

Catholics changing the world



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The great 20th century journalist G. K. Chesterton famously noted that the proof of Original Sin is the front page of the daily newspaper.

In this issue of The Catholic Register, guest columnist Joseph Woodard offers up the counterpoint that the indisputable evidence of God's love and Christ's Redemption are available in the "little acts of love" abundant in daily life.

These little daily acts are, in Woodard's words "innumerable, personal and necessarily sacrificial," and precisely for that reason rarely, if ever, make headlines in mainstream or even the vast riot of social media.

"Man takes 10 minutes to listen to lonely soul," is not a headline you'll likely see in the Daily Trumpet or on the Daily Wire.

Likewise, "Mother helps crying neighbour kid find toy" might appear in the Babylon Bee or Beaverton – but only ironically.

"These acts of love are almost always unnoticed and undramatic," Woodard writes.

Yet he adds that for Catholics, they comprise the source of the Church's independent moral authority – and its charitable power to transform culture. They become calls to service for all of us however we are able to answer and carry them out.

Examples of such answered calls abound throughout the year in the pages of *The Catholic Register*, and specifically in our annual Call to Service issue.

Our reporter Quinton Amundson provides a stellar illustration of what we mean by Call to Service with his story on Fr. Jim Willick, now the diocesan apostolic administrator for Charlottetown, PEI after the departure of Bishop Dabrowski for Hamilton.

The service key in the story about Fr. Willick is not just his 1998 ordination or his rise through the clerical ranks. Rather, it's what moved him to answer God's call. It was something as simple as singing the song *The Day He Wore My Crown*. While singing, he felt a call he could not ignore.

"For some of my fellow brother priests, it is not a particular moment but for me it was right during this cantata," Fr. Willick says. "I've never regretted one day since saying yes."

By no means does being called to service require being fit for a clerical collar.

Calgary's Sean Lynn accepted a call to service from Bishop William McGrattan to lead a renewal outreach for men in the diocese. He took it even further to launch the Heroic30 Renew Men Challenge across Canada and the U.S. What's compelling beyond the idea of the challenge itself is how Lynn defines the heroism of men.

No fancy-schmancy sports equipment, no bragging rights, no death defying feats required. These heroes will walk the challenging path of simply living a good and Godly life.

"A heroic man is one who worships the God he is created in the image of," Lynn says. "He loves his family, protects them, and contributes to his community as God calls him to."

How unnoticed, undramatic, and utterly culturally transformative is such masculine service?

As our Luke Mandato reports, its counterpart can be found in the daily acts of service that Annalisa Crudo-Perri, chaplain and religion teacher at Toronto's Loretto College School inspires from the all-girls Catholic student body.

"Those girls, leading with their faith, they're waiting for me at the front door (each morning) and there is always something going on here," Crudo-Perri told the Register. "My office is non-stop, and they are coming in each day wanting to do different initiatives."

Some of those initiatives can be on the more spectacular side such as a recent dance production aimed at raising awareness about the plight of the homeless in Canada's largest city. Others are

more face-to-face scale: A Big Sister-Little Sister club that provides younger students with mentoring and support and older girls with vital leadership experience.

No, "Student takes 10 minutes to listen to fellow student" isn't a headline you'll see in the Globe and Mail. (We didn't even use it on the Register story, alert readers will note.) But the service of listening takes place. Young lives, through shared conversation, are shaped, transformed, more fully prepared to take God's love into the world whether speaker and listener realize it immediately or not.

Parse the Register weekly and you'll find story after story resembling these three examples, not just because we are a Catholic newspaper but because the service they highlight is part of the answer to what it means to be Catholic.

Oh, yes, and what it means for Catholics to change the world.

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