



# STRAIGHT

## FROM THE STREET

Pastor: Rev. Rick Chapman

Pastoral Associate: Sister Marion Garneau

Pastoral Associate: Ms. Linda Winski

A NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF INNER CITY PASTORAL MINISTRY

May 2010

## Walking Together

### *Pastor Rick's Reflection*

Recently, members of the Emmanuel Community met for a time of sharing of a personal experience of their life journey within the context of a talking circle. Held within the healing circle of aboriginal tradition and directed by the Rev. Travis Enright, Vicar of All Saints Cathedral, Sister Marion offered the music and a reflection. The purpose of the "Gathering : Walking Together:"

- to share our truth regarding our experiences of life within the inner city,
- to share positive insights regarding the step(s) I have personally found helpful in reconciling with some of the difficulties and challenges of my

life – bridges of reconciliation of healing. The participants having entered the circle described many and various life experiences, transitions from a time of difficulty to an enduring inner strength.

An aboriginal elder spoke of her time when taken as a young child to residential school. She entered at seven years old and left as a young teen of fourteen. With tears she spoke, "I carried the burden of my loss of language and culture, my loss of family, and the physical and sexual abuse I endured while a student, as a burden within me for forty years. Recently, my brothers and I have begun to speak to these times together and in the sharing within my family and by being strengthened by the Creator, I am a survivor."

Younger aboriginal men and women spoke of the generational effect of the Residential School experience on themselves as children of parent survivors. They spoke of not fully understanding what their parents had to endure. They too were taken from our homes and placed in foster care as the ongoing effects of the



Pastor Rick chats with a woman he meets on the street.



Residential School haunted their parents and in many cases led to alcohol abuse and drug addiction. Healing is taking place within the Aboriginal community, yet these generational scars will take many generations to heal.

Non aboriginal members shared of experiences of the loss of loved ones, children, and wives, and husbands due to life difficulties or premature death. Many spoke to life issues of grief and loss, the struggle of existence after a paralyzing blow that continues to call upon their inner

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## Walking Together continued

strength as human beings; a strength often drawn from the Creator and Jesus, the place where one's faith encounters the holy.

Others spoke of the experience of homelessness, the only thing between them and a concrete underpass being a piece of corrugated cardboard – a great insulator! Yet, through perseverance and the support of the community, many have found adequate and comfortable housing. What a difference a roof over one's head makes! "I am content now." was the comment.

The "Gathering: Walking Together" affirmed that God walks with us through our moments of greatest difficulty. Members of the circle were strengthened as they resonated with another's story of survival and inner strengthening.

As the Pastor of ICPM, I feel that this Gathering drew us near to the place of healing and reconciliation within the mixed and diverse inner city community. The sharing was real. The sharing was honest. The sharing was at times painful to bear. Yet, within the context of the sharing circle we began to understand that God offers gifts of strength and growing peace within the deepest difficulties of our human experience. We trust there will be more Gatherings to follow.

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## Pack Sack Appeal



As summer approaches, the transient population of our city, men and women seeking work, migrant homeless finding their way to Edmonton city streets increases. Many homeless people find their way to the inner city community of Edmonton seeking support, soup, sandwiches and shelter.

ICPM is present amongst this population visiting on the streets and meeting the many within our Sunday worship and the Sunday lunch. We offer a friendly smile, a listening ear, directions and referrals to agencies and housing

opportunities, and when needed consolation and a prayer.

As one engages in this ministry, we find there is often a need for simple essentials, toothpaste, a hair brush, and various toiletries. Over the last two years a local community church has supplied us with pack sacks containing many needed personal items. Pack sacks are easy to hand out, easy to carry: a good offering with an individual who is experiencing homelessness.

ICPM is seeking churches and interested persons who would be willing to donate pack sacks containing needed personal items. In the past, donors have searched yard sales to obtain the pack sacks and low cost store items for pack sack contents. If you are willing to assist us in this appeal, please begin gathering used or inexpensive pack sacks and fill them with items from the list below.

- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| ● Comb or brush               | ● Small Kleenex                                   |
| ● Cotton Socks                | ● Toothpaste                                      |
| ● Lip balm                    | ● Wash cloth                                      |
| ● Note pad and pen            | ● Dental floss                                    |
| ● Sun screen                  | ● \$10 grocery food voucher or McDonald's voucher |
| ● Fun item (crossword, cards) | ● Deodorant                                       |
| ● Hand lotion                 | ● Nail file                                       |
| ● Chocolate or energy bar     |   |
| ● Toothbrush                  |   |

We will receive the knap sacks at the ICPM office - Bissell Centre East Main Floor 10527 96 St.

For more information contact:

Pastor Rick Chapman

780 424 7652

[rick@icpmedmonton.ca](mailto:rick@icpmedmonton.ca)

Thanks for considering this request. May God bless you as you walk the spiritual journey!

## ICPM: Strength in Partnerships

Much of ICPM's success is due to the strength of its partnerships. ICPM is a unique ecumenical Christian ministry of presence serving the people of Edmonton's inner city communities. The ICPM Board includes members of the Anglican, Lutheran, Roman Catholic and United Churches. The ministry team presently includes an ordained Anglican pastor, a Catholic Sister, and a Catholic laywoman. Each Sunday, volunteers from congregations from several Christian denominations and other faith traditions in the Edmonton region partner with ICPM and provide a generous, nutritious brunch for hundreds of men, women and children



from the inner city. Generous financial support from individuals, congregations, and denominational offices from the supporting denominations sustains the ICPM ministry year after year. ICPM also works in partnership with several inner city community agencies.

Sometimes, people think of ecumenical cooperation in negative terms as a "least common denominator approach." Others view the potential of ecumenical partnerships in a more positive way. They speak of an

"ecumenical gift exchange." In this understanding, Christians working together can contribute the unique strengths and spiritual gifts from their distinctive denominational traditions to a shared enterprise. In this understanding, one plus one plus one does not equal three, but rather four or five. This positive understanding is certainly true of the ecumenical partnerships supporting ICPM.

For over thirty years, ICPM has served as a way by which different local church congregations in the Edmonton region can partner to come to the inner city and reach out directly to those who are homeless and poor living in Edmonton's inner city neighbourhoods. In the last few years, Edmonton's mayor has challenged Edmontonians to move to a new approach to address homelessness in our city. Rather than continuing to manage homelessness, he has called for a long term strategy to end chronic homelessness. This strategy is outlined in "A Place to Call

Home: Edmonton's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness"

[www.endedmontonhomelessness.com](http://www.endedmontonhomelessness.com).

This approach seeks to shift over time from a primary emphasis of providing emergency services of food and shelter in a few inner city neighbourhoods to providing sustainable housing and needed social supports in neighbourhoods all across the city.

Last month, the Edmonton Homeless Commission, which is mandated to monitor and report on the success of this 10 Year Plan, issued its



first annual report. The news was encouraging: "424 permanent homes had been secured for 546 people who had been homeless." The success of this approach requires ongoing government funding and "wrap around" support services from front-line workers in community agencies. However, the long-term success of this approach depends on community welcome, inclusion and hospitality by residents in local neighbourhoods across the city.

Local church congregations are invited to become an important part of this local community welcome and inclusion. The fruitful partnership of local church congregations coming to the inner city with ICPM to help the homeless can now be expanded. Members of these supporting congregations are in a good position to become advocates for the homeless in their own local neighbourhoods. This may be a difficult and challenging task in the face of local NIMBY ("not in my backyard") debates. Hopefully, the partnerships that ICPM has built over the years with different churches and local congregations can assist in these next steps in realizing the ambitious goal of eliminating chronic homelessness in our city.

*Bob McKeon*



## Ministry among women

It hurts to see the bruises, the black eyes, the swollen lips and the stitched up lacerations on their faces. It's heart-wrenching to see their tear-filled eyes and hear their brief admission that "they got raped last night" and know that there is little that one can do to ease their pain... except perhaps a hug that lasts for more than 3 seconds. It's hard to hear their outbursts of rage and anger in language punctuated by expletives and phrases most of us don't hear every day. Such language doesn't become them and shrouds the beauty that lies within. Unfortunately, it also hides the pain and the shame with which many of them live. It's painful and disappointing when a snapshot of their week includes... getting beat up, being turned down for a place to stay, being beaten, raped and robbed, or not being able to attend their child's birthday party because they were in jail or too strung out on drugs.

From time to time, however, there is good news! Perhaps they have finally found an apartment or perhaps there is progress being made to be reunited with their children. Maybe they won their case in court and are not going to be evicted! Perhaps they have found a job or have finally made the decision to enter a rehab program. Maybe they are even celebrating a certain number of days of being 'sober' or 'clean' or counting the days until their parole hearing or release from prison.

To be a woman in society in general makes her vulnerable. To be a woman in the inner city means to be even more at risk – economically, physically, socially, psychologically, emotionally and spiritually. The women among whom we seek to be present are among the most vulnerable



people in our society and they are vulnerable NOT necessarily by choice... but by circumstances... many of which are beyond their control.

### Who are these women and how is ICPM seeking to minister among them?

They are young (some barely into their teens) and they are old (sometimes looking much older than their years).

They are single, married, separated (or estranged), divorced, widowed...

They are white, immigrant, aboriginal,... they are multi-colored and multi-cultural

Many have given birth but sadly they are mothers whose children have been taken away

Many come from violent backgrounds, ... having witnessed violence in their home,... having themselves been abused, sexually, psychologically, physically, emotionally and are now trapped within a cycle of violence from which it is very difficult to escape.

Many have been (or are) incarcerated. Some even seek incarceration because it is safer and less violent than their existing condition.

Many work the street and prostitute themselves in order to make enough to rent a hotel room where they can sleep safely at least for one night.

Many live with multiple challenges – mental illness, HIV, addictions, and FASD

Many are chronically ill due to the rigors of street

life.

Many have a revolving door of relationships with men... because being unattached and on the street as a woman is dangerous.

Many die far too young and alone and under violent conditions.

Many newly homeless women will attach themselves to a man even though this usually means having to yield to his sexual demands which can



lead to being beaten.

Most are poor with little access to the economic resources needed to secure housing and a quality of life deserving of their dignity.

For each and every woman there is a story of how she got to this place in her life, what keeps her there and what

## Ministry Among Women continued...

she longs for. Each story is different in its specific circumstance but together they share the common reality of telling what it is like to live on the margins of society... vulnerable and at the mercy of forces beyond their control. Daily life is a struggle including the challenge of meeting her basic needs for food, clothing and shelter. It includes the challenge of navigating the various 'systems' to secure some income stability (job, welfare, AISH...) and access to supports required to achieve a minimal quality of life deserving of a human being. Sometimes these systems pose obstacles that make it difficult to rise above the mundane to feel good about herself, her opportunities and her potential to achieve her dreams. For women who already live with multiple challenges, this can be an arduous task. Giving in to drugs, alcohol, prostitution or crime is sometimes the only way she knows to ease the pain or survive another night.

ICPM seeks to minister among women who find themselves in these circumstances. We recognize that each person is created in the image and likeness of God. We also recognize that each encounter with an individual needs to be approached with an openness to the Divine who dwells within that person and that seeks to touch the Divine in us. Our role is not to judge or fix a problem.... Rather, it is to serve ... to discover the holy in the encounter and embrace it.

ICPM exercises a ministry among these women in various ways. The following are descriptions of our initiatives to provide ministry among women.

### Edmonton Institution for Women

Soon after the Edmonton Institution for Women opened in 1995, Sister Marion began volunteering there with the EIFW Mentoring Group, the Peer Support Steering Committee, other groups over the years, and with Sunday Faith Celebrations.

The Mentoring Group matches a Woman from the Community with a Woman in prison offering friendship and support. Sister Marion is a co-coordinator of this group. There is always a need for more Mentors ... though there are about 30 Mentors, EIFW has over one hundred Residents.

Through the Peer Support program, some incarcerated Women participate in a training program, then become potential supports for other imprisoned women experiencing difficulties.

Joining the Women of EIFW in celebrations of faith is both a privilege and an opportunity to meet them in a different environment ... and to be witness to the deep faith of many and their courage in sharing life experiences in the light of their faith.

### Women's Wellness Retreats

The Women's Wellness Retreat was initiated by Women who worked in agencies that provide education and support services for women in central Edmonton. Planning began in 2003 with the first wellness retreat being held on June 3-4, 2004 at Providence Renewal Centre with thirty participants attending. A second retreat was held the following year

(2005) at the AB Solicitor General Staff College.

In 2005, Inner City Pastoral Ministry became part of the 'Retreat Planning Group'. The 'Star of the North Retreat Centre' expressed interest in the event; Sister Marion became a Board Member at 'the Star' in view of Inner City possibilities. On September 9, 2005, a preliminary meeting was held in the Inner City with representatives from some of those previously involved (e.g. Mary



Norton) as well as Sandy Prather, Executive Director of the 'Star of the North'; Linda MacIsaac, staff person from 'the Star'; Sister Marion Garneau, Pastor Wendy Ainsworth, and Linda Winski of ICPM. This developed into a renewed Retreat Planning Group anchored by Linda MacIsaac. Retreats have been held each year at 'the Star' from 2006 to 2010; this year the dates are May 14th to 16th.

The purpose of these retreat weekends is to provide an opportunity for women to get away from the everyday stresses of daily life, and to focus on their own self care in a nurturing, safe environment. The women who participate have an opportunity to direct their energy away from the various issues they deal with



## Ministry Among Women continued...

and towards self care activities, ... toward strategies for dealing with stress in their daily lives. Our hope is that they leave refreshed and more able to cope with challenges in their lives.

These retreats are made possible through generous donations made possible by so many individuals. We are grateful for every generous person who has made an 'impossible dream' a reality for many Women who would not otherwise have such an opportunity.

### ICPM Women's Group

The ICPM Women's Group meets at the Bissell Centre, called together by Linda Winski, Mary Norton, and Sister Marion. Numbers fluctuate, yet those who choose to come find a welcoming place where they may choose to participate in crafts, conversation or simply find a safe place 'to be'. At times special events are planned such as lunch in the park, or enjoying a movie. It is an opportunity for ICPM Staff to meet members of ICPM's Sunday 'Community of Emmanuel' in a less structured setting and offers possibilities for related ministries.

Having the opportunity of sharing stories, at times we are able to accompany Women in a supportive way through both 'joys and sorrows' ... perhaps difficulties with pressures which can be so deep in Inner City challenges or blessings such as this month when a member of the Community receives an Esquao Award!

We are grateful to the Bissell Centre not only for our present office in Bissell East, but also for their

generosity in sharing meeting rooms, storage space and equipment with us for many different ICPM initiatives.



### WEAC (Women's Emergency Accommodation Centre)

WEAC is a women's shelter operated by E4C. It provides a service to women (with no children) who require emergency shelter due to various circumstances: just arrived in the city with no money, been kicked out of home, left home, escaping violence, in transit but with little money, on AISH, homeless with mental health issues....the circumstances are multi-faceted and sometimes very complex.

ICPM's involvement in WEAC and ministry to women started 17 years ago with Pastor Faith Brace who initiated contact with WEAC during her internship in 1993-94. In fact, in the spring of 1995 when she was about to be ordained, she could have had a job at WEAC. However, she chose to work with ICPM since it was more directly connected with ministry as viewed by the church. Faith was good friends with the manager at WEAC at the time and considered WEAC as one of her favorite places. She remembers

that the staff was marvelously dedicated.

The ministry at WEAC has continued through Pastor Wendy's time and into the present. Linda Winski, Pastoral Associate, continues to bring ICPM's ministry of presence to WEAC every second Monday for two or three hours. She is available for women who want to talk or pray and often assists staff with the reception and desk tasks during the lunch hour.

On the last Sunday of each month Sr. Marion and Linda go to WEAC to offer an hour of singing and sharing with the women. Held in the dining room at WEAC, those who choose to attend are welcomed into a safe place where they can share as much or as little as they wish. Many have expressed that this time is important because it is time away from the noise of the common room and the sometimes loud conversations. Here they can just "be" for a while and share in a few treats that Linda and Sr. Marion provide. This is a blessed time among the women.

At Christmas, Sr. Marion and Linda, often with the companionship of Sr. Maggie MacLean, conduct a Christmas service and provide Christmas Sacs for the women. At least once a year a memorial for the women, known to WEAC, who have died in the previous year is held. This is a special time to celebrate their lives and remember that they were, each and all, somebody's daughter, sister, aunt, mother, cousin, friend.... And they are missed.

## Ministry Among Women continued...

### Kindred House

Related to the ministry at WEAC is ICPM's relationship with Kindred House where Sr. Marion and Pastor Faith Brace have volunteered in the past. Though the active presence at Kindred House no longer continues, ICPM still supports the mission of Kindred House through our presence at WEAC and through the memorials in which we are involved.

ICPM's ministry among women happens in these particular places and also through our ministry of presence in the office, on the streets and on Sundays at the service and lunch. It is a blessing to be able to be among the women and share a part of their journey.

May our loving and compassionate and merciful God continue to bless this ministry among some of society's most vulnerable ones.

*By Sr. Marion Garneau and  
Linda Winski*

## Faces of the Inner City



## Circle of Light

The circle of light  
For which I fight  
The power of life  
For which I strive  
My faith gives birth  
To healing and quenches  
The spirit thirsting  
And flowing, growing  
Into wise ancient soul  
Forever redeemed by  
Love's pure blood  
Shed tear by tear  
Through eternal hope.

*By Shirley Courchesne*



## Events of Interest

### Gathering: Walking Together

Saturday, May 8, 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM

To share our truth regarding our experiences of life within the inner city.  
To share positive insights regarding the step(s) I have personally found helpful in reconciling with some of the difficulties and challenges of my life – my bridges of reconciliation and healing.

### Women's Wellness Retreat

Friday May 14 to Sunday May 16

For women who would not otherwise be able to experience such a retreat, this event offers a time way for self-care and renewal in a safe, welcoming, nurturing place with other women.

### ICPM Walk About

Thursday, May 27, 4:30 – 5:30 PM

Bissell East Main Floor 10527 96 St

Explore the inner city through the eyes of a long term community activist and resident and member of ICPM Board. Homelessness and affordable housing – is there an answer?

### UCSN BBQ

Friday, July 23

Giovani Park

Join in an inner city BBQ hosted by UCSN, a coalition of church and social agencies, health services and the City of Edmonton. ICPM, a member of this coalition, supports and assists in this yearly fun event within the inner city community.

## ICPM Board Members 2010 - 2011

Bob McKeon.....Roman Catholic  
Board Chair

Nick Ritson-Bennett..Anglican/Bissell  
Vice Chair

Nancy Kerr.....United  
Past Chair

vacant.....Secretary

Fred Drummond.....Anglican  
Treasurer

Sharon Webb.....Anglican  
Lunch Ministry Coordinator

### Members At Large:

Coby Veeken .....Roman Catholic

John Gee.....Anglican

The Rev. Bob Kimmerly.....United

The Rev. Stephen Hallford....Anglican

Nick Ritson-Bennett..Anglican/Bissell  
Centre

Sue Pasker.....Lutheran  
Christmas Sack Contact

David Barnum..... Anglican

Joy Berg ..... Lutheran

Karen Peterson .....Lutheran

Linda Boire .....Roman Catholic

### Ministry Team as Members of the Board

Rick Chapman .....Pastor

Sister Marion Garneau.....Pastoral  
Associate

Linda Winski.....Pastoral Associate

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Inner City Pastoral Ministry is an interdenominational Christian Ministry of presence. In partnership with community, and guided by the Spirit of God, we walk with the people of the Inner City of Edmonton.

**E**nclosed is my gift for Inner City Pastoral Ministry

Amount of gift: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Mr., Mrs., Ms, Dr. etc.)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town \_\_\_\_\_ Prov. \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Home) (Work)

Send to: Inner City Pastoral Ministry  
c/o Bissell Centre

10527 96 St NW, Edmonton AB T5H 2H6

Charitable Registration: BN107507378 RR001

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