



**JANUARY 6, 2017**



**A GOOD STORY IS A POWERFUL THING**

It can change minds, bring together differing worldviews, point to a greater truth we would have missed otherwise or reveal something that was hidden before.

In fact, it is said that after nourishment, shelter and companionship, stories are the thing we need most in the world.

Stories change hearts, too.

Just ask John Janzen who works in community education at Siloam Mission.

As part of our emphasis on building a community of care and cooperation, his job is to bring understanding to young people and dispel myths about those who experience homelessness.

Last year, John went to 74 schools to present about Siloam Mission and toured 94 school groups through our building. Because of his efforts many schools have started initiatives to help the less fortunate in our city – and many of the children have gotten their whole family involved.

Over the years, John has found that children are impacted more by a story than by facts. They listen better, remember more and understand more clearly if he tells them a story rather than the harsh facts of poverty and homelessness.

And in fact, the same thing goes for adults.

So John set about to create a story called Blink's Garden. It's a moving and powerful story about a girl who can see beauty where others cannot. And although she is scoffed at, she perseveres for years until things begin to change; until the beauty she sees becomes visible to others as well.

It's the story of many of the city's less fortunate and the volunteers who serve them day in and day out. Every day more than 600 people come through our doors. All of them have something beautiful to offer. Some see it, others are blind to it.

I have to admit on some days I have a hard time seeing beauty in people. Imagine if we as a society would see the beauty in each downtrodden person. Nobody would be without a home tonight.

Siloam Mission has been providing care for the less fortunate for close to 30 years. Our community of volunteers, staff and supporters have made significant strides in changing the lives of thousands of people each year.

They've been persistent – engaging Manitobans to see the beauty where it is hard to find at times.

Blink's Garden first premiered at the Winnipeg Fringe Festival, then played at the Edmonton Fringe Festival and in Toronto this summer.

The success of the story in changing hearts and minds in schools and festivals led to the completion of a storybook and CD. Now schools and parents across Manitoba can use it to help their children see beauty in people and places they may not have before.

Homelessness will continue well into 2017, and likely at least until the children in school right now will run the world.

I hope they will not have lost their ability to see beauty when it is their time to care for our communities.

All I know is that a good story is a good start.

Floyd Perras,  
Executive Director  
Strategic Initiatives of Siloam Mission

This column appears courtesy of Siloam Mission. To order Blink's Garden, please visit <https://www.siloam.ca/2016/10/blinks-garden-available-for-pre-order-now/>.

## **THANK OFFERING GIFTS HELP CONTINUE MISSION**

Nazarenes are a generous people. Gifts of thankfulness from the recent World Evangelism Fund offering continue to be received. These funds reach ministries around the world and result in praise to God, our generous giver. So far, US\$515,000 has been received in Thanksgiving, or Thank, [Offerings for the World Evangelism Fund](#). These gifts are now making Christlike disciples in the nations.

Thank you for your generosity. As we recognize your faithfulness, we cannot help but give praise to God. Your devotion to the mission is a blessing that stretches into eternity as people around the world come to a saving knowledge of Christ. Your gifts will help others know the Great Giver and recognize that the blessings they receive are **All From Him**.

God bless you for your devotion to taking the gospel around the world.

With gratitude,

The Board of General Superintendents

The above article appears courtesy of NCN News. For more global Nazarene news, please visit [www.ncnnews.com](http://www.ncnnews.com).



## **BERNIE POTVIN RETIRES**

Dr. Bernie Potvin is retiring from his position as Associate Professor of Education – a program he helped design and establish. Over the years, he has served in various capacities at Ambrose, beginning with the development of the Bachelor of Education (After Degree) program, and serving as the Director and, more recently, Interim Associate Dean, of the program. Along the way, Dr. Potvin has helped with the development of online learning in the Ambrose Seminary, and taught courses in Educational Psychology. For a short while, he also served as Dean of Arts and Science.

### **Developing education curriculum in Afghanistan**

For the past five years, he has also invested deeply beyond Ambrose, leading a team of international educators in building a teaching and learning infrastructure – from the ground up – in Afghanistan. Sponsored by the Canadian government (Global Affairs Canada), working in partnership with a number of international governments and agencies, this labour of love has resulted in the creation of a national curriculum and the training of teachers in challenging post-war circumstances.

### **Ambrose thanks Dr. Potvin**

*“Bernie: you are a change agent and a passionate advocate for those you are called to serve,”* says Dr. Linda Schwartz, current Dean of Arts & Science. *“You will be missed by colleagues in all programs at Ambrose University.”*

*“The many teachers here in Alberta, across Canada, and around the globe, for whom you have been and continue to be a colleague and mentor, are grateful for your diligence and care for their welfare as pre-service and new teachers. And your many friends and professional associates across the Alberta Education system and in the international community also wish you well in your future pursuits and adventures.”*

### **Understanding education through incarnation**

As Dr. Potvin reflects on his tenure with Ambrose university, he notes: *“Each of us in education is committed to a real, incarnational experience of integration, beginning with our experience of God, as a given, always with us. We remind ourselves and our students that the recognition of the incarnation is in the hints and guesses, prayer, discipline, thought and actions of real life (T. S. Elliot).”*

*“Integration for us has always been in the particulars and not found in the generalities and abstractions of Christianity. Truly, the hint half guessed, the gift half understood (in our program) for us has been first saying ‘yes’ to the incarnation.”*

*“The value added has been shaping the lives of over a hundred graduates, most of whom have taken up their careers in schools. Also, personally, I have valued the chance to work with some of the most amazing, inspiring people I have ever worked with. As I retire I am pleased that the foundation for future good work has been laid and that the future is indeed good.”*

### **Looking ahead**

Ambrose is deeply grateful for Dr. Potvin’s commitment and service to our university community. Our best wishes go out to him as he takes up new and interesting pursuits and challenges, both personal and professional.

## **THE DYNAMIC TRIO**

The Dynamic Trio, the most recent publication of Dr. William Stewart, is now available!

At the most hopeless and discouraging time of her life, Allison meets a group of new friends who have started studying the three primary Christian qualities of hope, faith, and love. As Allison begins to absorb the meaning, power, and truth of this “Dynamic Trio,” she is introduced to new ideas, principles, and purposes that will change her life. With the help of her new friends, she applies hope, faith, and love to her own situation and is transformed from a lost and defeated person into someone with purpose, meaning, and fulfillment.

As you join Allison in her journey, you may come to a fresh understanding of these three qualities and begin to enrich and renew your own spiritual journey.

You can purchase your copy of The Dynamic Trio from the National Office for \$20.00 (includes shipping charges).



*From all of us at the National Office, may the Lord richly bless you in 2017!*