



DECEMBER 11, 2015

CHRISTMAS GREETING FROM OUR NATIONAL DIRECTOR

In re-reading St. Matthew's telling of the birth of Jesus (Matthew 1:18-2:23) I was stricken with the realization that Mary and Joseph were homeless refugees when they traveled to Bethlehem: an order from the emperor forced them to leave Nazareth and travel to Bethlehem to pay a tax. And Jesus, shortly following his birth, became a refugee in Egypt.

I recalled the grave animosity that existed among Egyptians toward the "Children of Israel" at the time of the Exodus: that animosity had not abated when they left Bethlehem and fled to Egypt. There is a startling similarity to the plight of refugees today who are escaping Syria, most of them with nothing but their lives.

In this Christmas Season I am reminded that Jesus was born a refugee, lived his life in poverty, but still founded a "Kingdom that is not of this world." In our world it is easy to be distracted at Christmastime by the ever-expanding extravagance of Canadian Christmas celebrations. I encourage us to all remember the birth of our Saviour. If your community is fortunate enough to become hosts to refugees, whoever they are, I prayerfully encourage you to greet them warmly, generously and kindly: Hebrews 13:1-3 reminds us that as followers of Jesus, this is the very least He expects us to do. May God give you peace and joy as you celebrate this Christmas Season.

Dr. Clair MacMillan
National Director, Church of the Nazarene Canada

CANADIAN FOODGRAINS BANK PROJECTS IN NEED OF FUNDS

The number and severity of humanitarian crises this year has been unprecedented and has resulted on a major draw on Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB) resources. As of October 31, 2015 (7 months into the CFGB year) a total of \$18.2 million in food assistance, \$1.4 million in nutrition, \$6.7 million in agriculture and livelihoods funding

has been committed in 32 countries around the world. Another \$10 million in food projects are about to be committed. CFGB accounts are at their lowest point in the last two decades and many needs are on the waiting list to be funded.



Nazarene Compassionate Ministries Canada (NCM Canada) is a member of Canadian Foodgrains Bank and as such is also facing a deficit of funding. NCM Canada is in need of funds for a nutrition project impacting young children in Bangladesh and a seed project impacting children in Child Development Centres (and their families) in Nepal – children like the two little girls (sisters) pictured above who are malnourished and frequently sick and unable to attend school. Without proper nutrition and an education, they face a lifetime of deprivation and poverty.

December is Compassionate Ministries emphasis on our Nazarene calendar. As Christmas draws near, please consider giving to CFGB food projects so that children like those pictured above, can have a hope and a future.

Funds donated for CFGB food and nutrition projects are matched 4:1 by the Canadian government.

You can give online at www.ncmcanada.ca or send a cheque to the National Office Church of the Nazarene Canada and mark it “CFGB.”

Multiply your gift this Christmas!

Rev. Elaine Bumstead
Executive Director, NCM Canada

YEAR-END DONATIONS TO NCM CANADA **(INCLUDING THOSE DESIGNATED FOR CFGB)**

The National Office will be closed from December 21st and will reopen on January 4th. In order to facilitate year-end giving during the Christmas season when the National Office is closed, you need to know the following....

- In order to receive a tax receipt for 2015, your envelope bearing the donation must be postmarked no later than December 31, 2015. Any online donations must bear a transaction date of December 31, 2015 or earlier. (The NCM Canada website is www.ncmcanada.ca).
- If for some reason you need confirmation that your cheque has been deposited in 2015, please notify Eric White to make special arrangements. Phone (647) 200-6504.

Blessings in this holy Christmas season!

Rev. Elaine Bumstead
Executive Director, NCM Canada

SIERRA LEONE DECLARED EBOLA-FREE

Sierra Leone was declared Ebola-free more than a year and a half after the first case of the world's worst Ebola outbreak was reported in West Africa. On November 7, the World Health Organization reported 42 days (the length of two incubation cycles of the deadly virus) had passed since the last person confirmed to have the disease cleared a second consecutive blood test.

Thousands of people gathered in the streets of the capital city, Freetown, just before midnight November 6 in anticipation of the announcement. Various groups came together to organize a march through the city led by a military band and ending at a cotton tree in the heart of the city. The area was packed with people holding candles, jumping, and dancing. There were waves of celebration all over the city, including men, women, and children.

The Church of the Nazarene's 10th Sierra Leone District Assembly followed the Ebola-free declaration on Sunday, November 8.

"This was certainly not a coincidence; rather it was considered a divine arrangement," said Vidal Cole, Sierra Leone district superintendent. ***"Members of the church came trooping into the assembly in a very jubilant mood. The assembly was more of a joyous***

celebration. Some came in singing, jumping, dancing, shouting, and praising the Lord for what He had done. The atmosphere was full of excitement and great joy, and the words on everyone's lips was that of the Ebola-free declaration. The assembly started with a time of praise and worship that participants seemed unwilling to end, and the presence of God was very strong in our midst."

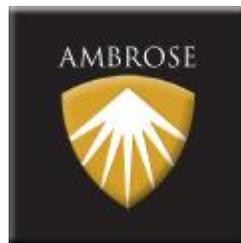
For many people, the Ebola-free declaration means that life will now return to normal. Farmers can now go to the farms, laborers can work on a daily basis, and students can continue their education in a safe environment.

Others are happy that they no longer have to live in fear of a disease that can wipe out entire families. Some said they will be able to travel freely to any part of the country, as the travel restrictions were lifted and vehicles are now navigating through many routes that were formerly suspended because of the crisis. People are also happy because the restriction on social gatherings has been lifted, thereby enabling them to host various get-togethers and celebrations at both individual and community levels.

Finally, some will be able to pay their last respects to their loved ones by giving them a funeral instead of a burial handled by government burial teams.

– [Church of the Nazarene Africa Region](#)

The above article appears courtesy of NCN News. For more global Nazarene news, please visit www.ncnnews.com.



A SHARED VISION TO END POVERTY

CANADIAN
P  **VERTY**
INSTITUTE

Two weeks ago, Ambrose announced Derek Cook as the new Director of the Canadian Poverty Institute. We caught up with him recently to learn more about his vision for serving the marginalized in Calgary and throughout Canada.

Q: What drew you to this role?

A: Responding to God’s call to justice has led me through work as an educator in labour camps, as a farm union organizer, as a counselor and settlement worker with new immigrants, and as a researcher and policy maker in government. Through all of this my focus has been on working alongside those who have found themselves excluded and bringing them more closely into community.

Q: Which aspects of your previous experience are you excited to bring to Ambrose?

A: My experience with issues of poverty is quite broad. I’ve worked among those who are marginalized as an educator and organizer, and I’ve also worked on their behalf as a researcher and policy strategist, so I bring a multi-faceted and deep perspective to this work.

Most recently I had the honour of serving as the Executive Director of the Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative, Mayor Nenshi’s task force on poverty reduction. Through this work I was able to mobilize the city around a shared vision for a poverty-free Calgary which was articulated in our strategy: [Enough for All](#).

Working in community to create that strategy deepened my knowledge of poverty in Calgary and also helped me build strong networks and partnerships with an exciting and diverse cross-section of people. These relationships and the insights they gave me will be very foundational as I work to establish the CPI as a key partner in our collective work to end poverty.

Q: How can academic communities like Ambrose help address poverty?

A: When we think about any type of social action, we must be aware of the important dimensions of action, reflection, and learning. When we take action we must also take time to reflect on that action, which leads to learning, which in turn influences future action. This cycle ensures that our work is effective and that we are responsive to the community.

For many people engaged in the active struggle on issues like poverty, there is often little opportunity for reflection and learning – especially opportunity to reflect and learn with others. From this perspective academic communities have a critical role to play: they provide space to connect reflection and learning with action. The key is to keep our ability to reflect and learn connected to practice. We need the real life experiences of those on the ground struggling with and against poverty informing our reflection and learning. This requires very active engagement between academic institutions and the community.

Q: What is your vision for the CPI’s contribution in the city of Calgary and beyond?

A: Ambrose University's focus on redemptive engagement in society is an important aspect of my vision for the contribution of the Canadian Poverty Institute to the Calgary community and the broader Canadian community. Redemptive engagement implies a reciprocal relationship of sharing that nurtures the growth of both partners.

As an institute dedicated to eradicating poverty through research and training, it is important for the CPI to both inform and be informed by the communities in which we work. Through dialogue we will gain new insights that will shape our own research and teaching. At the same time, sharing our knowledge will also help others improve practice and will serve to empower those who are marginalized.

Ultimately, the challenge of ending poverty will be met through collective action by many people working in partnership toward a shared vision. I believe the CPI can be a powerful voice for articulating that shared vision and building the partnerships and knowledge necessary to realize it.

Exciting Days Ahead

The CPI is a recent addition at Ambrose, having just been established last year, but we have big dreams for the future. We're so pleased to have Derek in leadership as the institute continues to grow.

**Send your news items of national interest to Diane at national@nazarene.ca
and see your information appear in the next edition of
Nazarene News**