

Children will enjoy Petroglyphs - a holy place

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time
John 6:1-15
July 28, 1991

APLAY ON THREE STATEMENTS

Dramatis Personae
Religion Column (The Column is personified. It is known as R.C.)

Reader #1
Reader #2

R.C.: 1. The Great Blue Heron is my patron bird.

Reader #1: "O God!"
Reader #2: "Well dear, his is Catholic after all. I mean, they have all those holy places in France. They're called shrines. There's the Martyr's Shrine in Midland for example. And then there are countless holy people called saints."

"Did you know they keep dead bodies in Churches? The Oratory in Montreal, a huge church on a hill, has the heart of Brother An-



Religion and Reality
by
Jim Ryan

dre preserved for the benefit of the faithful."

"In fact, I believe every church has a relic in its altar. A relic can be anything from a piece of bone to an eyelash. Each relic is a part of the body of a saint."

Reader #1: "Pig's knuckles more likely."

Reader #2: "Well, be that as it may, that's their tradition. So why shouldn't we have a holy

animal or a holy bird? I admit it does sound a bit winky."

R.C.: 2. Petroglyphs is my favourite holy place.

Reader #1: "God. There he goes again. Petroglyphs ... isn't that...?"

Reader #2: "Yes dear. It's a Provincial Park just north of Peterborough."

Reader #1: "But isn't it...?"

Reader #2: "Yes, it's the site of native Indian rock carvings. The carvings were made by Indian shamans. They're the equivalent of the Bible."

"The Ontario government has put them under concrete, steel and glass, just like Codex Sinaiticus in the Vatican Library or the manuscripts on view in glass cases in the British Museum in London."

R.C.: 3. The Great Blue Heron is a Christ-figure.

Reader #1: "O, God bless us, worse and worse."

Reader #2: "No wait. The

Great Blue Heron has certain Christ-like qualities."

Reader #1: "Like what?"

Reader #2: "Well, apparently the Great Blue Heron feeds along the shores of rivers, lakes and swamps, eating dead, dying or diseased fish."

Reader #1: "So what?"

Reader #2: "Don't you see? The Heron eats up death. It's a Redeemer. It keeps nature fresh and clean. The Great Blue Heron is like Christ in the sense that it

destroys and recycles death."

THE END

Column addresses readers: "Take your kids to Petroglyphs this summer. When you get to Canada's Wonderland, just keep driving east. It's a great place: hiking trails, beautiful scenery and the rock carvings. You kids can make charcoal rubbings of the carvings to take home. They can watch a great video entitled "The Talking Rocks." There's a Provincial campground nearby."

Communication leads to understanding

In his address to the annual meeting of the directors of the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), WACC's General Secretary, the Reverend Carlos A. Valle, an Argentinian Methodist pastor, called on Christian communicators to help the churches recover the ability to suffer and to struggle with the oppressed and the marginalised.

WACC's directors met in Toronto, Canada, 29 June - 5 July at the invitation of The United Church of Canada.

"We are living in a critical era in the history of humanity. At a worldwide level, lies are silencing the truth that the churches are called to announce," Mr. Valle said.

"Communication helps us to understand this reality and to free us from the limitations imposed by our own theological short-sightedness," he added.

In cooperation with its project partners, WACC aims constantly to challenge these limitations in the search for truth and freedom.

In Johannesburg, South Africa, for example, the Interchurch Media Programme has for several years recorded and challenged gross injustice at great personal risk. Now, in a more open climate, its "offshoot", the Soweto Media Programme, helps church and community groups to participate as fully as possible in their country's democratic process.

In Asia, where Christianity is a minority faith, WACC's Asia Region Association is playing an important role in helping to network grassroot communication groups and programmes.

In Latin America, where radio is a vital medium, groups such as Bolivia's Radio Esperanza (Hope) have pioneered participatory radio programming in the mountainous Quechua-speaking areas of the country.

In the Middle East, WACC continues to work with the Middle East Council of Churches as it strives to communicate the truths underlying the tragedy of war and the ethno-religious conflicts in the region.

In the Pacific, WACC is assisting the churches to respond to the video boom of imported video programmes by providing production training to local groups. Church-sponsored video distribution centres are offering programmes which are sensitive to local cultural and religious traditions.

In Europe and North America, WACC members are involved mainly in media awareness initiatives and advocacy work. A powerful example of this was a seminar organized by The United Church of Canada prior to the WACC meeting.

The seminar theme, "500 years of Evangelisation in the Americas" highlighted the need for a global change of attitude towards indigenous peoples.

Speaking on behalf of aboriginal Canadians, the Reverend Stan McKay, a United Church minister, called on communicators to help dismantle prevailing myths that continue to denigrate and oppress.

"In their work overseas, North American churches stress the need to respect other cultures, but in their own backyard the op-

pression, restrictions and lack of communication continues," he said.

Communication education remains a priority in all WACC's regions. Of increasing concern is the relationship between communication and culture, particularly minority cultures, and the power of communications to help bring about social change.

The World Association for Christian Communication was formed in 1975 when the World Association for Christian Broadcasters merged with the Agency for Christian Literature Development. Although WACC is still involved with radio, TV and publishing, its programmes now tend to be smaller, more participatory and serving the poor and the marginalised. Group media such as posters, audio visuals and community drama also play a powerful role.

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Invest in the Lord

"Ye looked for much, and lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house." Haggai 1:9.

The best investment of our time and money is to give our first and our best to the Lord. He will take care of the rest.

"Moreover, as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and the right way." 1 Samuel 12:23.

Prayer does make a difference. Take time to pray for others. We all need it.

"Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man." Matthew 15:11.

Are your words words that comfort or hurt? Perhaps we give too much attention to diet and not enough to our speech. Think it over.

"O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me." Psalm 139:1.

The Lord knows all about you and your needs. Only He can satisfy the longings of our soul for now and eternity. Remember, He loves you.

"But he that is greatest among you, shall be your servant." Matthew 23:11.

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