

# The Canadian Templar



October 2014  
Newsletter



## News and Report from our Grand Prior

The beauty of autumn is here and now summer is just a fleeting memory. It went by so quickly. On September 13, St James Priory in Toronto had their 10th anniversary Investiture along with a change in its leadership. Congratulations to Nick Migliore for being installed as the new Prior. Nick has many years' experience in owning his own security business and is a proven leader, as is his new Chancellor, George Jackowski. Please join me in extending to Prior Nick and his new leadership team every good wish in the further development of the Priory. I would also thank the former Prior, Randy Cronkite for his years of dedication and service to the Toronto Priory and for his continued support. To the newest Knights and Dames - welcome into our Order and I hope you get involved right away in the many good works that are available.

This upcoming week is the International Grand Magistral Council meetings in Bristol England. There is a small group from Canada that will be attending, many have left already.

The next international meetings will be in Tomar Portugal, in either March or April. The exact dates



will be announced at the meetings in Bristol and I will keep you informed. Many have expressed an interest in going to the historic medieval Templar city of Tomar. The next Canadian Investiture will be in Windsor on Saturday November 1.

I wish you and your families a very thankful Thanksgiving on Monday October 13. That date is steeped in Templar history, for on Friday October 13, 1307 King Philip IV of France arrested the Templars on false accusations and tortured and killed many of them.

H.E. Commander (Ret'd) Peter L. Kelly CD, GCTJ,  
Grand Prior of Canada

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## Editors Letter

Talking to a fellow Knight at the Windsor Garden Party he said he usually didn't read pdf attachments or newsletters as he simply didn't have the time. He then said he took the time to read ours and really enjoyed it and hadn't realised how much material it contained. He then suggested that when it was sent out the email should contain a wee introduction to its contents as he thought that would be useful and would have made him read previous issues. And so from that conversation this "Editors Letter" is born. I might add that when Priors send this out to their members they could copy and paste this into their email as an introduction to the newsletter. You can of course edit it to suit your own needs. As this is the first such I am taking the time to make some personal points as well which I don't plan on doing in the future.

In this issue we've continued to add International news and to try to provide educational articles for you to read to better understand and consider the issues. Our continued focus on the Middle East and the issues with ISIS and also Israel are part of what makes us Knights Templars.

Some of the articles in this newsletter include...

- The Hamas trap: hidden labyrinth was wired for war
- Iraq's Christians May Face Extinction
- Drive-in sermons a revelation in Ross-shire
- Sudan: Remarkable address to the recent "Durban Conference" in New York
- Why the US is bombing ISIS in Iraq
- Vladimir Putin on Muslims
- Ukraine crisis: Is the noose around Putin tightening?
- Malala Yousafzai and Kailash Satyarthi win 2014 Nobel peace prize
- Some information on OSMTH activities on the world stage

There is really so much going on these days that I wanted to look at how all this is impacting Christians. In the recent past I feel there has been little focus on the plight of Christians and it was all about the fundamental rights of the Muslim majority to rule their own countries. However as these various articles show there is little religious tolerance in these countries whereas in the West we have freedom of religion and religious tolerance. It's like supporting the Palestinians we fail to understand the intolerance they have for Christian values. That is why I have been focused in telling this story to try and address a more balanced approach to the mainstream media. All of that said you individually need to decide these issues for yourself and I am but providing articles that hopefully make you think.

In this issue we continue to report on the work of Cannon Andrew White in Bagdad as it illustrates the conditions on the ground. I also managed to record a couple of wee videos of our Vicar General speaking at the Windsor Garden Party and one reveals a little of what the International order is doing so hope you enjoy these.

I have also started to expand the reporting of Canadian news from a global perspective. In this issue you will find encouraging reports on Canada's Energy and Agricultural sectors as well as a troubling report on our Tourism industry where we have a \$16 billion travel deficit. We also report on the progress of the talks between Canada and the EU.

To all this I also try to bring you some of Canada's history so you can better understand how we got

to where we are today and this issue brings you the story of the "Experiences of a Backwoods Preacher". And as we are celebrating 150 years since Confederation I am providing a link to a book where you can learn something about the Fathers of Confederation.

As usual individual Priors are doing a great job and I'd like to congratulate the Windsor Priory as the only one that consistently sends their reports in on time. Prior Roy needs to be congratulated not only for his timely submission of his newsletter but also for the range of charitable work that his Priory does. I hope our other Priors will take his lead and be encouraged to do as well.

We in Canada need to set the standard by reporting on our activities so the rest of the world, as well as our own Knights and Dames, can see for themselves what we achieve in our order. Each Priory needs to take full responsibility for reporting their activities as not to do so is just unacceptable. We also need to understand what each Grand Priory is doing in the world and more about how they run their Grand Priory within the context of membership of OSMTH.

Within our own order we have many people fluent in languages other than English. It would thus be great if they could make contact with a Grand Priory in the world to communicate with them in their own language to ask for a report on how they are organised. If they could then translate that to English for this newsletter we could then publish the account. And then they could further look to getting in some updates on their activities and again translate that for this newsletter. Even if you don't know a specific language you may well have a friend that can and so you might encourage your friend or colleague to do this for you.

We in Canada can at the very least set the standard as an example to others in our order.

Our Grand Chancellor, the Rev Dame Nola Crewe and fellow newsletter editor, continues to do her Column but also sends in articles for the newsletter from a variety of sources from around the world. In this newsletter I've provided links to videos of her giving a few of her homilies from her home in Toronto to a small group from her church. We hope this will grow to be a weekly offering but technical challenges still prevail. If anyone in Toronto can help her please get in contact with her direct.

Being conscious of how large this newsletter is getting I am also providing links for additional reading so to get the most use out of this newsletter you should be reading this online with a connection to the Internet. However, at the suggestion of Prior II Matthew Gaasenbeek of Toronto I have started to add page numbers for those that like to print them out. Previous editions of this newsletter can be downloaded at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/Religion/kt.htm>

You'll note when I provide a link it's always the full link and so if you do print it out and then later have an Internet connection you'll be able to type it in from a paper copy.

As usual we also try to bring you more light hearted bits with a touch of humour and even a recipe. The humour this time revolves around lawns which I've always believed just make work for us so was delighted to find this article.

Please remember that all Knights and Dames are encouraged to send in articles for the newsletter. We don't actually hear much at all about what individuals are doing in their own daily lives at work and at home so do share with us. The newsletter is also a great way to tell us something about the charities we support. So rather than just tell us about a charity we've donated to you might consider doing an article about them.

Some upcoming items we are working on for the next newsletter include an article from Prior I of Toronto, Sir George, about how to get Templar medals that you can wear on your Dinner Jacket at our Investitures. We also look forward to hearing from Sir Stuart Ross and his work as deputy secretary of the International order. We'd also like to get an article in about how to get promoted within the order as there seems to be a dearth of facts on this topic and so if someone could do such it would be appreciated.

And finally, feedback is important as I rarely hear from any of you as to your thoughts on the newsletter. So do let me know what you like or don't like and if you want more or less information or suggestions on other topics that would interest you. My email address is available at the foot of this

newsletter as well as my phone number.

I hope you enjoy this issue.

Alastair McIntyre GOTJ.

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## Notable Upcoming Events

Canadian                      International

November 1 Windsor Convent and Investiture

December 14 Christmas Social at Windsor

October 15-19th.GMC Bristol International Meeting

Spring 2015 Tomar, Portugal, International Meeting

Note: Some of the dates can be approximate so to get more specific information do email your Prior for up to date information. Their email addresses are at the foot of this newsletter.

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## News from the Priory of Ascension of Our Lord, Windsor

Your editor attended the Windsor Garden party held at our Grand Prior's home on 17th August and here are a wee selection of pictures I took...

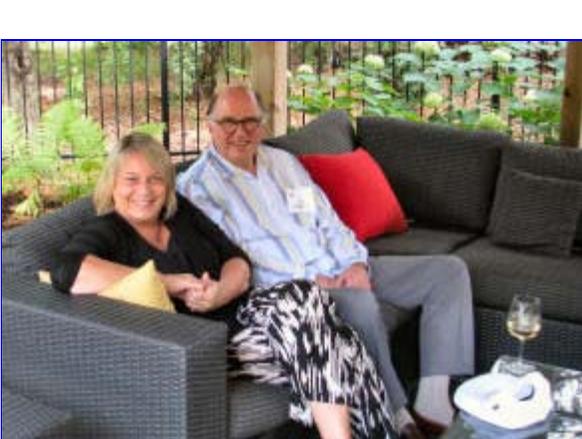


Our Grand Prior who helped me delete my cameras storage disk so I could take some pictures and videos.



On left my fellow photographer and on the right the Prior of Windsor addressing his Knights and Dames

And some Crowd Scenes...





And some good food on offer



Our Grand Prior and Vicar General tell us what is happening in Canada and around the world

I was not confident that video would work but took a couple of small ones and to my surprise they actually came out not too bad at all and I now wish I'd done more.

I recorded two parts from our Vicar General's talk...

Part of his talk he gave on what our order is doing in the world  
<http://youtu.be/FWnfVXsstUE?list=UUrt1y8jPcLXUyeWioSh798w>

A Special Prayer developed by the Knights Templar  
<http://youtu.be/iKxu9K3lJsl?list=UUrt1y8jPcLXUyeWioSh798w>

And here is the actual prayer...

An OSMTH Prayer for Peace in all the world

Almighty God, the Creator of all, we, of the Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem, remind ourselves daily that the Psalmist of old bids us to "PRAY FOR THE PEACE OF JERUSALEM AND THE PROSPERITY OF ALL PEOPLE"

With broken hearts, bruised bodies and wounded souls, we come before you praying for peace to reign in the hearts and minds of all people.

Remembering, that we are Born of God, Redeemed by Jesus Christ, and filled with the Holy Spirit. Help all nations and peoples to put away the crimes of war, the battles of bitterness and cruelty one person to another.

Help us to see all people as the great family of God; in a fellowship of peace with love one for another in the dignity of your created form.

Lord Jesus, you died in the midst of crisis on Calvary's Hill. You were laid in the Sepulchre of Jerusalem and rose above it all to free us from sin and death.

Let us now as Children of God, Sons of Abraham, People of Faith be dead unto the sin of warfare and alive in a new life of peace and unity.

This prayer we offer through Jesus Christ the Prince of Peace and the author of our salvation.

And to that we say Amen, Amen and Amen.

Now here is the account from Prior Roy...

Ascension Priory has had a busy summer and this will continue into the fall and winter months. As you can see by the photos added by Sir Alastair, who we are happy to say attended our Summer

Social, we had a good turnout and a wonderful day for our event. Chancellor Terry Pearce and I are busy making our donation presentations for the 2014 year, as you can see by the attached photos.



Presentation to the Salvation Army and the participants are Chancellor Terry Pearce, Major Scott Rider of the Salvation Army and Prior Roy Embury.



Presentation to Sherry Jones who is very ill and cannot work



St. Leonard's House and the participants are Prior Roy, the Chaplain of St. Leonard's Rev. Riley McLaren, Skip Graham, the Director of St. Leonard's and Chancellor Terry.



Chancellor Sir Terry Pearce and Prior presenting a cheque to Mary Rovers of The Friendship Bible Club



Donation to The Military Families Resource Centre. On the left is Anita Wilson from the Centre and Prior Roy, presenting the cheque.



On the left, Alexandria Fischer, the fundraising co-coordinator and on the right, Catherine Shanahan, the Executive Director of Family Respite Services, receiving a donation from the Prior



Tamara Kowalska of the Windsor Youth Centre receiving a cheque from the Prior.



Mike Dugal of The Assist Group receiving a much appreciated cheque from the Prior.



Connie Martin of Maryvale receives a cheque from Prior Roy



Members of our Priory Council hard at work at a Council meeting



Our Convent and Investiture will be on Saturday 1st November at the Church Of The Ascension in Windsor at 3:30 PM and we invite and encourage all members to join with us for this important event.

Our annual Christmas Social will be on Sunday 14 December at the Windsor Yacht Club from 3:00 PM to 6: PM and once again we encourage all members to come and join us for a celebration of the Christmas season.

In the event you are not able to join us for either of these events allow me to wish everyone a Very Merry Christmas and the happiest New Year Ever.

Semper Paratus  
H. E. Major (ret) Sir Roy Embury, CD, GOTJ  
Priory Of The Ascension Of Our Lord



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## News from St James Priory, Toronto

### Garden Party on Monday 14th July

This was held at the home of our Grand Chancellor, Rev. Dame Nola Crewe between 6 - 8pm and a grand event it was although not as many turned up as was hoped. They missed out on a grand selection of fine wines, spirits and beer and food from one of Toronto's top chefs as well as great conversation and we all had a great time. Your editor attended and took these pictures...



The garden ready for guests.



Note the Regan/Bush sticker on the Beer fridge!



Our Grand Chancellor and lights and fire pit in the evening as it got dark



Our Grand Chancellor and Dame Di, wife of Prior II.



Prior I, Sir George and his wife Dame Joan.



And even your editor got into a shot!



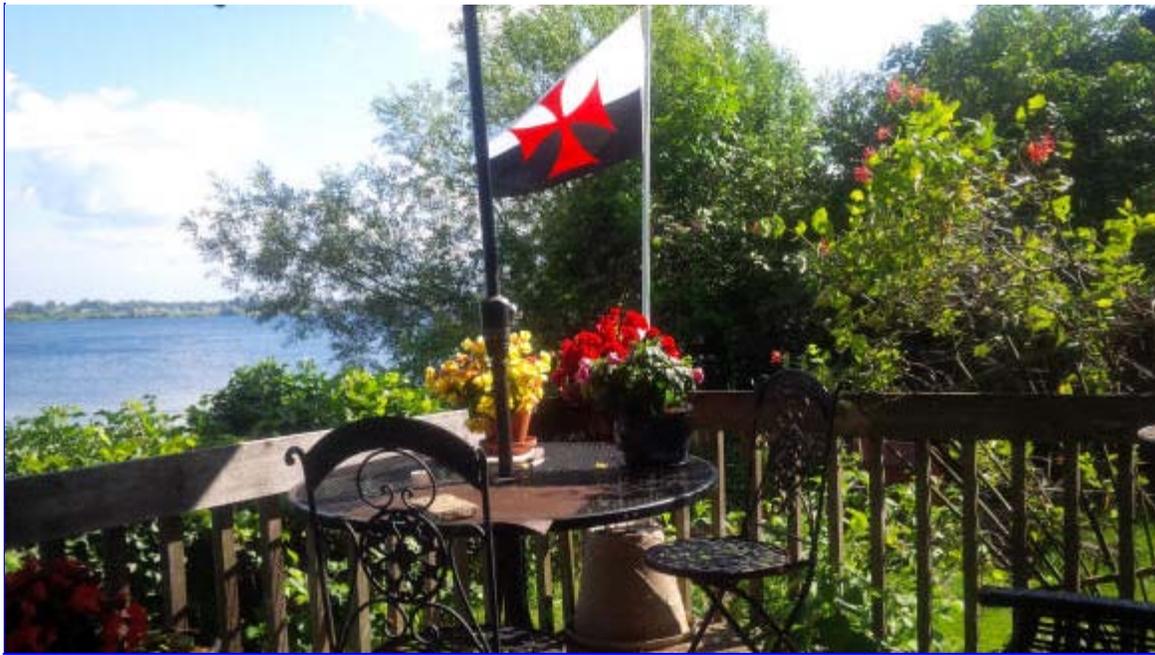
Prior II, Sir Matthew, talking to Sir Derby and his wife Vicky



And excellent food supplied by Cinq Foods, Fine Caterers of Toronto, and that is just a sample of what was on offer. Dame Savannah in attendance with her friend Sean who is visiting from Ireland.

Unfortunately the current Prior and Chancellor were unable to attend.

Templar Flag displayed on the St. Lawrence River  
Sir William Upper is now flying the Templar Flag at the foot of his garden which means anyone sailing up or down the great St Lawrence River will see it.



### Annual Investiture

At this event held in St James Cathedral we saw the outgoing Prior complete his term and the new prior installed. We had new postulants knighted as Dames and Knights and one promotion of Sir Stuart Ross to KCTJ. My thanks to the photographer for sending in these pictures to me direct.



Our Grand Master with the new Prior, Sir Nick Migliore, of St. James Priory.



Group Shot (Clicking on the picture will bring up a much larger version)



Our new Knights and Dame



Newly promoted Sir Stuart Ross KCTJ with the past and new Priors.

And now for some group shots from the banquet following the investiture...





And final pictures of our Vicar General of the International Order and the new Prior, .Nick Migliore

### News from the Priory of Simon Peter, Ottawa

All charitable activities continue. Our KIVA microloans are being repaid at an astonishing rate and we will reinvest any profits with them. Based on our experience with thus activity over the past three

years we highly recommend these loans to other priories and will gladly put you in touch with the organisation on request.

The Aphasia Centre of Ottawa, our local supported charity, received a considerable sum from the annual Walk 'n Talk, which we support by running the food section. We are planning for next year to streamline our costs and thereby increase the practical side of this support. Some of our Knights and Dames also take part in the Centre's Trivia Night fundraisers separately.



Above logo was designed by Jason Camp <http://jasoncamp.net/about/> which we've borrowed to illustrate this article. Should Ottawa wish to get in touch with him he said he'd be happy to design a logo for them to support this charity.

The Hockey Knights in Canada project is gaining momentum, and is being supported by Project North (see <http://projectnorth.ca/>) and the Priory of Saint James. We are now talking with the original Northern recipients of the equipment we collect to see if some of it could be better used in the far-flung communities of Northern Ontario.

Finally, we are looking at two possible dates for our convent and investiture in 2015, and will select one after consultation with the Grand Priory. These dates are April 25 and May 2, to be confirmed in our next update.

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Bill Megill  
Prior, Priory of Simon Peter  
From the Vienna Airport en route to the International Convent in Bristol

They do have a web site at <http://templarsottawa.org/>

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## News from the Commandry of Edmonton

They do have a web site at <http://edmontontemplars.com/>

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## Chancellors Corner

H. E. The Rev Dame Nola Crewe, Grand Chancellor  
Now has her own forum on our Electric Scotland Community.

In this forum she is adding some videos of her Homilies that she does from her home to her wee

congregation from St. Monica's Church.

You can view these videos and correspond with her at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forumdisplay.php/162-Rev-Nola-Crewe>

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## International News

### Middle East and North Africa

The Arab Spring of 2011 launched an era of sweeping political changes in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa, which has historically been the least free region in the world. The fall of longtime leaders and the people's rising demands for a stronger voice in their own governance have brought new opportunities for reform and democratic transition in countries otherwise marked by severe abuses of almost all fundamental political rights and civil liberties. Freedom House is helping citizens to realize these aspirations through a variety of programs across the region.

The Hamas trap: hidden labyrinth was wired for war  
Taken from the ElectricScotland.com Community forums.

Israeli security thought it had adequate intelligence about Gaza. It was in for a surprise. It was not just the labyrinth of tunnels discovered, much more extensive than expected, but the stockpiles: thousands of weapons, Russian anti-tank missiles, explosive devices, and large amounts of tranquillisers, handcuffs, syringes, ropes. The tools of capture on a large scale.

Some of the tunnels are very deep, big enough to hold vehicles. They were dug with electric jackhammers, mostly about 20 metres below ground, and reinforced with concrete made on site, in workshops adjacent to the tunnels.

The tunnels served as command centres, infiltration points into Israel, weapons stores, rocket-launcher hiding sites, and the means to move and conceal fighters during urban combat. The tunnels dug into Israel were created in parallel pairs, with multiple shafts to the surface for multiple entry points. Inside urban Gaza, the labyrinth could allow fighters to move unseen between homes and alleys.

Gaza had been wired for war. On a scale more advanced than Israeli military intelligence realised, which is why the Israel Defence Forces lost more than 40 soldiers in the first phase of Operation Protective Edge.

Areas of cities were laced with hundreds of booby-traps. The commander of the IDF Gaza Division, Brigadier-General Mickey Edelstein, said that in a single street in Khan Yunis in southern Gaza, his soldiers had found booby-traps in 19 of 28 homes. Three Israeli soldiers were killed by an explosive device when they entered a building. The IDF has conceded it was surprised by the scale of the bomb traps across Gaza.

Israel is thus engaging in very limited ground combat in Gaza, given the whole area is a booby-trap of explosives, ambush and civilian targets. The largest known military control centre for Hamas was placed in the basement of a hospital.

The IDF's use of bombing has created a heavy civilian cost.

"Hamas planned these tunnels for years, and planned to use them to kidnap soldiers," chief spokesman for the IDF Brigadier-General Moti Almoz told a recent media briefing.

Actually, since then it has emerged that Hamas had a much broader agenda. Kidnappings can deliver psychological blows to Israel but not strategic ones. Hamas wanted strategic blows. It wants jihad. Having devoted so much to war preparations, by some estimates 40 per cent of its budget, Hamas, with Iran, created the capacity for a major strike on Israel.

Israeli intelligence is assembling evidence from the tunnel labyrinth and from captured Hamas

members, that the scale of the effort was to have the capacity to launch a co-ordinated attack involving thousands of the approximately 15,000 fighters Hamas has trained in Gaza.

Hamas had also doubled its rocket arsenal between 2012 and this year, with hundreds of missiles with the range to reach Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, according to head of IDF military intelligence research Brigadier-General Itai Brun. Bigger missiles had been on their way in March, supplied by Iran and sourced in Syria. But the cargo ship Klos-C, an Iranian vessel under a Panamanian flag, carrying a load of M-302 surface-to-surface missiles, was intercepted by Israeli Navy special forces in the Red Sea.

With each revelation in recent weeks, the mood in Israel is that Operation Protective Edge has averted a catastrophe for the country, a mass terror attack, emerging from underground, incubated by the implacable hatred of Hamas.

The sheer scale of the war infrastructure revealed guarantees that Israel is far from done with this operation. It does not yet know the full scale of what was built and it wants this springboard of war and attrition destroyed. Tunnels have also been discovered in the West Bank, some stocked with bomb-making materials.

This is why the Israel government and public reacted with fury when US Secretary of State John Kerry suggested last week that Israel agree to a ceasefire which included a cessation of its operation to find and destroy tunnels. The proposal was deemed preposterous. (Numerous references to Kerry's facelift reflected the scorn with which his intervention was held.) Even famously pacifist Israeli author Amos Oz has been moved to condemn Hamas for creating a web of warfare through the civilian population of Gaza. At the other end of the political spectrum Economy Minister Naftali Bennett, the leader of the nationalist Jewish Home party, said of the war preparations uncovered: "Without the ground operation, we would have woken up one day to an Israeli 9/11."

Such is the nature of the Israel-Palestinian debate that many people regard all this as Israel reaping what it sows. Even as Israel strikes against a war machine, it is blamed for creating the conditions which created the threat. The result of this logic trap – and the differing standard applied to killings by Jews and killing by Muslims – is that more media coverage and outrage has been directed at Israel for the unintended deaths of children in Gaza than has been directed at the butchery of Muslims by Muslims, on a massive scale, in Iraq and elsewhere. In Syria alone, three years of war have seen between 120,000 and 170,000 people killed, including more than 11,000 children. This violence has spilled into Iraq, with atavistic massacres of prisoners by jihadis from Islamic State.

The deep animosities which are the ultimate source of this bloody absolutism could even be heard on the streets of Sydney last week, in the chants of demonstrators, some waving the black flag of the Islamic State: "Palestine is Muslim land ... Jew and Christian will not stand ... From Lakemba to Gaza ... You can never stop Islam."

Like Jews Before Them, Iraq's Christians May Face Extinction after Jihadist Invasion by Sean Savage/JNS.org

For most Westerners, Iraq is a foreboding and dangerous place that is filled with extremists and daily violence. Yet as little as 75 years ago Iraq was a vibrant country that was home to many different ethnic and religious minorities, including large Jewish and Christian populations.



The abandoned Saint Elijah's Monastery — the oldest Christian monastery in Iraq — located in the Nineveh Province, just south of the city of Mosul.

But the latest round of violence spearheaded by the jihadist terrorist group Islamic State of Iraq and Greater Syria (ISIS), which is driving through the heart of Iraq to the capital of Baghdad and inflicting medieval-style Islamic justice on anyone in its path, might be the last gasp of Iraq's ancient Christian community, which faces extinction like Iraq's Jewish community before it.

"Iraq used to be a beautiful mosaic made of many different faiths, including Judaism," Juliana Taimoorazy, founder and president of the Iraqi Christian Relief Council, told JNS.org.

Like the Jewish people, the Christians of Iraq have a long and storied history that can be traced back to the very foundations of human civilization.

Most Iraqi Christians belong to an ethnic group known as the Assyrians. The Assyrian people consider themselves to be direct descendants of the numerous ancient Mesopotamian civilizations such as the Sumerians, Akkadians, Babylonians, and Assyrians.

"The Assyrians, also known as Chaldeans and Syriacs are the children of Sumerians, the original people of Iraq," Taimoorazy said.

Mentioned numerous times in the bible from Genesis and onward, the peoples of Mesopotamia were key in formation of Judeo-Christian history. It is the land from which the biblical patriarch Abraham hailed. And later on, the Assyrians played a notable role in Jewish history, as they conquered the northern Kingdom of Israel and expelled the Jewish people to Mesopotamia. That led to the creation of Iraq's Jewish community, which continued until the 20th century. Additionally, the Mesopotamians' successors, the Babylonians, were the ones who later destroyed the First Temple in 587 BCE.

Christianity was first brought to modern-day Iraq by Jesus's Apostle St. Thomas during the 1st century CE, making it one of the oldest Christian communities in the world. Christians formed the majority of the country's population until the 14th century. The region's Christians have subdivided since then into a number of churches, with the Chaldean Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East forming the largest denominations.

Today, the Assyrians are based in northern Iraq's Nineveh plains, where they have fought to preserve the customs, culture, and languages of the area's past, despite facing numerous waves of persecution, mass killings, and expulsions since the invasion of Islam in the 7th century CE.

"For hundreds of years Christians have been marginalized in the Islam-dominated part of the world. After the fall of Saddam the situation has been devastating for Christian Assyrians and other minorities such as Mandeans and Yezidies," Nuri Kino—a Swedish-Assyrian Christian who is an independent investigative reporter, filmmaker, author, and Middle East and human rights analyst—told

“More than 60 churches have been attacked and bombed. Rapes, kidnappings, robberies and executions [are all prevalent],” Kino added.

Kino, who has been in constant communication with friends on the ground in Iraq, said that these attacks are all a part of daily life for Assyrians “who don’t have their own militia or any neighboring country to back them up.”

According to Taimoorazy, who has also been in regular contact with a number of people in Iraq, the situation has deteriorated rapidly since the jihadist invasion.

Taimoorazy said that “water and electricity have been cut, there is a shortage of cooking gas, clean water is running out and there is a fear of an outbreak of illness where the refugees have fled.”

“This is a complete disaster for the wellbeing of our nation,” she added.

Before 2003, it was estimated that around 130,000 Christians lived in Mosul, Iraq’s second-largest city, but only about 10,000 remained before the recent ISIS invasion a week ago. Now, residents say around 2,000 Christians remain in the city. Many have gone to the surrounding countryside or to Kurdistan. Additionally, many are seeking to flee the country altogether.

“Mosul is also very important for Christians, the prophet Jonah is buried there and also Abraham is supposed to be born in that part of Iraq,” Kino said,

“I have spoken to more than 20 Assyrian refugees [in recent days]. They are all saying pretty much the same thing: ISIS is a radical Sunni Islamic group who preaches and demands Sharia laws. That means that Christians have to pay a certain tax for protection, convert, or die,” she said.

The latest attacks are nothing new for Assyrian Christians and other minorities. They have faced nearly a century of continuous assault on their way of life.

“We lost 75 percent of our nation during the Armenian, Assyrian, and Greek genocide from 1914 through 1918,” Taimoorazy said.

This has accelerated over the last decade, where nearly two-thirds of Iraq’s 1.5 million Christians have fled the country since 2003.

As the jihadist invasion continues, Iraq’s Christian leaders fear that this may very well be the end of Christianity in Iraq.

“After more than 2,000 years, during which we have withstood obstacles and persecutions, Iraq is today almost emptied of its Christian presence,” Chaldean Auxiliary Bishop Saad Syroub of Baghdad said in an interview with the international Catholic charity group Aid to the Church in Need.

“We fear a civil war. If the various different opposing internal parties do not succeed in finding an agreement, then we must expect the worst. Another war would mean the end, especially for us Christians,” added Syroub.

The modern persecution and expulsion of Iraq’s Christian and other minorities draws many parallels to the waves of attacks on and eventual expulsion of Iraq’s Jewish community during the mid-20th century, when nearly 135,000 Jews were forced to leave from 1948 onwards. Overall, nearly 900,000 Jews were expelled from their homes across the Middle East, many settling in Israel, Europe, and North America.

Similar to Iraq’s Jews, who were targeted for their success and accused of supporting Israel, Christians in Iraq are also being targeted for their relative success and supposed ties to the West, especially the United States.

“The history of Jews and Christians in the Muslim dominated part of the world goes hand in hand.

Massacres and atrocities to the members of the two religions have been going on for centuries," Kino told JNS.org. "It is very sad that the colorful and very cultivated Jewish community of Iraq vanished."

For Iraqi Christians—as well as those in Syria, Egypt, Lebanon, and elsewhere in the Middle East—their ancient communities may soon also vanish, as many flee for safety in Europe and North America.

"At the current rate, with the mass exodus which is being witnessed by the world, the number of Christians left in the Middle East will be slim to none," Taimoorazy said.

There you have an overview of the way things are so my question is "Why isn't the world doing a lot more to protect Christians?"

Could we not collectively create a Christian state in the Middle East where we in the Christian World have a safe haven for all Christians and have a similar state in Africa?

As we can see these Christians leaving their homes in great numbers they are being spread all over the world. It just seems to me that the USA, Canada and Europe are sitting back not knowing what to do. John McCain wanted to bomb Syria but Syria was a place where Christians actually had a role to play in the Government of that country and were protected. So what's McCain's agenda here?

Sudan: Remarkable address to the recent "Durban Conference" in New York  
Sent in by Sir Matthew **Gaasenbeek**

These are the words of Simon Deng, once a Sudanese slave, addressing the Durban Conference in NY.

'I want to thank the organizers of this conference, The Perils of Global Intolerance. It is a great honour for me and it is a privilege really to be among today's distinguished speakers.

I came here as a friend of the State of Israel and the Jewish people. I came to protest this Durban conference, which is based on a set of lies. It is organized by nations who are themselves guilty of the worst kind of oppression.

It will not help the victims of racism. It will only isolate and target the Jewish state. It is a tool of the enemies of Israel.

The UN has itself become a tool against Israel. For over 50 years, 82 percent of the UN General Assembly emergency meetings have been about condemning one state - Israel. Hitler couldn't have been made happier!

The Durban Conference is an outrage. All decent people will know that.

But friends, I come here today with a radical idea. I come to tell you that there are peoples who suffer from the UN's anti-Israelism even more than the Israelis. I belong to one of those people.

Please hear me out.

By exaggerating Palestinian suffering, and by blaming the Jews for it, the UN has muffled the cries of those who suffer on a far larger scale.

For over fifty years the indigenous black population of Sudan -- Christians and Muslims alike --- have been the victims of the brutal, racist Arab Muslim regimes in Khartoum.

In South Sudan, my homeland, about 4 million innocent men, women and children were slaughtered from 1955 to 2005. Seven million were ethnically cleansed and they became the largest refugee group since World War II.

The UN is concerned about the so-called Palestinian refugees. They dedicated a separate agency for them, and they are treated with a special privilege.

Meanwhile, my people, ethnically cleansed, murdered and enslaved, are relatively ignored. The UN refuses to tell the world the truth about the real causes of Sudan 's conflicts. Who knows really what is happening in Darfur? It is not a "tribal conflict."

It is a conflict rooted in Arab colonialism well known in north Africa. In Darfur, a region in the Western Sudan , everybody is Muslim. Everybody is Muslim because the Arabs invaded the North of Africa and converted the indigenous people to Islam. In the eyes of the Islamists in Khartoum, the Darfuris are not Muslim enough. And the Darfuris do not want to be Arabized.

They love their own African languages and dress and customs. The Arab response is genocide! But nobody at the UN tells the truth about Darfur.

In the Nuba Mountains, another region of Sudan, genocide is taking place as I speak. The Islamist regime in Khartoum is targeting the black Africans - Muslims and Christians. Nobody at the UN has told the truth about the Nuba Mountains ....

Do you hear the UN condemn Arab racism against blacks?

What you find on the pages of the New York Times, or in the record of the UN condemnations is "Israeli crimes" and Palestinian suffering.

My people have been driven off the front pages because of the exaggerations about Palestinian suffering.

What Israel does is portrayed as a Western sin. But the truth is that the real sin happens when the West abandons us: the victims of Arab/Islamic apartheid.

Chattel slavery was practiced for centuries in Sudan. It was revived as a tool of war in the early 90s.

Khartoum declared jihad against my people and this legitimized taking slaves as war booty.

Arab militias were sent to destroy Southern villages and were encouraged to take African women and children as slaves.

We believe that up to 200,000 were kidnapped, brought to the North and sold into slavery.

I am a living proof of this crime against humanity!

I don't like talking about my experience as a slave, but I do it because it is important for the world to know that slavery exists even today.

I was only nine years old when an Arab neighbour named Abdullahi tricked me into following him to a boat. The boat wound up in Northern Sudan where he gave me as a gift to his family. For three and a half years I was their slave going through something that no child should ever go through: brutal beatings and humiliations; working around the clock; sleeping on the ground with animals; eating the family's left-overs. During those three years I was unable to say the word "no".

All I could say was "yes," "yes," "yes."

The United Nations knew about the enslavement of South Sudanese by the Arabs. Their own staff reported it. It took UNICEF – under pressure from the Jewish-led American Anti-Slavery Group -- sixteen years to acknowledge what was happening. I want to publicly thank my friend Dr. Charles Jacobs for leading the anti-slavery fight.

But the Sudanese government and the Arab League pressured UNICEF, and UNICEF backtracked, and started to criticize those who worked to liberate Sudanese slaves. In 1998, Dr. Gaspar Biro, the courageous UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Sudan who reported on slavery, resigned in protest of the UN's actions.

My friends, today, tens of thousands of black South Sudanese still serve their masters in the North and the UN is silent about that. It would offend the OIC and the Arab League.

As a former slave and a victim of the worst sort of racism, allow me to explain why I think calling Israel a racist state is absolutely absurd and immoral.

I have been to Israel five times visiting the Sudanese refugees. Let me tell you how they ended up there. These are Sudanese who fled Arab racism, hoping to find shelter in Egypt. They were wrong. When Egyptian security forces slaughtered twenty six black refugees in Cairo who were protesting Egyptian racism, the Sudanese realized that the Arab racism is the same in Khartoum or Cairo. They needed shelter and they found it in Israel. Dodging the bullets of the Egyptian border patrols and walking for very long distances, the refugees' only hope was to reach Israel's side of the fence, where they knew they would be safe.

Black Muslims from Darfur chose Israel above all the other Arab-Muslim states of the area. Do you know what this means!!!!? And the Arabs say Israel is racist!!!!?

In Israel, black Sudanese, Christian and Muslim, were welcomed and treated like human beings. Just go and ask them, like I have done. They told me that compared to the situation in Egypt, Israel is "heaven."

Is Israel a racist state? To my people, the people who know racism – the answer is: 'absolutely not'. Israel is a state of people who are the colours of the rainbow. Jews themselves come in all colours, even black. I met with Ethiopian Jews in Israel. Beautiful black Jews.

So, yes ... I came here today to tell you that the people who suffer most from the UN anti-Israel policy are not the Israelis, but all those people whom the UN ignores in order to tell its big lie against Israel: we, the victims of Arab/Muslim abuse: women, ethnic minorities, religious minorities, homosexuals, in the Arab/Muslim world. These are the biggest victims of UN Israel hatred.

Look at the situation of the Copts in Egypt, the Christians in Iraq, and Nigeria, and Iran, the Hindus and Bahais who suffer from Islamic oppression. The Sikhs. We -- a rainbow coalition of victims and targets of Jihadis -- all suffer. We are ignored, we are abandoned. So that the big lie against the Jews can go forward.

In 2005, I visited one of the refugee camps in South Sudan. I met a twelve year old girl who told me about her dream.

In a dream, she wanted to go to school to become a doctor. And then, she wanted to visit Israel. I was shocked.

How could this refugee girl who spent most of her life in the North know about Israel? When I asked why she wanted to visit Israel, she said: "This is our people." I was never able to find an answer to my question.

On January 9 of 2011 South Sudan became an independent state. For South Sudanese, that means continuation of oppression, brutalization, demonization, Islamization, Arabization and enslavement.

In a similar manner, the Arabs continue denying Jews their right for sovereignty in their homeland and the Durban III conference continues denying Israel's legitimacy.

As a friend of Israel, I bring you the news that my President, the President of the Republic of South Sudan, Salva Kiir -- publicly stated that the South Sudan Embassy in Israel will be built--- not in Tel Aviv, but in Jerusalem, the eternal capital of the Jewish people.

I also want to assure you that my own new nation, and all of its peoples, will oppose racist forums like the Durban III. We will oppose it by simply continuing to tell the truth! Our truth!

My Jewish friends taught me something that I now want to say with you.

AM YISROEL CHAI !

The people of Israel lives!

Thank you

Why the US is bombing ISIS in Iraq

President Obama announced on Thursday that he had authorized the US military to launch air strikes against ISIS militants in Iraq if they threatened the Kurdish capital of Erbil or the thousands of Yazidi minority civilians trapped on Mount Sinjar, both in northern Iraq. "When many thousands of innocent civilians are in danger of being wiped out, and we have the capacity to help, we will take action," he said. Those strikes began early on Friday.

Obama also announced that the US would airlift emergency humanitarian assistance into parts of the country. Why now? What in Iraq has led Obama to this point?

The key reason is that the Islamic State, the militant group better known as ISIS, has made major advances in northern Iraq in the past week. ISIS has swept into territory it had previously barely approached, posing a serious threat to American interests in Iraq and creating a major humanitarian crisis. Here's a guide to what happened, and why it's prompting American air strikes now.

You can more from this article at:

<http://www.vox.com/2014/8/7/5980595/iraq-crisis-bombing>

Vladimir Putin on Muslims

No wonder he was selected by Forbes as the most powerful person in the world!! This is one time our elected leaders should pay attention to the advice of Vladimir Putin. I would suggest that not only our leaders but every citizen of USA should pay attention to this advice. How scary is that? It is a sad day when a Communist makes more sense than our LEADERS but here it is!!!!

Vladimir Putin's speech – HIS SHORTEST SPEECH EVER.

On August 04, 2013, Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, addressed the Duma, (Russian Parliament), and gave a speech about the tensions with minorities in Russia:

"In Russia, live like Russians. Any minority, from anywhere, if it wants to live in Russia, to work and eat in Russia, it should speak Russian, and should respect the Russian laws. If they prefer Sharia Law, and live the life of Muslim's then we advise them to go to those places where that's the state law.

Russia does not need Muslim minorities. Minorities need Russia, and we will not grant them special privileges, or try to change our laws to fit their desires, no matter how loud they yell 'discrimination'. We will not tolerate disrespect of our Russian culture. We better learn from the suicides of America, England, Holland and France, if we are to survive as a nation. The Muslims are taking over those countries and they will not take over Russia. The Russian customs and traditions are not compatible with the lack of culture or the primitive ways of Sharia Law and Muslims.

When this honorable legislative body thinks of creating new laws, it should have in mind the Russian national interest first, observing that the Muslims Minorities Are Not Russians."

The politicians in the Duma gave Putin a five minute standing ovation.

Ukraine crisis: Is the noose around Putin tightening?

The Kremlin is a very different seat of power from 10 Downing Street, the Elysee Palace or the Washington White House.

The word Kremlin means "fortress".

For hundreds of years, that is exactly what it has been, with high walls, towers and a moat; besieged by foreign invaders, from the Polish army in the early 17th Century, to Napoleon 200 years later.

Today there are no foreign armies knocking at the gates.

Yet once again the Kremlin feels threatened.

Whether these are phantom fears or grounded in reality, they are fuelling a siege mentality at the heart of Russian power - one which is dictating Kremlin policy on Ukraine and on the West.

"Putin sincerely believes that 'Orange Revolutions' in Ukraine were instigated by the US State Department and that Kiev's Association Agreement with the European Union is an EU conspiracy to take dominance of Ukraine," says political analyst Andrei Piontkovsky.

"He hates the West for it and despises it."

See the rest of this article at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-29076189>

And on a lighter note...

Drive-in sermons a revelation in Ross-shire

A DEEPLY religious and devout country music fan has started his own drive-in sermons in Ross-shire, and is attracting huge crowds.

Johnny Bremner, 63, has been entertaining north church-goers with his own style of preaching.

Up to 30 cars attended his last service, with many others walking to the 'gig' to take in the atmosphere.

While Johnny plays his gospel music, invited local ministers are providing some divine words.

He set up the drive-through in the car park of Alness Academy last month to "test the waters" on how the public would take to his innovative idea.

Johnny, a member of Rosskeen Free Church, said: "It has just taken off, and I'm delighted.

He claims many people are not keen to sit in church to hear sermons, but this gives them a new avenue, something that is popular in certain parts of America's southern states.

Johnny, who actually got the idea from a similar event at Portrush in Northern Ireland, said: "I have had it in my mind since then, and thought I would try it out during this summer.

"Because of the success, I plan building on it for next year."

He added: "Everyone has an issue in their life. I meet a lot of people and some would want to go to church, but they don't like going into the buildings.

"Then there are disabled people who can't manage going to church, so this drive-in means that people can come along and they won't be seen. But at the same time we are getting the message across.

"It's just an outreach for people to hear the gospel. I do it through music and then someone comes along and gives the word.

"There are people who don't go to church who have been there. I was speaking to a lady who said she heard it way in the middle of Alness, so they hear it whether they come to the service or not."

The initiative has attracted local Rosskeen minister Rev Iain MacAskill and David Hepburn, from the

Fishermens' Mission in Brora.

Islam: Empire of Faith

I discovered a full documentary about Islam which you can view at:

<http://youtu.be/UHhbSvOcz4g>

Malala Yousafzai and Kailash Satyarthi win 2014 Nobel peace prize

A very good report on this can be found at

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/10/wins-nobel-peace-prize-2014>

An earlier interview with Malala can be viewed at

<http://news.nationalpost.com/2014/10/10/nobel-peace-prize-winner-malala-yousafzays-response-to-taliban-death-threats-left-jon-stewart-speechless/>

Joint NGO Statement

The Third Phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education and the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training. 15th September 2014.

As you will be aware OSMTH is an NGO of the UN and so this recent report may well be of interest to you and we are listed in the document. You can read this at:

<http://www.osmth.org/documents/UNStatements/2014%20HRC27.pdf>

ICRD Templar Update

This article is very much worth the read. The ICRD (International Center for Religion & Diplomacy) is truly one of our most valued and internationally recognized cooperative NGO's with OSMTH on the world scene. Both Chev. Dr. Johnston, President of ICRD, and The Rev. Chev. Canon Brian Cox, Senior Vice President of ICRD, are exceptional world leaders in faith based diplomacy. In fact, Canon Cox delivered a number of key presentations at the recent GPUSA annual C&I. It was also he that asked OSMTH to host the Copenhagen-Syrian Conference hosted by GP Denmark about 70 days ago which was attend by many to include Princess Elizabeth, Ennio Senese, Duke Alexander zu Mecklenburg, Tom Curtis (GPUSA), Lars Karstensen (GP Denmark) plus a number of Knights and Dames from Denmark.

Read the update at [http://www.osmth.org/documents/ICRD\\_TemplarUpdate.pdf](http://www.osmth.org/documents/ICRD_TemplarUpdate.pdf)

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## Canadian Updates

Our Prime Minister Harper at the UN

UN promises to ramp up Ebola response as Canada pledges \$30M.

Harper told an interviewer that Canada will consider stepping up its contribution to the US-led effort to stop ISIS, apparently at the direct request of the Obama administration.

Harper's surprising speech to the UN: Full of children, free of ISIS.

UNITED NATIONS – In a year of violence and geopolitical chaos, Prime Minister Stephen Harper used a surprising speech to the United Nations General Assembly to emphasize themes of peace and optimism.

The prime minister's third address to the chamber was remarkable for what it did not include: the words "Iraq" or "Russia."

But he did refer to every child needing a birth certificate, as he spoke at length about child health which he has identified as his No. 1 foreign-development priority.

For further information see:

<http://pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2014/09/25/statement-prime-minister-canada-new-york>

Quick Facts

- Canada and the U.S. have the world's largest and most comprehensive trading relationship, which supports millions of jobs in each country. Bilateral trade in goods and services surpassed CDN\$781 billion in 2013, with more than CDN\$2 billion worth of goods and services crossing the border daily — over \$1 million traded every minute.
- The U.S. is Canada's largest foreign investor, and Canada is the third-largest foreign investor in the U.S. U.S. investment in Canada is primarily in Canada's mining and smelting industries, petroleum, chemicals, the manufacturing of machinery and transportation equipment, and finance. Canadian investment in the U.S. is concentrated in finance and insurance, manufacturing, banking, information and retail trade.
- Canada is the largest foreign supplier of oil, natural gas and electricity to the U.S. In 2013, Canadian energy exports totalled CDN\$128 billion, of which 92 per cent (CDN\$118 billion) were to the U.S.
- About 400,000 people cross between the shared Canadian and U.S. border every single day by all modes of transport.
- A number of major initiatives to further strengthen Canada's economic relationship with the U.S. are currently underway or on the horizon, including:
  - The Beyond the Border Action Plan, which will enhance security and accelerate the legitimate flow of people, goods and services;
  - The Regulatory Cooperation Council, which aims to better align regulatory systems and boost North American trade and competitiveness;
  - The approval of the Keystone XL pipeline, which will create jobs and energy security for both countries; and,
  - The construction of the Detroit River International Crossing, which will reduce congestion, support growth in border traffic and provide a much-needed crossing alternative in this vital trade corridor.

Canada and the U.S. are working closely to boost trade between North America and the Asia-Pacific region through the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which will create jobs and growth both at home and abroad.

#### Quote

“Canada values our deep and enduring relationship with the United States. Our two countries have a long and remarkable history of collaboration on trade and investment, which is critical to our mutual prosperity. We are working together to lay down a modern framework to improve the flow of legitimate trade, travel and investment across our shared border, which will benefit citizens and businesses in both countries.” – *Prime Minister Stephen Harper*

#### 2013 Report on International Religious Freedom: Canada Chapter

It always amazes me how you can get a better overview of Canada from "foreign" reports than is easily found in Canada. In this case we bring you a report from the US State Department...

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor  
 2013 Report on International Religious Freedom  
 April 28, 2014

Reprinted from state.gov.

#### Executive Summary

The constitution and other laws and policies protect religious freedom, and in practice, the

government generally respected religious freedom. The government established an Office of Religious Freedom headed by an official of ambassadorial rank. This office was designed to promote religious freedom and oppose intolerance around the world.

There were reports of societal abuse or discrimination based on religious affiliation, belief, or practice, including both anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim acts.

The U.S. embassy and consulates supported religious freedom through visits to places of worship and outreach to religious groups.

### Section I. Religious Demography

The U.S. government estimates the total population at 34.6 million (July 2013 estimate). According to the 2011 census, the most recent to ask about religious affiliation, approximately 67 percent of the population is Christian. Roman Catholics (39 percent of the population) constitute the largest group, followed by Protestant denominations (22 percent). The United, the Anglican, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Baptist, and Pentecostal churches are the largest Protestant groups. Approximately 3 percent of the population is Muslim and 1 percent is Jewish. Groups that together constitute less than 4 percent of the population include Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs, Scientologists, Bahais, and adherents of Shintoism and Taoism.

According to the 2011 census, 0.2 percent of the population identifies itself as followers of "aboriginal spirituality." Approximately 24 percent of the population claims no religious affiliation.

Most recent immigrants are of Asian origin and generally adhere to religious beliefs different from the majority of native-born citizens. According to the 2011 census, "visible minorities" constitute 19.1 percent of the overall population, with a majority residing in major metropolitan areas across the country.

You can read more of this report at:

[http://www.electriccanadian.com/Religion/canada\\_overview.htm](http://www.electriccanadian.com/Religion/canada_overview.htm)

### Canadian Tourism

A recent report states...

"Almost every country in the world reports increases in foreign arrivals except Canada."

Over the past 11 years Canada has seen a drop in foreign arrivals to the extent that we now have a \$16 billion tourism deficit and you can see reports on this at

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/tourism.htm>

### Canadian Energy Industry

"I obtained a copy of this new report "Energy Review from US Energy Information Administration", the updated report from September 2014 which analyses the Canadian Energy Market. You can read this at

[http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/canada\\_energy.pdf](http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/canada_energy.pdf)

### The Canadian Pulse Market

Canada has developed a multi-billion dollar pulse and special crops industry. Canadian production of the eight major pulse and special crops (pea, lentil, bean, chickpea, mustard, sunflower, canary seed and buckwheat) increased from about 1,000,000 tonnes in the early 1990s to 5.7 million tonnes in 2010, more than a fivefold increase in 20 years.

A real success story for Canada and you can learn more about this multi billion export market at

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/agriculture/pulses.htm>

And as we're now getting into the colder weather here is a recipe for ..

Hearty Lentil Soup...

6 servings

1/2 cup chopped onion  
1/2 cup chopped celery  
1/2 cup chopped carrot  
1 slice bacon, chopped  
2 teaspoons minced garlic  
7 cups (or more) canned low-salt chicken stock  
2 cups dried lentils (about 12-1/2 oz.)  
2 large sprigs fresh thyme or 1/2 teaspoon dried  
1 bay leaf

Combine onion, celery, carrot, bacon, and garlic in a heavy, large Dutch oven.  
Stir over medium-high heat 2 minutes.  
Reduce heat to medium-low and cover and cook until veggies are tender, about 7 minutes.  
Uncover and add 7 cups broth, lentils, thyme and bay leaf and bring to a boil.  
Reduce heat and simmer uncovered until the lentils are tender, stirring occasionally, about 45 minutes.  
Discard thyme and bay leaf.  
Transfer 1/2 of soup to a food processor, cool slightly.  
Puree until smooth. Return puree to Dutch oven.  
(Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover and refrigerate.)  
Bring soup to a simmer, thinning with more broth, if desired.  
Season soup to taste with salt and pepper.

A video of a similar recipe can be viewed at:  
<http://www.electricscotland.com/food/recipes/soup.htm>

An overview of the Agricultural market 2014  
I obtained this report from Stats Canada and it makes excellent reading. You can view this at  
<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/agriculture/index.htm>

Charlotte County, New Brunswick - An Aquaculture Success Story

Once hard hit by unemployment, the economy of Charlotte County, in southwest New Brunswick, has been economically transformed by aquaculture.

Aquaculture now accounts for more than 3,000 full-time jobs in the local area, representing 25% of the entire workforce. Direct employment wages, salaries and benefits expenditures are estimated at \$47 million. In the related supplies and services industries - such as boat building, net and cage manufacturing, machine shops, etc. - it is estimated that an additional 2,900 jobs have been created. These positions add close to \$46 million to regional payrolls.

On the island of Grand Manan alone, there are approximately 240 direct and indirect full time, year round jobs that are related to the salmon farming industry. Projections indicate that a 30% growth in employment can be realized in the next few years - bringing 73 new jobs and an additional \$1.3 million in wages to the island. Tax revenues to New Brunswick from the salmon farming industry on Grand Manan now exceed \$4.5 million.

“Be it Resolved that the Village of Grand Manan supports and encourages the continued growth and diversification of the Aquaculture Industry within Southern New Brunswick.”

Canada's Public Health Response to Ebola  
Canada is part of the global outbreak response. It is helping by:

Giving health care workers in Sierra Leone access to laboratory services to diagnose infection quickly;  
Donating doses of Canada's experimental vaccine to WHO; and  
Donating extra funding to WHO and Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders, to help reduce and contain the Ebola outbreak.

More information can be found at:

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/id-mi/vhf-fvh/ebola-response-reponse-eng.php#a2>

ISIS mission: Divided, uncertain Canada edges gingerly into Iraq

The government has announced plans to deploy six fighter jets and 600 troops in a six-month air combat mission against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. The Liberals seem divided on the plan, the NDP steadfastly opposed and the Conservatives themselves reluctant combatants. (Paul Chiasson/Canadian Press)

Declaration by the Prime Minister of Canada and the Presidents of the European Council and European Commission – a new era in Canada/EU relations



Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, and José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, walk down the Hall of Honour in Centre Block on Parliament Hill during the Canada-European Union Summit.

Ottawa, Ontario  
26 September 2014

We, the leaders of Canada and the European Union (EU), meeting today in Ottawa, are committed to strengthening and deepening our strategic partnership that builds on our shared history and values. We reaffirmed our commitment to contributing to our mutual prosperity through our continued cooperation. We discussed the next steps with respect to the Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (Canada-EU Trade Agreement) and the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA), which together mark the beginning of a new, dynamic chapter in relations between Canada and the EU. We have also consulted on plans to strengthen our joint efforts to address international peace and security challenges and other crucial global issues of mutual concern.

#### Trade and the Economy

Today marks a truly historic moment in the evolution of the Canada-EU relationship as we celebrate the end of negotiations of the Canada-EU Trade Agreement. The Agreement delivers on the 2009 promise of a very comprehensive liberalization of trade in goods and services, significant new opportunities in government procurement, provisions to enhance and encourage investment, and improved and modernized rules on other trade-related issues. The Canada-EU Trade Agreement also establishes a range of cooperation mechanisms that will ensure continued collaboration between Canada and the EU as we continue to strengthen and deepen our economic partnership. At the same time, Canada and the EU place a strong emphasis on sustainable development, on cultural diversity, and on the right to regulate in the public interest within their territories.

Recognizing that this is a time of continued recovery in the global economy, we highlight the importance of the Canada-EU Trade Agreement as a vehicle to create new prosperity on both sides of the Atlantic. The Agreement will help generate more trade and two-way investment, and promote jobs and growth. We will work expeditiously to ensure that all our businesses, workers and consumers throughout Canada and EU Member States are equally positioned to realize the opportunities created by this historic accord as soon as possible, and will lend our full support to its early ratification through our respective legal and political processes.

This ambitious and ground-breaking agreement between Canada and the EU sends a positive signal about the importance of further trade liberalization. We are committed to undertaking further efforts to put the Trade Facilitation Agreement and other decisions of the 9th WTO Ministerial Conference back on track.

#### Deepening our Strategic Partnership

Today, we also celebrate the successful end of negotiations for the Strategic Partnership Agreement between Canada and the EU, which offers an important cooperation framework to strengthen our relations and deepen our foreign policy cooperation, and provides a platform for joint action on global issues. The SPA will contribute to stronger ties in areas such as energy, research and innovation, science and technology, and the Arctic. The agreement also seeks to enrich our dialogue on issues that directly affect the well-being of our peoples, such as the environment, migration, consular protection, people-to-people links and the special needs of youth.

We commit to ensure, as soon as possible, visa-free travel between our countries for all Canadian and EU citizens, also so that they will benefit fully from the new trade and economic opportunities that are being created between Canada and the EU.

#### International Peace and Security

Based on our common values and in order to foster global peace and security, we will work together to promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law. We will also enhance EU-Canada and Transatlantic cooperation in international peace and security, the fight against terrorism and organized crime, and international non-proliferation and disarmament.

Canada and the EU remain deeply concerned by the situation in Ukraine, and condemn the aggression by Russian armed forces on Ukrainian soil and the illegal annexation of Crimea. While we welcome the agreements on a ceasefire reached in Minsk on 5 September and 19 September 2014, they must be respected and fully implemented. Russia must withdraw its military assets and forces from inside Ukraine and along the Ukrainian border, and continue to de-escalate the situation. Russia must also take concrete steps to allow for a political and diplomatic solution that fully respects Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We expect Russia to return to the path of full compliance with international law and its international obligations and responsibilities. Canada and the EU continue to follow the developments on the ground, and stand ready to adapt their reaction and decisions with a view to encouraging further progress. In this context, we emphasize our commitment towards long lasting peace, prosperity, stability and security in Eastern Europe, and to that end support the further development of the Eastern Partnership.

Canada and the EU are extremely concerned by the deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation in Syria and Iraq as a result of the occupation of parts of their territory by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). We are appalled by and firmly condemn the indiscriminate killings and other violations of international law perpetrated by this and other terrorist organisations, in particular against persons belonging to religious and ethnic minorities and against women and other vulnerable groups. Those responsible for such crimes must be held to account. We will, with other partners from within and outside the region, assist the people of Syria and Iraq to act decisively against the threat of ISIL. Instability in Syria, caused by the Assad regime's brutal war against its own people, has allowed ISIL to flourish. A lasting solution urgently requires a political transition in Syria. In Iraq, we will work together to support the Iraqi people to meet this challenge, and stand ready to support a new inclusive Iraqi government as it moves to address the needs of all Iraqis, regardless of ethnic origin or religious belief.

We strongly believe that determined action is required to stem the flow of foreign fighters and will accelerate efforts to prevent radicalisation and extremism, share information more effectively, dissuade, detect and disrupt suspicious travel, prevent financial support, and investigate and prosecute foreign fighters.

Building on our long-standing cooperation in crisis management and support for good governance, we will strengthen cooperation further in support of our respective efforts in the wider Middle East, Africa, Central America, the Caribbean, and the Western Balkans.

#### Global and Regional Issues

We will revitalize our cooperation in energy including under the 2007 High-Level Energy Dialogue, particularly in key areas such as energy security, increased energy efficiency, renewable energy, the safe and responsible exploitation of conventional and unconventional energy resources, LNG trade, and improved market transparency and stability.

We reaffirm our determination to work together and with partners towards the adoption of an ambitious, effective, fair climate agreement applicable to all, with legal force, in December 2015 at the UNFCCC Conference of Parties in Paris (COP21), for which we will communicate our national mitigation contributions as agreed in Warsaw, with a view to doing our part to limit effectively the increase in global temperature below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. We will continue to work with others to mobilize climate finance from a variety of sources, including the private sector, to enable the investment shift required for the long-term transition towards low-emission economies, including through financial support to developing countries.

We welcome the deepening of ties in Arctic cooperation, including through the Arctic Council. EU and Canada are strategic partners in the field of research and innovation. We wish to reinforce our collaboration under the existing Agreement for Scientific and Technical Cooperation Between Canada and the European Community through active participation in the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme, including in priority areas of Arctic and marine research, in follow-up to the 2013 Galway Statement.

We are committed to work with all partners to agree to an ambitious post-2015 development agenda anchored in a single set of goals which should be action-oriented, concise, limited in number, aspirational, global in nature and universally applicable to all countries, while taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development, and respecting national policies and priorities. The agenda should reinforce the international community's commitment to poverty eradication and sustainable development. We also remain committed to the need for a strong post-2015 accountability mechanism.

We discussed the health of women and children as a pressing global issue, welcomed initiatives such as the May 28-30 Toronto Summit and sessions held this week on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly on these issues, and noted that ending preventable maternal and child deaths within a generation could be within arm's reach with a renewed global commitment.

Canada and the EU expressed their concern about the Ebola crisis in Africa, and stressed the importance of a coordinated international response to assist affected countries to tackle the diseases as swiftly and efficiently as possible.

This Ottawa Summit has given renewed voice and vision to our partnership, and has positioned us to work more closely and effectively together across a range of priority areas, for the prosperity and security of our peoples, and the global community.

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## Canadian History

Experiences of a Backwoods Preacher

Facts and Incidents culled from thirty years of Ministerial life by Rev. Joseph H. Hilts, Second Edition (1892)

I did mention in a previous issue that I was working on this book and so here it is for you to read. I think it shows very well how ministers in these pioneering times did much to help make Canada into what it is today. This likely represents the many ministers that worked all over Canada.

Here is part of the first chapter which also serves to show the importance of the Backwoods Preacher...

In this chapter I propose to relate a few incidents in my own life before I commence to give the experiences that I have had as a minister in the backwoods.

I was born in the township of Clinton, in the county of Lincoln, Upper Canada, May fourth, eighteen hundred and nineteen. My parents were both children of U. E. Loyalists, so that on both sides I claim descent from those whose loyalty cost them something, and whose attachment to Britain and her institutions led them to leave good homes in the States and come into the wilderness of Canada to make new homes for themselves, where, under the protection of the British flag, they might be safe, and under the shade of the maple leaf they might be contented.

My father did military duty during the last year of the war of eighteen hundred and twelve, and at the close of the war he was granted land in what was then called the new purchase, on the north of Lake Ontario.

When I was a few weeks past three years old my parents moved to their home in the wilderness, it being on the last lot in the ninth concession of the township of Esquesing, in the county of Halton. The home consisted of a log shanty that my father had put up the summer previous, and about an acre of clearing that had been done at the same time.

Among the first things that I can remember is looking at the shanty the day that we arrived. It seemed to me that it was a strange-looking house, with its bark roof and stick chimney and floor of hewed logs, and its door of split cedar, and its one light of glass for a window. But that little unpretentious building was our home for several years. At that time I had a little younger sister and a baby brother two months old. They have both gone over to the great company on the other side of the river. The sister went more than fifty years ago, and brother within the last few months. My father had a brother who had settled the year before on an adjoining lot, and another brother came in the following year and settled near by, so that his life in the new country was not so lonesome as it otherwise would have been.

Not long after we had got settled in our new home, one evening about sundown we were treated to an impromptu chorus by some of the denizens of the forest, which was, in hunter's language, the howling of a pack of wolves. To describe the peculiar music made by "a pack of wolves" would be too much for the genius of a Dickens or the poetic power of a Scott.

#### Pioneers at work

To one who never heard the sound before, the impression would likely be that the noise came out of the ground. At first he hears a plaintive tone, as if low down on the minor scale. Then it seems to ascend step by step until the highest major notes are reached. And, what seems most strange of all, is that the lower tones do not cease as the higher are produced; but they continue right on until the listeners hear sounds that represent every note on the musical scale, from the lowest minor to the highest major, including all the transpositions.

My father was a blacksmith by trade, and he had brought some of his tools with him, and among the rest an anvil. When the wolves commenced to make the woods vocal with their musical efforts, father thought that he would give them as much of a surprise as they had given us. So he loaded up the anvil with a heavy charge of powder, and set it off with a coal that he held with a pair of tongs. The noise produced by the firing of that anvil was, perhaps, the most startling sound that had ever awakened the echoes of these forest wilds. When the anvil went off, at first the report seemed to pass away, but as the sound struck the wall of the tall forest trees that surrounded the little clearing it seemed to be broken into fragments which came back to us like a thousand distinct echoes. But the wolves seemed frightened, and we heard no more of them for that time. It was not long, however, before they made their presence known in a more tangible way than by making a noise. My father

brought some cattle with him. One was a nice heifer two years old. One morning just outside of the clearing the bones of the heifer were found picked by the wolves. The first settlers often lost their cows and young cattle in this way. And for some years the life of a sheep was worth nothing, unless kept in an inclosure with a fence so high that a wolf could not get over it.

And the black bears were by no means scarce in the locality, as more than one empty pig-pen bore its testimony in the early days of the settlement. I might relate almost any number of "bear stories" if it would be desirable to do so, but I will relate one at all events. One of my uncles had left the place that he first located on, and had gone on a lot a mile and a half away from any house right into the solid bush. One morning about the break of day the loud squealing of a pig awakened him. He had two nice pigs in a pen near his house, and it was one of these that was making the noise. He ran out in a hurry to see what was the matter. He saw a large black bear clambering out of the pen and dragging one of the pigs after it. He picked up a handspike and began to belabour the bear with such force that it dropped the pig which was almost dead, and ran off towards the woods. My uncle put the pig upon a shed, and started to get help to catch the bear. By nine o'clock he returned with a lot of men, and dogs, and guns, which belonged to a sort of Club that had been formed for hunting bear and wolves. When they came they found that bruin had returned and carried away the pig from off the shed. They set the dogs on the trail, and started in pursuit of the depredator. They had gone about a half a mile in the woods, when they came to the place where his bearship had made a hasty breakfast off the stolen pork. He left the remains for more voracious and less fastidious eaters than himself, while he went on to find a safe retreat where undisturbed he might enjoy his noonday snooze without molestation. But the dogs soon stirred him up, and started him off at a rapid rate, while by their barking they gave notice to the hunters that they had found the bear.

The chase now became very lively, and from the fact that the bear did not take to a tree, the inference was that he was a very large one, which proved to be true. After a run of three or four miles, the hunters came up to the dogs, and found the bear in a small pond. Part of the dogs were in the water, and the bear apparently was trying to drown them by dipping them under the water with his paws. The men were afraid to shoot, lest they should kill the dogs, which refused to leave the bear, and he as stubbornly refused to come out of the water. At length, one of the men took a gun loaded with two bullets, and he waded into where he could place the muzzle of the gun to the bear's ear and fired the whole charge into its head. In a minute it was lying dead in the water. The men pulled it out and found it to be a very large and fat one. In skinning the carcass they found traces of old bullet wounds. By following the tracks they found no less than six balls, all of one size, with the flesh grown up around them. It was quite evident that at some time the poor brute had formed a very painful acquaintance with lead, but whether it belonged to white men or Indians no one could tell. But I must leave the bears and wolves to themselves, and write about something of more importance.

#### Our First Pastoral Visit.

The first minister to visit our home in the bush was a Methodist by the name of Heyland. Though it was more than sixty years ago, it seems as fresh in my mind as if it was but a few months since. In front of our shanty there was a good-sized creek, over which had been made a temporary footbridge of poles to walk on. One day my mother was standing in the door, and seeing a man trying to feel his way over the creek, she called father to go and see who it was, and if he needed help. When father got to him, he found that the man was near-sighted. This was why he had to feel for his way. Father assisted him over the creek, and brought him into the shanty. Then the man said, "My name is Heyland; I am a Methodist minister; I am hunting for the scattered sheep in the wilderness." Not understanding what he meant, I went up to mother and whispered to her, "If the wolves that killed our heifer find his sheep, they will not be worth much to him when he finds them." She replied to me that the good man did not mean sheep with wool on, but he spoke of the people who were scattered in the wilderness. Mr. Heyland had prayer, filter which he talked to my parents on religious subjects for a while, and then after laying his hand on the head of each one of us children, and devoutly asking God to bless all of us, he went away to visit other families. Who can estimate the value of such a visit. Little did Mr. Heyland or my parents think, that after more than threescore years, the coarse-looking, awkward boy, who then stood listening to their talk, would, with a swelling heart and a tear-dimmed eye, write about the visit of the pioneer preacher to one of the pioneer families.

Who can even form a conjecture of the amount of the influence that the Methodist preachers have exerted on the social and religious life of the people of this country.

They have greatly assisted in laying the foundations of the social structure. They have heard almost the first echoes of the woodman's axe, and they have gone to encourage him in his toil. They have impressed 'their teaching and their influence upon the hearts and minds of thousands of the children of the pioneer families of this Province as no other class of men has done. There can be no doubt on the question. The religious element of Canadian society owes very much to Methodism.

You can read this book at

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/Religion/backwoods/index.htm>

Canadian Confederation and its Leaders

By M. O. Hammond

THE Dominion of Canada is no longer an experiment. The union now so prosperous and solidified was adopted in the face of much opposition, and without directly consulting the people except in New Brunswick. For many years the lack of progress under the new constitution was accompanied by doubt and resentment. Conditions have changed and the party strife of that era has passed with the death of the last of the Fathers of Confederation. It seems timely, therefore, to examine the part played by the leaders of that day in the various provinces in bringing about the union. In this volume an attempt is made to present this service in proper perspective. Most of the men described were favorable to union, others were opposed and fought it until the final decision. An arbitrary selection for such a series may be open to criticism, but it will be found that each of those sketched in the following pages was an important factor and leader of opinion.

As we're about to celebrate 150 years of Confederation in Canada I thought it timely to make available this information for you to study. You can read this at

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/confederation/index.htm>

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Canon Andrew White

Greetings from the USA – Update from Canon Andrew White

SEPTEMBER 18, 2014

Dear Friends,

Greetings from the USA, we have been here for the past week having a whole variety of meetings in Washington DC, mainly with US government officials relating to the nature of our work in the present crisis. It has been a very productive visit and we are sure that it will have long term results for our work both in Iraq and internationally.

One of the highlights of the trip was the meeting yesterday with Dr Casey, the Special Advisor to the Secretary of State for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. Dr Casey is very much behind our work and hopes to come and visit us in Baghdad in the coming weeks.

Another highlight of the trip was the presentation to me yesterday of the Anne Frank Award for Religious Tolerance. This was a very major event organised by the Government of Holland, and the response from the US and Dutch governments was very positive. It was a very good event with many dignitaries present who very graciously recognised my role in peace-making in the Middle East, acknowledging the very considerable risks that I had taken. It meant a lot to me that this award was in memory of Anne Frank, a young girl who epitomises the international role in working for religious freedom having personally given her life in search for the freedom of religion.

Today I move on to a series of meetings in New York and then tomorrow fly to Dallas for more meetings and interviews on Daystar television.

Thank you for your continued support for the persecuted Christians in Iraq, what we have been able to do in relief and reconciliation has truly been outstanding and more than we ever thought was possible. I thank you sincerely for all your efforts in this regard. We will continue in our work, there

are approximately 1.8 million IDPs in Iraq now and we aim to continue trying to help as much as possible. If you are able to watch Daystar television please do so, particularly on Friday and Saturday when you will be able to hear a lot more about what is happening.

With every blessing,

SEPTEMBER 30, 2014

Dear Friends,

Greetings from Baghdad. People are very fearful the nation looks as if it has collapsed. The usual hectic and crazy streets were this morning almost empty. The news from our friends in areas surrounding Baghdad is equally worrying, the Islamic State (ISIS or DAASH as they are known locally) are very close to Baghdad. We do not really know what is happening all we know is that people are very afraid. We know that civilians have been killed in air strikes; we know that there are huge battles with ISIS; and we know that our army is not very efficient.

This morning I was with one of my soldiers who is assigned by the government to protect me. I asked him what he would do if he saw ISIS coming. He told me he would take off his uniform and run. So I asked if he took seriously his role as a soldier to fight and protect his people, he assured me he did not. He told me he just did it because he needed the money.

Meanwhile yesterday at Church I spoke on the subject of why we must love Israel. I posted the following brief posting:

“Why We Must Love Israel. This was the title of my sermon today, quite an interesting title for a sermon in Iraq. The sermon was based on Romans Chapter 11, “do not boast over the root for the root supports you”. The sermon was well received as I have been working on the issue for so long. Because Abraham is so important to us here the issue of the Yehudi and us is taken very seriously. Despite being in Iraq I love the Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians, and Iraqis and G-d loves them all too.”

I received a barrage of postings from people whether they hated Israel and saw them as anti-Palestinian or they were totally for Israel. What most people failed to understand was that loving Israel was far more than love for a State – it was love for a people. Love for a people that my Lord Jesus was part of and that our salvation came from. Though can we see that we are called to love Jews and Arabs alike but that loving Israel is not an option for those of us who love Yeshuah, we have to. We must not forget the history. We as Christians have got to accept that our theology was responsible for the development of Anti-Semitism. I spent hour's yesterday just answering questions on this subject. I am not going to answer any more. I have just written a small book on the subject called ‘The Older and Younger Brother’. It can be purchased on our website, [www.frrme.org](http://www.frrme.org) at a cost of £5.

At 2.40 am this morning I had a call from one of the security chiefs at the US Embassy here in Baghdad. Congressman Trent Franks in DC, who was very concerned about my security situation, had contacted them. He in turn had been contacted by one of our US Board members. We were with the congressman just last week, he is a good friend. The issue that was so worrying to the Embassy was that I no longer even have a badge to get into the Green Zone. I have a badge to get into the US and British Embassies but I cannot even get to them without being able to get into the Green Zone. We were able to get in until all the Badges to the Green Zone were replaced 6 months ago. So the Embassy say they will work at getting us the badge today. I really pray that this will happen today.

Added to all these problems my hearing aids got lost when the cleaner was cleaning my room. Without these I can hear very little and my work becomes really difficult. I have managed to order new ones, which my staff who are coming to Israel with me next week can hopefully take with them. I just pray that G-d will help me find the £2700 I need to buy them. No insurance is covered in Iraq so we cannot claim for things lost or stolen here.

The latest news this morning appears to be that the further advance of ISIS towards Baghdad appears to have been halted. How far they are from here varies according to who is providing the

information but they appear to be 5-15 miles away and in the last 12 hours have not got closer. So we live in hope. Sorry this update is longer than usual but rather a lot is happening. We seriously need your prayer.

Love to you all,

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## Secrets of Mary Magdalene - Knights Templar Gnostic Secrets

This is a good overview of Biblical analysis identifying the role and significance of Mary Magdalene, the Saint of the Templars and Gnostic Cathars, who is traditionally believed by the Knights Templar to have been an Apostle of Jesus. It is a concise summary of references in both the New Testament and the Gnostic Lost Gospels of the Nag Hammadi Scrolls.

This video explains that "Magdalene" actually meant "The Tower", her nickname and title of prominence and importance among the Apostles, and did not mean "from Magdala"

Academic and scholarly research that reveals the deeper underlying roots and origins of Christianity is often mistakenly used to attack the principle of faith. In the ecclesiastical opinion of the Sovereign Magistral Order of the Temple of Solomon, as the original and direct lineal continuation of the Knights Templar from 1118 AD, such criticism is superficial, deceptive, and based solely upon bad logic.

Jesus the Essene Nazarene is famous for "teaching in parables", which by definition means that the Gospels were always all about metaphor. There is absolutely nothing anywhere in the Old Testament or New Testament that says that the Bible must be taken literally, and even the Nicean Council which edited the Gospels knowingly left in a multitude of original metaphorical keys and clues to the true ancient wisdom. Jesus himself constantly emphasized that initiates who are aware of the topics and precepts, metaphorically "those with eyes to see", can easily pick up on the symbolic clues to read into the Gospels their full original more ancient meanings.

When educational research proves that things that people say about the Bible is not true, it is easy enough to see that the Bible itself does preserve that truth in its own actual authentic words. This is no reason to criticize faith, and does not undermine Christianity nor any other denomination or faith. Indeed, it is the ancient roots and deeper esoteric secrets underlying the religion that in fact give it much more legitimacy, greater relevance, and stronger significance to having real faith in the modern era.

You can watch this YouTube video from the Discovery channel at

[http://youtu.be/4iMZTzl\\_cFo](http://youtu.be/4iMZTzl_cFo)

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## A Wee Bit of Humour

GOD: Francis, you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there in North America? What happened to the dandelions, violets, thistle and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect, no-maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long lasting blossoms attracts butterflies, honey bees and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colors by now. But all I see are these green rectangles.

ST. FRANCIS: It's the tribes that settled there, Lord. The Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers "weeds" and went to great lengths to kill them and replace them with grass.

GOD: Grass? But it's so boring. It's not colorful. It doesn't attract butterflies, birds and bees, only grubs and sod worms. It's temperamental with temperatures. Do these Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?

ST. FRANCIS: Apparently so, Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn.

GOD: The spring rains and warm weather probably make grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites happy.

ST. FRANCIS: Apparently not, Lord. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it, sometimes twice a week.

GOD: They cut it? Do they then bale it like hay?

ST. FRANCIS: Not exactly Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.

GOD: They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?

ST. FRANCIS: No, sir -- just the opposite. They pay to throw it away.

GOD: Now, let me get this straight. They fertilize grass so it will grow. And when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?

ST. FRANCIS: Yes, sir.

GOD: These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.

ST. FRANCIS: You aren't going to believe this, Lord. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it.

GOD: What nonsense. At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stroke of genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the autumn they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. Plus, as they rot, the leaves form compost to enhance the soil. It's a natural circle of life.

ST. FRANCIS: You'd better sit down, Lord. The Suburbanites have drawn a new circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into great piles and pay to have them hauled away.

GOD: No. What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in the winter and to keep the soil moist and loose?

ST. FRANCIS: After throwing away the leaves, they go out and buy something which they call mulch. They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves.

GOD: And where do they get this mulch?

ST. FRANCIS: They cut down trees and grind them up to make the mulch.

GOD: Enough! I don't want to think about this anymore. St. Catherine, you're in charge of the arts. What movie have you scheduled for us tonight?

ST. CATHERINE: "Dumb and Dumber," Lord. It's a real stupid movie about ---

GOD: Never mind, I think I just heard the whole story from St. Francis.

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