



# The National Association of Vocation & Formation Directors (NAVFD)

MARCH 2018

## EASTER REFLECTION

Our God truly is a God of surprises! The other day I was covering a food item with "Cling Wrap." Suddenly, I found myself transported in spirit to the tomb where Jesus had been laid. A shocked and deeply saddened Mary Magdalene "stands outside the tomb weeping." As she bends over to look into the tomb two angels inquire why she is weeping. We all know her response: "They have taken away my Lord and I do not know where they have laid him." The story continues, "When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know it was Jesus." It is only when Jesus calls her by name that she knows him! Everything within her is transformed into joy. The one she loves is alive! She clings to him, not wanting to ever again lose her beloved. In the Gospel of John, Jesus says to her, "Do not cling to me.... Go to my brothers [and sisters]." Mary goes and announces to the disciples that she has seen the Lord. Matthew has a slightly different account in which Mary Magdalene "and the other Mary" are at the tomb as the week is dawning. The angel acknowledges that the women are looking for Jesus "who was crucified." The angel instructs them, "Go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him.'"

The Holy Spirit used the cling wrap to help me realize how easily one can cling to hopes, dreams, situations, one's health or education, reputation, people,

what is familiar, even far away countries, and miss hearing Jesus calling us by name "in the garden of every day life." Our hearts do not hear the angel saying, "He goes before you into Galilee. It is there you will find him."

As we celebrate Easter 2018, The hope and prayer of the board of NAVFD is this: that we can toss away the cling wrap and, like Mary Magdalene, go into the Galilee of our every day lives and wrap those we meet, be they "hungry or thirsty, naked, sick or imprisoned," in the

light and peace, the hope and joy, and the tender, merciful love of the resurrected Christ. In the words of Rina

Risitano, fsp, "His is an

empty tomb, as ours are empty tombs. We are destined to live. The light of his resurrected body charges with new life our vision of death. Death has no longer power over him, nor has it over us. He calls us, as he called Mary, to go and spread this wonderful news." (*The Folly of God, The Journey of the Cross*, S. Koder, R. Risitano, Pauline Press, 2007)

We await, with joyful anticipation, your presence among us in Hamilton, April 22 - 25 when we can hear your stories from your Galilee and we can celebrate together, "He is Risen. He does go before us into Galilee." We have seen him." Alleluia!"

Sr. Mary Clare Stack, UJ



### Contact Us

[navfdco@gmail.com](mailto:navfdco@gmail.com)

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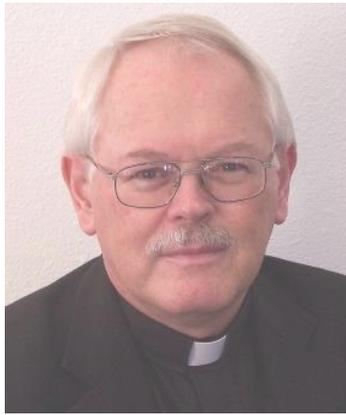
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*Inviting all Religious 55(ish) and Under  
serving the People of God in Canada to...*

## **SEARCHING FOR A COVENANT OF MUTUAL SUPPORT – A DEEPER ONENESS WITHIN THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST**

**with Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI**

This *Reflective Gathering* will be a blend of silence, prayer, community, and input. Father Ron Rolheiser, OMI is currently the President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio TX. He is an author, retreat director, teacher, and theologian. He was born and raised in Saskatchewan and is proud of his Canadian roots.

**Place:** Queens House, Saskatoon Sk

**Date:** July 17 (4:00 pm)- July 23 (1:00 pm)

**Cost:** \$625

**Register:** [bookings@queenshouse.org](mailto:bookings@queenshouse.org)

**Deadline:** May 15, 2018

We are grateful that some participants from the Religious Under 55 Retreat 2017 are part of the planning team for 2018. Questions? Contact Sr. Michelle Garlinski, SNJM [mgarlinski@smamb.ca](mailto:mgarlinski@smamb.ca).

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### **CONFERENCE 2018**

In a few short weeks, the waiting will be over and we will all be together at the NAVFD conference in Hamilton. So far we have 105 people registered from various groups and congregations: Religious Sisters, Brothers, and Priests, Serra Club members, CWL members, University Chaplains, Youth Ministers, and Diocesan Vocation Directors to mention just a few. They hail from PEI to Alberta attracted to the conference by the calibre of the keynote speakers Cardinal Gérald Lacroix and Sister Nathalie Becquart as well as the workshops and Father Tom Rosica's presentation on Youth Evangelization. There are also, of course, the relationships to create and renew among those in attendance. For the first time in the

history of NAVFD, some of the presentations will be simultaneously translated so that French and English speaking participants will feel welcome. See [www.vocations.ca](http://www.vocations.ca) for the registration form.

Hope to see you there!



*Announcement: There will be no NAVFD newsletter in April  
due to our conference. See you there!*

## LANDSCAPE OF RELIGIOUS VOCATIONS IN CANADA

### NEWSLETTER REPORT – MARCH 2018



Greetings from the team of the “Canadian Vocations to Religious Life” research project. It is with great enthusiasm that we share with you that our project has reached its completion!

This collaboration with the *Centre for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA)*, made possible through the financial contribution of the *Conrad N. Hilton Foundation*, allowed us to gain great insight into the current landscape of religious vocations across Canada. Furthermore, our results allowed us to identify some of the defining features of today’s religious life in our country as well as some of the most successful trends in vocation animation.

The results we have gathered will be made available to all religious congregations, and to the Canadian Church at large, in a variety of formats and venues. We will be presenting these results for the first time at the 2018 NAVFD Conference to be held in Hamilton, ON, between April 23 and 25. At the conference, there will be an opportunity for a Q&A in addition to a number of informal spaces for further conversation and feedback with members of our team.

We hope that the data collected will create a platform for the development of strategic plans for vocation animation for diverse religious institutes. NAVFD is committed to producing materials containing the results (brochures and articles) and distributing those amongst its members and beyond.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

We ask for your prayers and support as we conclude this important project. Have a blessed Easter season!

Héctor Acero Ferrer, Project Manager  
[navfd.research@gmail.com](mailto:navfd.research@gmail.com).



NAVFD congratulates our Executive Director, Sister Nancy Sullivan, CSJ, who was awarded the Medal of Honour, "Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice." Here you see Sister Nancy pictured with Bishop Douglas Crosby, OMI of Hamilton (on the right) and Cardinal Gérald Lacroix, Archbishop of Quebec City (and a keynote speaker at our upcoming national conference).

Sister Nancy was awarded the medal for her gifted and generous work for many years in Jamaica, for her deep commitment to the "Hamilton Out of the Cold" programme and, of course, for her wonderful vocation and formation ministry with NAVFD. Many congratulations Sister Nancy. We are all so proud of you and grateful for all your hard and passionate work for NAVFD.