

THE KOLPING CANADA NEWSLETTER

Winter 2012

MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL PRAESES

(From thoughts by Pope Benedict XVI in "Wer hilft uns leben?")

Our world would not exist without God. He is the Creator. But this is not all. The incarnation of his divine Son, and our redemption by Him, is what holds the world together. By now you must have realized that there is darkness and coldness in the hearts of people: hate, injustice, cynical distortion of the truth, cruelty and inhumanity among mankind. What period of human history has experienced so much fear of the future as ours? Many people do not even want to recognize the problems of the future. Many live only for the present moment and don't have the hope of the possibility of the existence of the kingdom of God and of happiness in heaven.

Notice the difference between the preaching of the Messiah and of that of John the Baptist: the latter's message is that the Messiah is coming as a judge. Quite different is the message of the Messiah: He comes as a child into the world, he does not blow out the shimmering wick of a weakened faith. He comes in kindness and humility. He doesn't shy away from dying on the cross out of love for His people. Our salvation began during the holy night in Bethlehem, out of His truth and His love for all of us. In this sense I wish all of you, my sisters and brothers in the Kolping Family a "Blessed Christmas"!

Treu Kolping! Father Karl Hoeppe, C.Ss.R

MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT

"Let's practice more and deeper love towards people. Let's show Christian Living in ever more practical ways, and the present will be better, and the future brighter." - A. Kolping

Yes, Christmas is near and we are all busy preparing ourselves and our households for the big event. As a Kolping family, we have our Christmas party, with many of our old familiar hymns and readings, as well as new and old music of the Christmas season.

It is time to give thanks to those who work for us. I know he is getting old and frail, but I would like to thank Father Hoeppe; he is always there for us. And we are getting old together with him.

I want to thank Regina Knoll for her work with the Newsletter. Many thank-yous also to Inge Baumstark, our National Treasurer, for keeping the books.

Thank you very much to all Presidents of their local Society, and their Executive Members. May God bless you all.

Wishing you all the true meaning of Christmas which is peace, love and happiness.

Treu Kolping! Steve Salb

MESSAGE FROM KELOWNA

Our little group here in Kelowna had a small gathering in May, as usual at the Mekong Restaurant. We discussed having a summer picnic or some type of get-together, but due to various problems, health and otherwise, this did not happen.

We did, however, have a lovely afternoon on December 4th. Several of our members could not make it to the meeting, but we did have a visitor from Stuttgart – a guest of Henry Wehnert. Since it was the 146th Anniversary of Father Kolping's death, Henry read some interesting statistics pertaining to our organization. Of course we also prayed for the canonization of Father Kolping.

Dieter and Gisela Howald gave a Power Point presentation on their work in Kampala, Uganda. In their own words:

For the past ten years, since we have been traveling to Uganda, our main task was to facilitate the distribution of the medical equipment, etc. in the containers shipped out of Vancouver. This past year, the Rotary Clubs of District 5060 established a Medical Equipment Committee in Kelowna with the intention of collecting equipment donated by the Interior Health Authority for distribution in developing countries. Easy, you say? Not so! To ship a container to Africa costs at least \$16,000, and after many meetings and negotiations, the first 40-foot container was finally shipped out of Kelowna! It contained the usual: hospital beds, wheelchairs, walkers, commodes, etc., etc. This equipment will go to various hospitals and clinics in Northern Uganda. We had many donations of (new) soccer uniforms, socks and boots, hundreds of soccer balls, plus about 1,000 t-shirts, 500 pairs of flipflops, and other items too numerous to mention. Our orphanage will get some of the beds and other medical equipment, t-shirts, etc. Three years ago we had decided to guarantee the orphans a steady

food supply for one year. Three years later we are still able to maintain this program from donations we receive here in Kelowna. Three years ago our budget was \$10,000 a year; the need to feed 380 orphans for one year has now risen to \$16,000 in 2012.

Kolping Uganda will get 800 soccer uniforms, balls, t-shirts and so on, for their youth programs. Also included in this shipment is a 40 gallon drum of dehydrated vegetables and fruit from the Gleaners (Google it). The vegetables will make 6,000 portions of soup – that would be a wonderful addition to the orphans' diet, if customs allows it into the country. The PP presentation shows how the equipment was stored and packed in the warehouse, plus the loading of the container. So it's on its way; in fact, we were informed that it could arrive in Mombasa harbour, Kenya, as early as the end of December, which means we will most likely have to be in Kampala, Uganda by the beginning of February. Hopefully things go well with customs, etc. and we can distribute everything to the sick, the poor, and the orphans of Uganda.

After the presentation, Henry passed around an envelope and, as usual, our loyal Kolping brothers and sisters made generous donations to the Uganda project.

Our Advent celebration consisted of readings, plus a singalong, which everyone seemed to enjoy. This soon developed into a nostalgic remembrance of Advents of long ago and far away. The meeting ended with the singing of the "Kolping Lied"

We wish everyone a Blessed Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Treu Kolping! Gisela Howald

MESSAGE FROM KOLPING TORONTO

This year's World Day of Prayer was a little different - we called it 'Family Night'. On the 20th anniversary of Father Kolping's beatification in Rome on Oct. 27th, we attended Mass at St. Patrick's, followed by a prayer service and then ended with a full-course meal prepared by our own chef Eddie Urwalek, one of our members. This new way of way of marking the Kolping International World Day of Prayer worked out very well and will be bound to be repeated.

The annual Parish Bazaar on Nov. 6th was another success, due in part to the assistance of our Kolping Society. Although though we no longer man our own table, Kolping donated \$500, and our members helped out where needed.

On Nov. 30th we had a guest speaker from the Archdiocese of Toronto to educate us on the topic of Estate Planning. Our invitation to attend went out to the whole congregation and it was nice to see about six non-Kolping members attend.

On a sad note on Nov. 11th we lost our dear friend and very special Kolping brother, Joe Schmid, who passed away much too soon. He was a proud Kolping member and it always showed in the way he carried our Kolping banner. We will never forget Big Joe. His friendly manner and good humor was contagious. Rest in peace, old friend! (**Kolping Winnipeg well remembers Joe; we join Kolping Toronto in mourning his death. Ed.*)

Once again it's time to plan for Christmas, always a special time in our Kolping family. Many of our members belong to the Male Choir, and before Christmas many extra rehearsals are required for the big concert.

May Christmas bring you health, peace and happiness. And let us not forget Christ in Christmas.

Treu Kolping! Steve

MESSAGE FROM KOLPING VANCOUVER

As we look back over the year 2011, it has been a year of monumental changes for Kolping Vancouver. Holy Family Parish had been our home since 1956, but times and circumstances have changed. A lot of soul-searching and discussions had taken place for some time, and with the wholehearted support of our membership we moved our base to St. Monica Parish in Richmond. As anyone who has ever moved knows, moving entails a lot of adjustment, and we are no different; it will take time to adjust to our new surroundings and also to earn credibility and respect with the new parish.

On October 30th we celebrated the Kolping World Day of Prayer with Mass at St. Monica's, in observance of the 20th Anniversary of the Beatification of Adolf Kolping. Vice-president Günther Vetter represented our president Horst Zimmermann, who, with six other members, was taking part in the Rome pilgrimage. We joined Kolping members around the world in praying for the beatification of Kolping. With the help of Erika Fahrman, Resi Knoll and Elisabeth Lange, who went out of their way to prepare the food, our first function turned out well.

Our Rome travellers, who had returned home safe and sound, joined us for Kolping Memorial Day on November 27th, the first Sunday of Advent. In his homily, Father Boniface reminded us to look beyond all the ordinary stress and preparations for Christmas, to pause and take time for longing, hope and the promise of the coming of Christ. At the end of the Mass, Father asked our president Horst to give a short introduction on the work of the Kolping Society. As we gathered for brunch, Father, who had been on vacation at our previous function, felt right at home, happily reconnecting with old acquaintances. Karl Schindler was honoured for 60 years of loyalty to Kolping – an impressive achievement. Karl, our "music man", was initiated in Bavaria. In keeping with the spirit of the Advent season, Christian Rumpf shared two inspiring stories with us: The Talking Christmas Candle and the Christmas Guest. Thank you to our hosts Sigi Araszewski and Resi Knoll for preparing the food, as well as to Heidi Stolting for the beautiful table decorations.

We are sad to report that we had to say farewell to our Kolping brother Joachim Knoll, who

passed away suddenly on November 26th after a long illness. We extend our sincere sympathy to his wife Frances, two children and five grandchildren, as well as to his twin brother Winfried. Joachim and Winfried immigrated to Canada in the early 1950's, where they both joined Kolping and started their families.

As we prepare for the holy Christmas season, we think of all our friends who are ill and keep them in our prayers. On behalf of the Kolping Family of Vancouver, I wish you all the love, peace and blessings of the Christ Child throughout the coming New Year!

With warm Kolping greetings, Rose Vetter

MESSAGE FROM KOLPING WINNIPEG

Our Schlachtfest in October was again a huge success, with a full hall and delicious food, a band that did not want to stop playing and people who did not want to go home! Once again we were all completely exhausted and many muttered about that being the last Schlachtfest as far as they were concerned, etc. etc. It really is getting harder and harder for all of us, but then we start to think what it would mean if we were to stop. Events in the German community in this city are becoming fewer and are less well attended, and if we - Kolping Winnipeg - stop, it will make a huge difference in the overall picture. (An example: On Sunday, Dec. 11th, a formerly powerful German group in Winnipeg held its annual Christmas party. There were only nine children. 80% of the emceeing was in (very bad) English; a brass band played songs and marches for 40 minutes, then 5 minutes of Christmas carols, one verse of each. Santa Claus was just pitiful hanging there in his chair, with his strong German accent, and with his moustache and beard stuck underneath his lower lip. He appeared a little too happy, with a lot of inside jokes and annoying remarks to his 'helper' who wasn't all that steady himself. (Could they perhaps have dipped into the Gluehwein?) On each table there were two paper plates with what worked out to two pitiful store-bought cookies and one slice of Stollen per person. While the coffee was being served, the children were urged, no, begged, to come up for their free drink and a hot dog. Hot dogs, at a German Weihnachtsfeier! A local German choir more or less saved the afternoon.)

We, in Kolping, try a little harder. We have music (piano, accordion, guitars, reed instruments), poems and readings from people of all ages. Our ladies bring a container of their own Christmas baking. There are white table cloths, candles and other beautiful decorations, and we sing our favourite carols. We have a nice St. Nikolaus and there are presents for all the children (brought by the doting grandparents), plus a bag full of goodies for each. Several generations always show up, including several great-grand-parents now. Arranging this is hard work, but it is so rewarding. And it's wonderful to have our young people help serve the wine and coffee and to clear the tables when it's all over; the kitchen is full of buzz and happy laughter. For many of us it is the best of all of our functions.

Our Adventsfeier on the 6th was well attended. Among other things we watched a video about Christmas in Germany, and a 20-year old film of one of our last German midnight masses, celebrated by Fr. Otterbach, with the full choir at its best. We all looked amazing, and so young!!

It is now the 23rd of December, and today the forecast here in Winnipe is for a high of plus 5. Let us rejoice and be glad!

Our annual General Meeting will take place on the 8th of January, after a Mass and luncheon. In the meantime, we wish all Kolping members, their families and friends a peaceful and blessed Christmas, and health and happiness in the coming year.

Treu Kolping!

ED: Our National President, Steve Salb, has thanked all of us who are still working to keep Kolping alive in Canada. I believe that the biggest thank you should go to Steve, a true Kolping warrior. Would there still be a Kolping presence if he were to give up his job? I doubt it. Thank you, Steve!

Treu Kolping!