



Dear Friends of OMC,

Once again summer has passed by all too quickly. For me I was able to get away for a month to attend teachings on the Middle Path at Deer Park outside of Madison Wisconsin. The experience and understanding of how little I know was well worth the time spent and points out the importance of continuous practice, learning and study. During my absence Ray Czajkowski was available to handle any issues needing the attention of the executive.

I want to relate one recent effort which serves to demonstrate how OMC and its faith members work together to help ensure the provision of Multifaith Spiritual and Religious Care/Chaplaincy in long term care facilities. OMC Board Members Prakash Mody (Jain) and Harsharan Singh (Sikh) drafted and sent a joint letter to the Minister of Health outlining their concerns regarding access to care by members of their respective communities. Since receiving a letter of response from the government I, on behalf of OMC, have sent a follow-up letter to the Minister of Health & LTC listing the following areas we feel need attention and resolution:

1. Mandatory requirement for Chaplains/Spiritual Care Providers
2. Availability of Multifaith Worship space

3. Metrics be included for Spiritual and Religious Care when facilities are inspected
4. Capability within the system to handle the diverse religious and spiritual needs of residents.

With the current Provincial election campaigns just winding down, it may be some time before we receive a response. Needless to say we will be encouraging the government to see the importance of ensuring that a portion of the funding provided to LTC facilities be allocated to Spiritual and Religious Care. Bill 140 (An Act respecting long-term homes), states that "Every resident has the right to pursue social, cultural, religious, spiritual and other interests, to develop his or her potential and to be given reasonable assistance by the licensee to pursue these interests and to develop his or her potential." In a nutshell, the Act recognizes the need but does not supply specifics as to how this is to happen.

In addition to the above, a committee has been struck to develop a project to determine how to best promote Diversity in Chaplaincy. This committee is composed of Elizabeth Rahman (Muslim), Harsharan Singh (Sikh), Prakash Mody (Jain), Desmond Sequeira (Roman Catholic/Chaplain) and Stan Middlestadt (Buddhist). A proposal is being prepared by Desmond Sequeira the purpose of which is to define a project in which to find ways of increasing diversity.

The fall will be busy with activities that we wanted to make sure you are all fully aware of. So, what follows is information on the Education Conference in Jackson's Point, celebrating the 35th Anniversary of OMC. I hope to see you there!

Warm regards,

Stan Middlestadt, President

UPCOMING EVENTS

OMC - CAPPE EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE NOVEMBER 4 – 6, 2007

"CARING FOR THE HUMAN SPIRIT"

Sponsored by the Ontario Multifaith Council on Spiritual and Religious Care in conjunction with the Ontario Northeast Region of the Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education, the conference will be held at the Salvation Army Conference Centre, Jackson's Point, Ontario, November 4 through 6. This event will bring together CAPPE chaplains and other spiritual care providers along with Regional Multifaith Committee members and OMC staff in a beautiful and peaceful setting on the southern shore of Lake Simcoe. The conference will not only be beneficial for its educational events but for networking, support and fellowship with people who share a common but often unaccompanied profession.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Dr. Thomas O'Connor

Dr. Thomas O'Connor is a member of CAPPE and teaches at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary. He is both a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) and Pastoral Counselling Education (PCE) teaching supervisor. His area of expertise is in research and he has written on how psychotherapy relates to Spiritual Care providers. As a supervisor in both of the above mentioned areas he is fully cognizant of how chaplains indeed do psychotherapy in their work. His presentation is titled: "The Similarities and Differences Between Spiritual Care, Spiritual Counselling and Spiritual Psychotherapy: The Challenges Before Us."

Dr. O'Connor has suggested we read his article "Pastoral Counselling and Pastoral Care: Is there a Difference?" found in *The Journal of Pastoral Care and Counselling*, Spring 2003 Volume 57, No. 1.

Rev. John Parks

"Spiritual Care: a SHRTN Community of Practice"

John Parks is the Spiritual Care Coordinator at the Cornwall Community Hospital. John has represented chaplains as both the Long Term Care Chaplain's Representative and the Hospital Chaplain's Representative on the South East Regional Multifaith Committee. Currently he represents the Baptist tradition on the South East Regional Multifaith Committee.

Come and learn more about how this multi-level, highly interactive web-based communication tool can get you connected to this cutting edge educational and networking resource. At this presentation you will learn how to use the Seniors Health Transfer Network (SHRTN) to connect with other professional Chaplains and caregivers from across Ontario. Whether you provide spiritual care to seniors in a LTC, Hospital - Acute, Chronic or Rehabilitation, -, or any community or institutional setting, this presentation will help get you connected to people, resources, and educational opportunities to help you develop personally and professionally.

You will see how each Community of Practice (CoP) is supported by a Knowledge Broker and an Information Specialist who facilitate communication, networking and access to information to caregivers in long-term care, hospital, and community care settings throughout Ontario. Terry Kirkpatrick and Nancy Roberts are

your support personnel to the Spiritual Care CoP with SHRTN.

Rev. David Janzen

"So What's Wrong with Shooting Fish in a Barrel?" A discussion on proselytization

David Janzen is the chaplain at Golden Plough Lodge in Cobourg. He also is the Long Term Care Chaplain's representative on the Kawartha Lakeshore Regional Multifaith Committee.

This is a continuation from last year's workshop "When is a Chapel Service like Shooting Fish in a Barrel?"

Issues we will explore:

- 1.Examining what happens in our chapel services.
- 2.What do we want to happen? What is our goal in conducting chapel services?
- 3.Who conducts the services?
- 4.What kinds of services exist?
- 5.OMC standard re: proselytization.
- 6.Raising the issue with community faith groups.
- 7.Are we clear about what we expect?
- 8.Monitoring what happens in chapel.
- 9.When someone wants to change religions.
- 10.Ministering in a multifaith setting. What does this really mean?
11. Is this a freedom of religion issue?

Rev. Fritz Clarke

"Caring for the Continuing Spiritual Needs of Ex-Offenders"

Fritz Clarke is MAP Executive Director. MAP (mentorship-aftercare-presence) is a non-profit aftercare ministry that provides a supportive presence for people leaving both the provincial and federal criminal justice system in the Ottawa area. MAP started in Ottawa, May 2000, by a drop-in director, a prison chaplain, a social service worker,

and a former inmate who all had a common vision: to see those finishing their prison term take a new direction in their lives when they are released.

Rev. Fritz Clarke has worked with youth and young offenders in Ottawa for more than four years. In addition, he has worked with the homeless in Ottawa in drug rehabilitation and in shelters in the city. Fritz has always sought opportunity to work with the marginalized in the Nations Capital. He has studied Theology and Ethics which he applies to his work at M.A.P. on a daily basis.

Karen Marks RN, BA, MTS

"Walking the Labyrinth"

Karen Marks is a Parish Nurse and is also: InterChurch Health Ministries Ontario Parish Nurse Coordinator, Therapeutic Touch Practitioner & Teacher (Recognized by TTNO), Labyrinth Facilitator, Spiritual Director Chair, Canadian Association for Parish Nursing Ministry (CAPNM)

CONCURRENT WORKSHOPS

Monday afternoon, conference participants will be able to choose two workshops from the following:

- "Walking the Labyrinth"
- "Caring for the Continuing Spiritual Needs of Ex-Offenders"
- "Spiritual Care in Long Term Care" - a SHRTN Community of Practice"
- "So what's wrong with shooting fish in a barrel?" (Proselytization in LTC facilities)

ALSO DURING THE CONFERENCE

The Ontario Northeast Region of the Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education will hold its Annual General Meeting from 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. on Sunday, November 4. In the evening there will be a Fireside Chat with the keynote speaker and members of the Coalition of Mental Health Professions on the Regulated Health Professions Act. On Monday evening a Fireside Chat will include the sharing of events and ideas that were used to celebrate Spiritual and Religious Care Awareness Week 2007. A "Faith Group Showcase" will be available for those interested in learning more about faith group rituals and practices.

REGISTRATION

Registration forms can be downloaded from the OMC website (www.omc.ca) or can be obtained from the office of the Ontario Multifaith Council, 789 Don Mills Rd. Suite 208, Toronto, ON M3C 1T5, phone 416-422-1490. Registrations must be submitted to the OMC by October 10, 2007.

SPIRITUAL AND RELIGIOUS CARE AWARENESS WEEK OCTOBER 21-27, 2007

"CARING FOR THE HUMAN SPIRIT"

Spiritual and Religious Care Awareness Week honours professional spiritual and religious care providers and celebrates the collaboration of staff, families and countless volunteers across the province of Ontario.

Spiritual and religious care is about listening, clarifying, counselling, and offering spiritual direction to those in need. When one is scared,

lonely, confused, angry or disillusioned, spiritual and religious care providers will offer counsel and support, and when asked, will contact representatives from one's own faith group to assist in your care and comfort. Providers of spiritual and religious care serve those of any faith, and those of no faith at all.

Across Canada, thousands of dedicated and gifted spiritual and religious care givers of all faiths work in highly specialized settings such as hospitals, long term care facilities, correctional facilities, mental health centres and facilities for people with developmental disabilities.

Spiritual and Religious Care Awareness Week offers an opportunity to recognize the value of religious services and spiritual care and to honour those who provide the care.

Each year the Ontario Multifaith Council provides Spiritual and Religious Care Awareness Week packages to individuals and facilities across the province. Packages include posters, a Multifaith liturgy and other resources to help participants create awareness of the profession and to help celebrate this very special work.

Please visit our website, or contact a Regional Manager in your area, or our office for more information on these upcoming events.

OMC AT A GLANCE

The Ontario Multifaith Council:

- consults and advises the government of Ontario on faith group matters relating to the provision of spiritual and religious care in government run or funded institutions
- ensures the availability of persons (Board members/appointees and volunteers) with adequate understanding, ability,

qualifications and appropriate status within their faith group

- collaborates with the Government in providing multifaith awareness training and education to persons who work or volunteer in government institutions and transfer payment agencies

MULTIFAITH INFORMATION MANUAL

The Manual was developed and published in the late 1990s as a response to the increasing demand for an easily accessible authoritative guide to faith group modes of worship, rituals, dress, diet, holy days/festivals, beliefs and practices. For more information or to purchase the Multifaith Information Manual (the \$28.45 price includes shipping) please contact our Information Coordinator, Mohamed Taher.

The Winter issue of the OMC Newsletter will be available in about three months. Please email us with your suggestions and content submissions. If you would like to write something for the newsletter, please let us know.

Send all newsletter comments and inquiries to newsletter@omc.ca

For other inquiries contact:

The Ontario Multifaith Council
789 Don Mills Suite 208,
Toronto, ON
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(416)422-1490 www.omc.ca

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Keith Maddock has been serving as a chaplaincy volunteer in the Toronto (Don) Jail for eleven years. He tours the ranges with art supplies and spiritual reading materials for all faith groups on a weekly basis, and facilitates a group discussion program on alternate Fridays. He also serves as the Quaker (Religious Society of Friends) representative on the Toronto Regional Multifaith Committee, the Spiritual and Religious Care Advisory Council for the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, and the Ontario Ministry of Corrections Advisory Council on Adult Correctional Issues.

Summer Doldrums Blown Away

Even knowing from experience that “the Spirit can live in the jails”, as George Fox once remarked, there are hot summer afternoons when it is hard finding the motivation to visit such dreary places.

“Hello Mr. Quaker? Are you ready to come out now?” the female guard asked with a slightly ironic smile as I stood behind the bars with a group of seven men in orange jumpsuits waiting to be returned to their cells. “In due time,” I answered, beaming back at her, “But at the moment I’m in good company”.

A combination of circumstances led to it being an exceptionally good afternoon. Seven creative and imaginative participants responded to the call to attend a programme in the chapel –I knew they wanted to be there since the option was to stay behind and spend the afternoon watching the World Cup on television. All caged creatures develop a sort of phobia about emerging from their confinement, and when there is some distraction to make their imprisonment more palatable expectations are low.

But seven is a good number in spiritual accounting. I prepared the space by spreading pictures cut from magazines on the three tables. They were eye

catching photographs of mountain landscapes, wild birds, and an assortment of other intriguing images. I suggested they each select one or two of the pictures that interested them, and then share the reasons for their choices.

One of the older men, named Riley, started with a picture of someone praying before a large golden stature of the Buddha. He was intrigued by the value of the gold, and by the exotic nature of the symbolism. Why does the Buddha have so many hands, and why does it have three faces? We talked about the many-faceted nature of the Divine, the omniscience and power of Spirit. Sharing a little of my Quaker testimony, I commented that the symbolism of world religions only hints at the real incarnation of the Spirit in each one of us. Each one of us is, in a sense, a Buddha, a Christ.

The conversation continued as the men commented on their choices. Riley was also impressed by a picture of a hawk standing over the remains of its prey – an image of survival, strength, and – oh yes, freedom. But then Ronald, who introduced himself as a musician and an artist, shared his reflections on the more delicate image of an Eastern Bluebird – a very spiritual sign in his eyes. I recalled the story of a Manitoba-Saskatchewan railway conductor who once encouraged the Eastern Bluebird to return to the prairies by making nesting boxes for the small songbirds and placing them strategically along his route. Baszak eagerly shared his picture of another songbird perched on a strand of barbed wire, the potential hazard a stark contrast to the delicate and apparently carefree songster.

An apparently bleak winter scene – bare, black trunks rising like iron bars out of a carpet of snow as far as the eye can see – was also not lost on the men as an image of beauty and freedom – in spite of its obvious analogy to a prison environment. Two pictures seemed rather out of place in the overall selection. The first was a detail from an abstract painting that provided an opening for bitter levity about frying their brains on crack cocaine. The second was a picture of a marathon

race. One of the men remembered a time in his youth when, while sitting by a race track doing cocaine, he was suddenly aware of a crown of people running past him. Though all he could see were their legs, the sound they made as they passed made him aware of the comparative insignificance of what he was doing while missing out on the real potential of being in of the world.

Finally, Ronald shared a poem he had written in response to one of his cellmates asking for something to send his child. On reflection, he thought that the words could just as easily refer to a love for God – so he copied it in beautiful calligraphy (an elegant hand even though copied with a lead pencil). Before the programme was over, he presented me with a copy, which includes the words below (copied with his permission):

. . . within the worries and the doubt
And the pain all I have to do
Is think of you and all that drifts away,
And by the time that I’ve thought all of this thru
Anything thought bad is replaced
By the goodness in you.

We closed with a few minutes of guided meditation. While focusing on breathing meditation, some of the guys almost cracked up when I tried to chant the Hindu-Buddhist word “Om”. I couldn’t help joining in their mirth, being aware of my own spiritual pretensions in that moment. We closed the programme in a spirit of mutual warmth and appreciation.

“Are you ready to come out of there yet, Mr. Quaker?” It’s strange, but I sometimes experience a kind freedom behind the bars that I’m reluctant to give up.