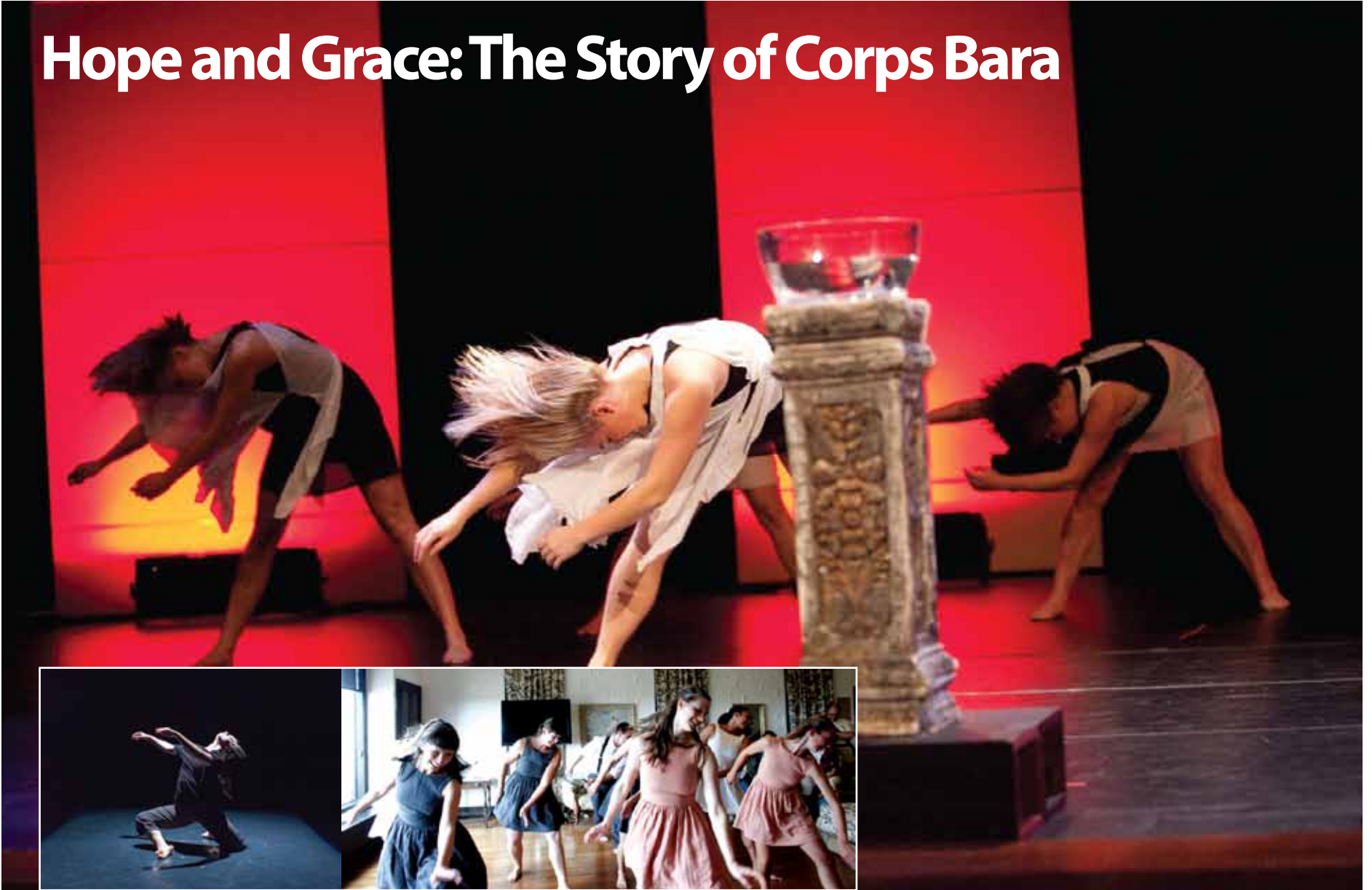
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## Hope and Grace: The Story of Corps Bara



Corps Bara's 2012 performance "Harmful if Swallowed" Char G Photography

Corps Bara performing at Leighton Centre for Alberta Culture Days. Char G Photography

Corps Bara "Cleansing" Photo by Charlene Woodman

Hope and Grace: The Story of Corps Bara Dance Theatre  
By members of Corps Bara

Founded in 2001, Calgary's Corps Bara is an innovative fusion of contemporary dance and dance theatre that aims to touch the heart and stir the spirit. As one company with two initiatives, there is both a youth dance company ages 9-18, as well as a project based company of professional dancers. Corps Bara is mentoring a new generation of dance artists and arts leaders through the youth company, while providing career opportunities for contemporary dance artists through the professional company. Through both initiatives, they have created an artistic and spiritually nurturing community that provides a place for creativity to be unleashed.

Chantal Gandar is in her third year as Artistic Director for Corps Bara's Project Company. She has a B.A. in Dance from the University of Calgary, and an M.F.A. in Dance Choreography from the University of Arizona.

"Over the past twelve years, collaboration has become a key element to the work of our professional company," says Chantal. "We've worked with local choirs, theatre groups and a number of community organizations to create performances that really expand the artistic boundaries of dance."

This year Corps Bara partnered with EnChor Chamber Choir, using the music "Sunrise Mass," from Ola Gjeilo. The 35-member choir joined the dancers in the theatre for the full performance of this thirty minute work. The choir and a string quartet were positioned on the balcony at the back of the stage, providing a powerful experience of live, collaborative art.

Members of the youth company are encouraged to have a deep spiritual connection with the choreography they perform. Through this, as well as the mentorship in rehearsals, many of their dancers have gone on to train and perform at prestigious places such as the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre, the

Banff Centre, Alberta Ballet, the Limon Institute and in many university dance programs.

What sets Corps Bara apart is their roots in Christian faith, as well as their family-like community. They attract many dancers and choreographers that don't have a specific faith, but are drawn to the work they see on the stage and the relationships they see being formed through the company. In this way Corps Bara acts as a bridge between the arts community and the church.

"We reach into the broader community bringing shows about hope and grace to the theatre, which has become a form of sanctuary for us," says Chantal. "We also perform at many churches, using the arts to convey God's beauty and love as well as our human brokenness."

The vision of Corps Bara reaches beyond the stage. Founder and Executive Director Karen Sudds recalls that it has taken many years to dream this dream out loud, and then step in and own that dream as reality. As they generate conversations in the rehearsal studio, in the foyer of theatres and in churches throughout the city, Corps Bara is also cultivating an artistic community with the intent of enriching and impacting our city.

"We are creating a safe place for artists to explore their vulnerable craft and their wobbly faith," says Karen. "So many people have auditioned to be on our stage, and so many others have worked behind the scenes, sewing costumes and hanging lights. Young girls and boys have been mentored as artists and leaders. Thousands of people have seen our dances and thousands of dollars have been donated to make that possible. And as great opportunities and new doors open to us, we're really humbled to think that our journey has just begun."

For more information about Corps Bara Dance Theatre, visit [www.corpsbara.com](http://www.corpsbara.com) or phone (403)660-8093.

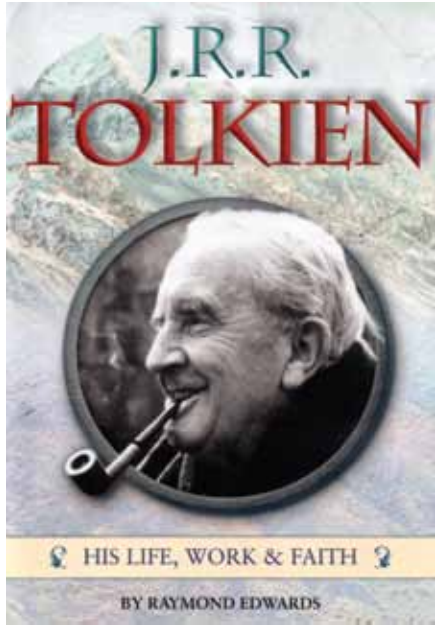
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## Aching Beauty; Unblinking Malevolence



Aching Beauty; Unblinking Malevolence  
by Laura Locke

A review of J.R.R. Tolkien: His Life, Works and Faith (2012, CTS Publications)

I can still remember my "Lord of the Rings" summer. It was the summer after grade eleven, and I was getting sick and tired of high school. I had lined up a steady but rather boring waitressing job, and one day I picked up *The Fellowship of the Ring*, the first book in J.R.R. Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" trilogy, at the public library. From the first chapter my little world – and my summer – was transformed. I devoured all

three books in the trilogy over those two hot, dry, languishing months. Though my body existed in the world of waitressing and hanging out with friends and family, I LIVED in Middle-earth.

Flash forward to the years 2001 to 2003 when I, along with millions of others, blissfully trotted to the theatre to watch all three blockbuster "Lord of the Rings" movies directed by Peter Jackson. And last fall, with the release of "The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey", I was again happily plunged back into Middle-earth. Last fall also saw the publication of a new short biography of the man who has brought such enjoyment to fans like me around the globe.

*J.R.R. Tolkien: His Life, Work and Faith*, written by Raymond Edwards, tells the fascinating tale of how a young British boy, orphaned in 1904 at age thirteen, came to write books that, one might argue, kicked off the genre of fantasy fiction.

The book begins with a vivid description of a makeshift hospital set up in a university hall in England in 1916, filled with sick and injured soldiers home from WWI. One young soldier spends most of his time scribbling in a small notebook "stories of an age of myth, of elves and dragons and love and despair and hope lost and renewed. His name is Ronald Tolkien."

The stories Tolkien wrote in that hospital cot were not published for many, many

years, but it was here that his life's work began. Edwards' book recounts Tolkien's early family life and how, after the death of his parents, he and his younger brother became wards of Father Francis Morgan, a family friend. Tolkien himself later called Fr. Morgan his "second father", and, upon hearing the news of Fr. Morgan's death in 1934, Tolkien wrote to his friend C.S. Lewis: "I feel like a lost survivor in a new alien world after the real world has passed away."

Tolkien went on to marry and raise a family of four, and also become a world-renowned scholar of ancient languages. But it was in the informal literary club called The Inklings, formed by Lewis, where his fiction writing blossomed. Tolkien first met Lewis in 1926 at Magdalen College in Oxford, where they both taught, and the book thoroughly describes the arc of their long relationship. Many of Tolkien's stories, written to entertain his children, might never have developed into anything else if not for Lewis. As Tolkien himself wrote, Lewis was "for long my only audience. Only from him did I ever get the idea that my "stuff" could be more than a private hobby." Edwards also details how Tolkien's early Catholic formation shaped his writing, which was also infused with his love of heroic legends from Northern mythology.

Edwards book does more than narrate the intriguing facts of Tolkien's life – he also provides us with thoughtful insights into the man and his times. He writes, "Tolkien's writing is rooted, certainly, in his vast and intuitive scholarship, but also in an

The stories Tolkien wrote in that hospital cot were not published for many, many years, but it was here that his life's work began.

imaginative reaction by an acutely sensitive and educated Catholic to the staggering trauma of the Great War. Running through his work is a profound and often heartbreaking meditation on the ruinous perversion of goodness and civilization, on the coterminous arising of aching beauty and unblinking malevolence from the same God-given faculty of sub-creation."

Though a small book – almost pocket sized and only 93 pages long – it is a delight to read and should not be underestimated... which reminds me of something Gandalf once said about a little friend of his: "There is more to this hobbit than meets the eye."

Laura Locke is Editor of Kolbe Times.



Laura Locke

## Quotes from the works of J.R.R. Tolkien



### The Return of the King

In sorrow we must go, but not in despair. Behold! We are not bound forever to the circles of the world, and beyond them is more than memory.  
– Aragorn

I tried to save the Shire, and it has been saved, but not for me. It must often be so, Sam, when things are in danger: someone has to give them up, lose them, so that others may keep them.  
– Frodo Baggins

### The Hobbit

Saruman believes it is only great power that can hold evil in check, but that is not what I have found. I found it is the small everyday deeds of ordinary folk that keep the darkness at bay... small acts of kindness and love.  
– Gandalf

### The Fellowship of the Ring

The wide world is all about you: you can fence yourselves in, but you cannot forever fence it out.  
– Gildor Inglorion, Elf

All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us.  
– Gandalf

It is perilous to study too deeply the arts of the Enemy, for good or for ill.  
– Elrond, Lord of Rivendell

### The Two Towers

There are some things it is better to begin than to refuse, even though the end may be dark.  
– Aragorn

It's like in the great stories, Mr. Frodo, the ones that really mattered. Full of darkness and danger they were, and sometimes you didn't want to know the end because how could the end be happy? How could the world go back to the way it was when so much bad had happened? But in the end it's only a passing thing, this shadow; even darkness must pass. A new day will come, and when the sun shines it'll shine out the clearer.  
– Sam Gamgee

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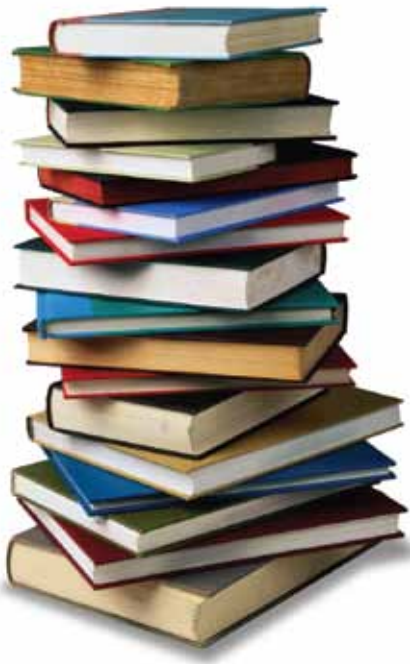
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## BREATHING LIFE INTO MINISTRY



# 9 Books

## A Labour of Love I was the type of kid who read the phone book if there wasn't something else available



my parents always made sure I had alternatives. Since my parents were not learned in the traditional sense, and had not come from bookish families, I was not fed on a regular diet of children's classics. So I pretty much charted my own course, often dictated by articles about influential writers that I might find in the newspapers, and then later, at university, through the passions and prejudices of my favourite professors. I can pretty much map my reading trajectory according to the courses I took, from medieval to theatrical, Victorian to Canadian.

As a young wannabe writer in the '80s my favourite authors were Heinrich Böll and William Faulkner, the latter of whom ruined my writing for a good 15 years as I tried to imitate his eccentric and epic style. It was not until much later that I began to return, as a writer, to what I see now as my Canadian roots, and to craft my stories through the drier, wiser tones of an Alice Munro or a Mavis Gallant, the humour of an Atwood and the poetics of an Ondaatje. I never scaled their heights, of course, but through them I learned how legitimate and exciting the Canadian view was as the subject of fiction. It may seem strange now, when a breadth of experience and subject matter is such a given, but there was a time when Canadian identity in fiction had to be argued for and championed, and where a writer like Morley Callaghan had to set his stories in Buffalo, rather than Toronto, just to get them published.

So when I was asked to write this initial column on the subject of favourite work I thought that this would be easy and my choice obvious. I considered the magical realism of Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *100 Years of Solitude*, or the simple complexity of Italo Calvino's *If On a Winter's Night a Traveller*. I still reel at the boldness of Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom* where the story is given a heart-wrenching twist through a detail buried in the genealogy at the book's close. I re-read Shakespeare the way one might pray the rosary, looking for inspiration, solutions to characterizations, or for the comfort of perfection.

But in the end the work that shimmers behind, around and above all others, which I turn to in depth or as a magpie seeking meaningful moments, is the Bible. Its influence on literature is impossible to capture in words. It has given us the titles to more novels than any other single work — from *The Sun Also Rises* to *East of Eden*, *Song of Solomon* to *Leaven of Malice*; more aphorisms and sayings are drawn from its pages than from any other source — an eye for an eye, by the skin of your teeth, a labour of love — with Shakespeare a distant second. And the architecture of this great and holy work teaches all writers — young and old — how to tell a story, how to move an audience, and how to make truth the centre of every tale. I am not a theologian, and you would not detect a Biblical resonance in my novels, poetry books, plays or academic writings. But the influence is there: in the texture of the

writing, in the works' moral core, and hopefully, occasionally, in a moment of inspiration that is witness to something greater than the individual voice can ever hope to become.

Dr. Gerry Turcotte is the President of St. Mary's University College in Calgary, Alberta. He is also the author or editor of 15 books, including the novel *Flying in Silence*, shortlisted for The Age Book of the Year in Australia.



Dr. Gerry Turcotte Courtesy StMUC

Kolbe Times is beginning a series entitled "Books That Changed My Life", written by leaders and innovators in our faith community. This is the first article in that series.

A Labour of Love  
By Dr. Gerry Turcotte

From the earliest age I have always wanted to be a writer. I loved books, wrote books, studied books. Any kind of book. I was the type of kid who read the phone book if there wasn't something else available, but

## Nothing new under the sun



*Nothing new under the sun  
(a found poem based on  
Biblical sayings)*

By Dr. Gerry Turcotte

*If you are as old as the hills,  
or as old as Methuselah  
know that all things must pass  
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust*

*But as you bite the dust  
Or give up the ghost  
Gird your loins and Fight the  
good fight  
For faith will move mountains.*

*Set your house in order  
Read the sign of the times  
Follow the strait and narrow  
To the ends of the earth*

*The writing is on the wall  
To everything there is a season  
You reap what you sow  
From the fat of the land*

*So beat your swords into  
ploughshares  
And see eye to eye  
Let not the sun go down on  
your wrath  
Make your peace offering*

*Love thy neighbor as thyself  
And in the twinkling of an eye  
Even if only by the skin of  
your teeth  
Bear your cross*

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Living Water College Sacred Choral Music Program

Photos by Ken Fast

Captivated by the Chorus  
By Joseph Lara

Joseph Lara attended the Living Water College Sacred Choral Music Program in August 2012, and embraced every aspect of the program. Though young, he quickly grasped the importance of integrating his art with his faith and right thinking. Here are his thoughts at the culmination of two intensive weeks.

-Kenneth Noster, President, Living Water College of the Arts

For as long as I can remember, I have loved classical music. Even in a car seat, and throughout my early childhood, my parents would have a CD close at hand just in case I were to get cranky, and "The Four Seasons" or "The Magic Flute" would thoroughly soothe me. Through failures and triumphs, projects and events, I have listened to classical music (I am listening to Handel's "Messiah" as I write this). Classical music has been with me everywhere.

Well, that is, almost everywhere.

You see, I am a Roman Catholic and, like most Catholics, have grown up with hymnals like "Glory and Praise" and "Catholic Book of Worship 3" and have sung from a collection of no more than 45 hymns, the ones everyone seems to have memorized. I, like most Catholics, have never encountered at Mass any classical music from the over 1000 years of Catholic musical tradition. I have grown up loving classical music, but I have never experienced it in the most important place: the Mass. But I, like most Catholics, just ignored this fact and continued singing "church" music. I didn't question it, and neither did any one else in my parish.

However, all this changed with the Sacred Choral Music Program at Living Water College of the Arts. There, I learned what can be sung at Mass, and I learned how to sing it. I also learned about the philosophy of music, and why it is so important to the Church and to humanity. I learned why humans perceive beauty as it is, and I was given hints as to why beauty was so captivating, why the classical music I had grown up with moved me.

Most importantly, I came to know more of Christ himself.

The beauty that lay behind those amazing Handel arias, piercing chords, and vibrant voices that I came to love was really Him, but I couldn't see it before, I couldn't make the connection. From my experience, "Church" music was always folksy or pop-inspired. Of course I had heard of Mass composers such as Palestrina and Bach, but they always existed in faraway lands like Italy and Germany, in concert halls, but certainly not at Mass.

At the Sacred Choral Music Program, I realized I was not alone. There were many like me, with their images of classical music and liturgical music separated by a bottomless ravine. We learned and sang, and to tell you the truth, no type of music felt better suited to the sacrifice of the Mass. We felt not only united as a choir but as the body of Christ, as cells making up a single organism. I felt that I was truly praising and adoring Christ, being part of his body and still raising my voice unto Him. My parts in the choir were distinct from the other parts (as each part of the choir has its own job),

but I still felt part of a whole, a cohesive and organic unit. It's fulfilling, and I feel that no musician should live without experiencing it at least once.

The community at Living Water is profoundly Catholic in prayer and charity; but that didn't matter most. What really mattered was that I found an expression of Christ that I have been craving my entire life, but hadn't really seen until those glorious moments when I was singing Mozart's "Ave Verum Corpus" for and to Him.

In the end, finding Him and knowing Him is really all that matters.

Joseph Lara is from Wainwright, Alberta where, among other ventures, his family raises Andalusian horses. Joseph was only 15 years old when he attended the Living Water Sacred Choral Program, but his classmates would never have guessed his age, not only because of his spiritual and intellectual maturity, but also his deep baritone voice. For more information about Living Water College of the Arts, visit [www.livingwatercollege.com](http://www.livingwatercollege.com)

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# Beauty from Ashes



Cover 2004 New Video Group

those she loves and cares for. In this compelling documentary about Sister Helen Travis, we find someone who knows what it takes to get through to even the worst alcoholics. Why? Because she has walked in their shoes.

"With some people, and I'm in this category, they need a crisis in their life. And I got my crisis. I was married, had three children. My oldest, Thomas, was 15 when he was murdered – stabbed to death because of drugs. Once my first boy died, I looked at myself differently. After that, I drank plenty. I won't deny it. Seven days a week. I made a lot of mistakes in my life."

As we find out, after her husband died of alcoholism, she stopped drinking and became a Benedictine nun. She soon found herself running a 23-bed shelter for drug addicts and alcoholics in one of New York city's most poverty-stricken areas. We're never told how she became a religious, or how she was selected to administer such a complex community project. Perhaps it doesn't matter. Maybe God selected her because no one else wanted the job. Fortunately or unfortunately, Sister Helen – like thousands of others serving on the frontlines with the homeless – seems unprepared for what she finds every day, is usually without support or supervision, and only seems to learn by making mistakes as she goes.

Sister Helen is not one to shy away from challenges. She relentlessly stands up for what she believes in, usually giving the men in her care the second, third and fourth chance that someone must give them. Her "guys", most of whom are hardened and hopeless, often don't know what to make of her unorthodox methods. In the end, they are grateful for her tough love, as crazy as it is.

Whether you like Sister Helen as a human being or not, her story grabs your attention and keeps it. The 90 minutes zip by, as the documentary's fly-on-the-wall approach draws us in and keeps us tightly clutching our seats as we wait to see what this nun and her unlikely sons will do next. Amidst the surprising twists and each new crisis, we witness funny and sad repartee. There is no normal here. Sister Helen and the cast of residents in her home experience the unexpected every day – and it seems to keep them as entertained as we are.

That said, sometimes this film is hard to watch, crossing back and forth between gritty realism and other scenes that seem to be almost surreal. At times, it's hard to believe we are watching real people.

One thing we can be certain of is that Sister Helen is not your average nun. Perhaps she's a saint...but don't expect the Vatican to recognize her in your lifetime.

She swaggers like Frank Sinatra, smokes, curses and can be tough as nails, especially to those she loves and cares for.

*Sister Helen* received the Director's Award for Best Documentary at the Sundance Film Festival and was an Emmy Award nominee. Rotten Tomatoes gives it 92% on the Tomatometer. Locke Reviews gives it an unqualified high-five.

Bill Locke is a recovering documentary filmmaker. He is now President of Capacity Builders Inc., a consulting company serving community organizations, and is co-author of "The Nurturing Leader".



Bill Locke

Beauty from Ashes  
By Bill Locke

A review of *Sister Helen* (2004) directed by Rob Fruchtmann and Rebecca Cammisa

The South Bronx is known for its colourful characters, but Sister Helen might be the most colourful of all. She's the most unusual 69 year old nun you'll ever meet, come to dislike, and then love. She swaggers like Frank Sinatra, smokes, curses and can be tough as nails, especially to

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