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they made application and were granted permission to come to Calgary in the winter of 2002.

On February 12, 2002 the nine Kerors arrived in the West. Dabora, Lino and his children will become Canadian citizens later this year.

Soon after his arrival, Lino realized that there were other Sudanese Christians in Calgary.

However, they were like sheep without a shepherd. After

conversations with Bishop Barry Hollowell, space was made available at the Cathedral Church of the Redeemer in downtown Calgary, every Sunday afternoon at 4:00 pm. Since August 2002, Lino has pastored and cared for this community with a loving and skillful hand.

Twice a month John Pilling, a priest in the diocese associated with the Cathedral, presides at the Eucharist. With the exception of the Prayer of Consecration and one of the readings, the service is all in the Dinka dialect. It is Lino's

hope that one day he will be ordained a priest.

"When this happens there is so much more scope with what we can do with our liturgy and in my leading of my people."

Although only numbering about fifty people, when you attend a Dinka service it sounds like the Cathedral is filled with well over a hundred souls. The songs, all native to the southern Sudan, are sung with a conviction and joy that is uplifting. The music has a definite African sound, and all the hymns are

sung with a driving rhythmical accompaniment on two drums.

Accenting the singing was the descant of the women.

The Eucharist concluded with the youth offering up praises to the Lord expressed in the form of dance. It was joy-filled, free and a testimony to the faith of people who have, through suffering, come to a deeper conviction about what it means to have faith in Jesus Christ.

Lino and the Sudanese congregation in Calgary embody what the Apostle Paul meant

when he wrote: "We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us." (Romans 5.2-5)

Jonathan Gibson is rector of St. Augustine's, Calgary

Opinion

Serving The Voiceless; Running for Parliament

By Tyler Ragan

My personal rule talks of me being a voice for the voiceless. It is a simple line to attempt to describe a life long call God has placed on my heart throughout my journeys.

I've been a high school student standing up against hatred in my community. I've lobbied governments to protect the arts. I've written letters for Amnesty International. And as a street pastor, I petitioned the provincial government of Alberta not to close a desperately needed homeless shelter that was seeing God's miracles pour out.

It was these actions that led to this line being written in my rule.

I have been speaking out to protect the social programs church leaders helped to build (social services, disability, public health care).

It culminated on January 23, 2006 when Canada held a federal election, and I participated as a candidate for the New Democratic Party in Calgary Northeast.

I was nominated May 5, last year and my campaign began minutes after. Some might wonder why I take this step as a youth pastor, and a member of the Third Order, Society of St. Francis.

For me it was a unique way to reach out to the community I live in and get down past the surface issues and to raise awareness across a city about the agencies, organizations and people that are trying to stop the bleeding and pain of poverty and devastation we are wreaking on our environment.

As a candidate, I found while door knocking what was needed was a listening ear, and someone willing to help direct people to the parts of government they could talk to. In some cases, an advocate was needed to government or non-profit agencies.

The most shocking thing is that while conventional wisdom says having a strong faith will hamper you in public life, many people were comforted when I said I would pray for them.



Tyler Ragan

After speaking those words as well, how many people asked for me to simply pray with them there on their doorstep, or after a debate, or at a bus stop.

Campaigning for a political party as one with strong beliefs and principles is hard, because you have to support a platform.

I found it easier to be able to step away from the platform and open up a dialogue with the people of my community. I took a pastoral outlook and realized

winning was not the important thing. This unique eight-month calling had given me the opportunity to reach out to those that were hurting and in pain, those that may never darken the doorways of a church or know where to go for help.

My message was simple: I will listen and try to make things better, for I have hope that a better world is possible for us all.

My attire was simpler, blue jeans and a hoody, as a youth pastor, not a politician; I did not feel comfortable in the trappings of the office.

Finally, when it came to fundraising - I looked out at the hurting and those in need. saw and toured many organizations that helped children with developmental disabilities, abused seniors, and the homeless - I knew I could not ask for money for a campaign. I took the initiative of asking people to direct the donations they would have sent to my campaign to these agencies that were producing miracles for God's children.

When it was all over, and the votes were tallied, I was third of five on the ballot and felt at peace.

Why, you might ask? Some would say I failed my calling by losing.

But I was proud of the hard work of my volunteers; I had always spoken from my heart and held to my beliefs. The best and most humbling part was the Wednesday night after Election Day being able to face the youth I minister to and let them know that one person can make a positive impact.

Why did I run? To give a voice to the voiceless and inspire a new generation to take up the reigns of care for creation and community leadership, winning or losing was irrelevant in this special calling from God.

Tyler Ragan is a part-time youth pastor at St. George's Anglican Church, political activist and secular Franciscan

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

The Sower's editor, Bob Bettson quotes Keith Ward, Professor of Divinity at Oxford University, as saying that the differences between Christians and Muslims are no greater than that between Christian groups and different Muslim groups (Jan 2006, p. 10). Such a statement is not borne out of an understanding of Christian and Muslim doctrine, but the practice of their faith.

His claim that both Christianity and Islam are monotheistic religions fails to recognize an essential distinction. This distinction is in the nature and being of God. Christianity understands that God has revealed himself to humanity by means of a progressive interaction with humanity that begins in the patriarchal period and concludes with the apostolic preaching of Jesus' disciples.

The development of the revelation of God culminates with the revelation of Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ and the

outpouring of the Spirit upon the Church. Early Church reflection on this has led to the discovery that God, while a simple being, indivisible in his essence, exists in multiplicity as Father, Son and Spirit.

Islam, on the other hand, does not recognize any progression in the revelation of God.

The way in which God revealed himself to Abraham is a complete picture of his being.

It is at this point that it fails to agree with Christianity, and by this distinction, it must be acknowledged that the difference between Christianity and Islam is that they worship different deities.

The Islamic Allah is not God! This is the belief of the Christian Church. While the word "allah" may be the equivalent in Arabic of the word "god" in the English language, it does not refer to the same deity that the word "god" does when used of the patron deity of the Christian faith. The Christian God is a Triune being, a singular deity

that is Father, Son and Spirit eternally.

Professor Ward treats these two, Christianity and Islam, as if they were like dialects of the same language rather than completely different languages. This treatment is erroneous.

If we acknowledge with the historic Church that the Trinity is the most obvious and distinctive feature of Christianity, we are faced with a clear realization that the differences between groups of Christians and groups of Muslims are superficial compared to the radical difference that exists between Christians and Muslims. It is the radical distinction that makes them religiously incompatible.

Christians will always be the Muslim's infidels and Muslims will always be the Christian's pagans.

*Andrew R. McGinn
Mississauga, Ont.*

The Sower invites parishes to send in notices of events, which might be of interest to the larger Diocesan community for inclusion in the

Diocesan Calendar. Please send to:

The Sower

210 Olympia Drive S.E. Calgary, Alberta T2C 1H5

or e-mail to bbettson@shaw.ca

Deadline is the first of the month before publication.



Holy Trinity
Anglican Church

Bridging the gap
between God and His people

HOLY TRINITY 25TH ANNIVERSARY UPCOMING EVENTS

In celebration of Holy Trinity's 25th Anniversary, a series of events will take place during the months of 2006 leading up to the October 2006 Anniversary.

Holy Trinity has been active in many areas to build community; some of these areas have been in forms of outreach. Please watch the Sower for Monthly events celebrating the life of Holy Trinity and attend as many as you can.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

In celebration of Holy Trinity's 25th Anniversary, March will be a month with emphasis on Holy Trinity's Youth Group. Where it's been to where it is today.

A special celebration will take place with a "Retro Lunch" happening after church on Sunday, March 19, 2006.

Plan to join us!

For more information or if you would like to offer to share your talents that evening please call Debbie Bradley at 274-2758 or e-mail to 25@holymtrinitycalgary.org