

Christian graduate education for over 30 years

ART TALKS! THE RUTH MEMORIAL SERIES ON THE ARTS AND CULTURE

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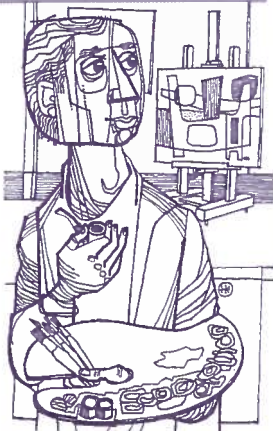
Traces of Colour: Faithful artists across the globe

— an evening lecture and a one-day conference designed to help Christians in the arts to gain a global perspective on their activities, and to foster links with other artists and groups.

By Chris Cuthill

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Psalm 72.7&17, pen drawing by Henk Krijger

On Thursday evening, about 100 people heard Nigel Goodwin weave a stream of consciousness tapestry of stories, reminiscences and aphorisms with a poetic panache, pleading for the importance of art in all of life. An actor influenced heavily by the Dutch art historian Hans Rookmaaker, Nigel has spent the past 30 years providing encouragement and support to artists on their personal spiritual journeys. As founder of the Arts Center Group in London, England, and the current director of the Genesis Arts Trust, he has used his special gifts of pastoral empathy to create a safe place for many artists.

The Friday one-day conference began with Cal Seerveld and his “traveler’s diary” look at various Christian artists he has interacted with in his cross-cultural journeys. Dr. Seerveld examined issues of enculturation by probing the disparate ways in which artists deal with their cultural traditions.

Particularly poignant was Seerveld’s lament for artists whose conversion to Christianity has prompted them to leave their culture behind – to the detriment of their work.

Peter Smith, a printmaker and art department head of Kinston College in London, England, offered a personal narrative of his life-journey from his time as an art student till the present – and how, as a Christian, he has found his way in a variety of traditions, from colour field painting to wood-block prints. This was followed by James Tughan who discussed his series of 5 drawings collectively titled, *Dreaming of Lions*. The series is an illustrated narrative of a fictional people’s

journey from “isolation and abuse to community and healing”.

The final speakers of the day were Stuart Scadron-Wattles, producing artistic director of Theatre & Company in Kitchener/Waterloo, and Karen Johnston from YWAM (Youth With a Mission). Scadron-Wattles admitted his discomfort speaking with Christian groups, arguing that as a Christian who produces professional theatre, his interest is in building relationships with the larger community. This perspective was juxtaposed with Johnston’s, who used a warrior metaphor (drawn from her background as an indigenous person) to aid in understanding the role of the arts in our spiritual battle.

The day provided an important forum for what John Franklin called a “healthy diversity” of Christian voices active in the arts. The strength of the event, noted Chaplin, was a mutual sharing among the 50 participants. Divergent opinions were offered, and

manifold communities were represented, but the overwhelming tone was respectful. Not only a wide variety of disciplines, but approaches, were represented. According to where one is in the spectrum, this variety can often cause discomfort, but the event positively challenged the tendency to stick with one’s own kind.

For those attending, the conference exposed part of a community of artists (and what Seerveld called “contributors to the community”) which they were

(Continued on page 3)



Nigel Goodwin (left) and Calvin Seerveld, guest speakers and arts visionaries.

from the
president



DEGREES OF PERSISTENT PRAYER

Sometimes God answers persistent prayer when we are hardly paying attention.

“
The old policy of restricting ‘standard’ degree-granting to secular, publicly-funded universities is gone. The Ontario government now wishes ‘to provide more opportunities for Ontarians to seek degrees, with a broader choice of fields of study and locations.’
”

The President's Prayer Letter of January 1989, written by my predecessor Dr. Clifford Pitt, included no less than four requests for prayers concerning the Ontario government's degree-granting policy. At that particular time ICS was preparing to present a brief to the Ontario Council on University Affairs, arguing that the policy of restricting the right to grant standard degrees to secular, publicly-funded universities should be changed. ICS sought a policy framework which would allow it to grant Master of Arts (MA) and Master of Education (M.Ed.) degrees. This was not a new item on the Institute's agenda; the 'degree-granting issue' was already a major preoccupation well before we received our limited degree-granting charter in 1983.

The prayers offered in 1989 seemed to go unanswered. But the degree-granting issue remained a persistent theme in the Prayer Letters. In 1992 ICS rallied prayer support for a successful effort to win the right to grant the Master of Worldview Studies degree (the next best thing, we thought, to an MA). In 1996 we argued the case for a more pluralistic policy before a government Advisory Panel on higher education in Ontario. In 1998 we offered prayer support for Redeemer College in its quest to have its limited degree-granting rights amended. While Redeemer won very important concessions, the government went out of its way to insist that the restrictive policy remained intact.

In the spring of 2000 nobody at ICS was paying attention to the degree-granting issue. We were busy with other things, such as the academic aspects of our affiliation with the Toronto School of Theology at the University of Toronto. So when those decades-old prayers were answered we were caught off guard!

Ontario's Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities announced a new policy on April 28. There is a wonderful irony in the way I personally heard about this. In late April I was travelling in Alberta, and returned to ICS blissfully unaware of the Minister's announcement. Waiting on my computer was an email from Jasper Lesage at Dordt College with a copy of a press release and a query about the significance of what the Minister had said. So news of the new policy reached my office, six city blocks from the Minister's office, via Sioux Center, Iowa!

The changes announced by the Minister clearly represent a tidal change in policy. The old policy of restricting 'standard' degree-granting to secular, publicly-funded universities is gone. The Ontario government now wishes "to provide more opportunities for Ontarians to seek degrees, with a broader choice of fields of study and locations." To that end, the government will create a framework in which privately-funded institutions can apply for degree-granting authority appropriate for their programs. The government will also create a 'quality control' mechanism to ensure that these degree-granting institutions meet and maintain appropriate academic standards.

The new policy has many features advocated for many years by ICS and other independent institutions of higher education. Once the new policy is implemented ICS will have the choice of continuing with its present degrees or applying for revised degree-granting authority. It appears that ICS could apply for the right to grant its own MA and Ph.D. degrees, provided it can demonstrate that it has the resources to offer quality programs. ICS could also partner with other institutions in applying for extended degree-granting rights. The new policy clearly falls short of our ideal in one area – funding equity. Capital and operating grants continue to be restricted to the current publicly-funded universities.

Whatever the government's motivations in introducing these changes, it is clear that the new policy creates unexpected new opportunities for ICS. As the government now moves toward implementation, ICS will focus on assessing how we can best capitalize on these opportunities.

This unexpected turn of events certainly shows that God answers persistent prayer in his good time. And now is a good time to persist in persistent prayer. Join us in offering thanks and praise for this amazing change of policy direction, and in seeking wisdom and guidance as, in the coming months and years, we explore the implications.

Excerpt from Increasing Degree Opportunities for Ontarians: A Consultation Paper

- There will be a Quality Assessment Board to advise the Minister on whether proposals for new degree programs are of degree-level quality.
- The Minister will decide whether to approve the programs, taking into account the advice of the Quality Assessment Board on:
 - the quality of the program
 - the institution's compliance with regulations that protect students' financial interests
 - other matters that may affect the public interest, such as any cost to the taxpayer.
- New private degree-granting institutions will not be eligible for capital or operating grants.

ARTS CONFERENCE (Continued from page 1)

just discovering. Peter Smith noted that he had experienced more encouragement in this one weekend than in a whole decade in England. Such an event, Franklin argued, creates "momentum" – prompting hope and expectation for more events of this kind.

Chris Cuthill is an ICS Doctoral Student.

The annual Art Talks! conference was sponsored by ICS in cooperation with the Imago Arts Foundation. It was co-facilitated by Adrienne Dengerink Chaplin (Senior Member in Aesthetics at ICS) and John Franklin (Director of Imago).

HOUSING NEEDED!

Due to an increase in enrollment for the Fall semester, ICS is looking in the Toronto area for housing for its graduate students. If you have an apartment or room for rent, or know of a suitable possibility, please contact Jeanne Jordan-Awang or Pam Trondson
Tel: +16-979-2331
Fax +16-979-2332
email jjordanawang@icescanada.edu or ptrondson@icescanada.edu

An inspiring meeting

For a long time the daytimers of about 20 philosophy or religion students had noted May 8-19 as the dates for intensive lectures by Henk Hart.

by Annemiek Spronk

We didn't know just what to expect from those weeks, for all we knew was his name and that he discussed with Kai Nielsen, an atheist (who we didn't know; in distinction from Herman Philipse, who was known to us), about the sense or nonsense of faith in a secularized pluralist world. Is it necessary to rationally justify faith? At the time we knew little more than that the cover of Hart's book was red.

At the appointed time we all sat ready with *Walking the Tightrope of Faith* open on page one, not noticing that he had come in. Only when he started to talk we realized he was Henk Hart. He struck us as a modest man of integrity. And he spoke Dutch. Big relief!

Together we studied the book by reading the pages to be discussed beforehand, daily using papers about the material from four students. We asked Hart for clarification, discussed the strong arguments and the critical points, and added our own issues. Steadily we struggled through the book and grew toward the debate Hart would have with Dutch atheist Philipse.

Thursday May 18 was the day of execution. The would be executioner seemed formidable, certainly less of a congenial discussion partner than Nielsen. He turned out to be a real sophist, who tried to win his public with grand narratives, jokes, and a loud voice. Rhetorically he made a strong showing. In appearance he was the very antithesis of Hart: a debonair man wearing a bow tie and a carefully chosen suit. A stereotypically pretentious Leiden prof in comparison

with whom Hart looked almost monklike. Hart stayed calm, gave sharp but polite responses, and harvested the public's admiration by leaving the impression that despite the clever rhetoric, Philipse's story had little content. But the debate provided much material for discussion over a glass of wine.

The next day we closed the course by digesting the entire range of material once more via a single thesis from each participant. Though tired from the many new impressions, we were inspired by all the new insights and left for a festive dinner at the home of Henk Vroom, who, together with Wessel Stoker, had co-participated in leading the course. In a relaxing environment we went back over the weeks and listened to fascinating stories about student life from a distant past, all attractive enough to make us barely catch the last train.

We had not expected that after a mere two weeks we would feel like we had known each other for years; a feeling Hart shared with us. He thanked us for the ties we had created and for the genuine openness of our discussion. At dinner, Hart's wife confirmed that he had come home in good cheer every night, as was true for us all. The book, as well as the group, were sufficiently inspiring to allow us not to forget all we learned very soon.

Annemiek Spronk is doctoral student in theology, Free University, Amsterdam

CANADIAN ECUMENICAL JUBILEE INITIATIVE - INTERNATIONAL THEOLOGY EVENT

The Vision and Practice of Jubilee: Biblical hopes new beginnings

New Beginnings event brought approximately 150 people from across Canada, representing church denominations, agencies and coalitions and individuals working in the Jubilee Movement. Several international guests were also present from countries such as Kenya, Zambia, Nigeria, Fiji, as well as a representative of the World Council of Churches from Sweden.

A full schedule began Tuesday evening with the opening celebrations: "Living the Legacy of Justice Making". Through bilingual (French/English) liturgy, ritual, speeches and reflections, participants remembered those who have gone before in the work for international economic justice. The following days participants analyzed the Jubilee experience to-date, addressed the challenges and responses to globalization, examined specific issues in globalization, expressed the biblical and theological hopes and chal-

(Continued on page 4)



CRC-related participants at the Jubilee theology event: (left to right) Connie Kuipers, Bruce Voogd (CPJ delegate), Sylvia Keesmaat, Arie Van Eek (CRWRC delegate), CRC delegates: John Hiemstra, Reinder Klein, Peter Vander Meulen.

In May the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative (CEJI) hosted an ambitious national conference focused on discerning the hopes and challenges of the Jubilee Movement. CEJI partnered with the Institute for Christian Studies, St. Michael's College and Emmanuel College (both at the University of Toronto) to host this 5 day international theology event. *The Vision and Practice of Jubilee: Biblical Hopes*



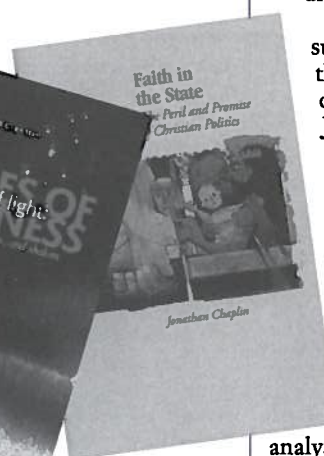
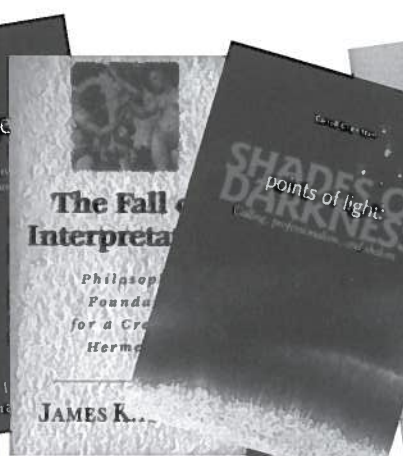
new books from ics

A lifetime's harvest: Christian political thought in practice

by Albert Gedraitis

Gerald Vandezande, *Justice, not just us: faith perspectives and national priorities* (Toronto: Public Justice Resource Centre, 229 College St., 1999).

This beautiful volume is a valedictory summing-up; it marks the author's retirement after many years of service through a key Christian political organization in Canada, Citizens for Public Justice. For many years, Gerald Vandezande was CPJ's



Executive Director, then National Public Affairs Director. He has been a strong friend of ICS since its founding, and several ICS graduates have supplemented their theory work at ICS with political work at CPJ, as volunteers or staff members (see Alumni Notes).

The book takes as its orienting political issue, the fight for government action against child poverty which has been on the rise across Canada. From there, Vandezande expands on "The scandal of poverty ...and the crises of politics." This prioritization marks a change in CPJ's agenda for Christian political action, where the first concerns 30 years ago had been freedom of association at work, pluralization of government support of schools systems, and parliamentary reform on the basis of proportional representation (a campaign that never got off the ground).

The third chapter, "Seeking Justice into the 21st Century," is 40 pages long. Vandezande presents his lively analysis of an array of issues, his personal re-statement of a possible CPJ program for the future. He discusses Canadian national unity, the ideology of assimilation, Quebec separatism as a response to past harmful assimilation, the experience of assimilation by Canada's native peoples, the Social Union, the Calgary Declaration (1997) on the constitution, the moribund Canada Health & Social Transfer payments to the provinces. All these topics are surveyed in relation to the growth of separatism, regionalism, and provincialism (extreme devolution of powers from the Federal level). In a further brief study, equality rights for domestic partnerships are advocated as a defence of families, reserving the term "marriage" for the traditional heterosexual legal bond.

Since publication of these powerful ideas by an activist-thinker located outside academia, it must be noted that events have swiftly brought a quite different movement into national prominence: Canada's own Christian right-wing. A second book is urgently needed from the dean of Christ-centered political practice, and his colleagues, to challenge through dialogue the new forces. A second book, already mentioned by Vandezande, might also renew the original CPJ agenda, while maintaining the stance so ably articulated in *Justice - Not Just Us*. This book co-heres profoundly with the research in ethics at ICS.

New books from ICS Alumni

(not for sale through ICS)

Craig Bartholomew & Thornsten Moritz, *Christ and Consumerism: A Critical Analysis of the Spirit of the Age* (Paternoster Press: April 2000, 176 Pages, ISBN:0853649871)

David I. Smith & Barbara Carvill, *The Gift of the Stranger: Faith, Hospitality, and Foreign Language Learning* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids MI, 2000, 208 pages, ISBN 0802847080)

James K. A. Smith, *The Fall of Interpretation: Philosophical Foundations for a Creational Hermeneutic* (Intervarsity Press, June 2000, 216 pages, ISBN: 0830815740)

Senior Member inaugural addresses now available

Carroll Guen Hart, *Shades of Darkness Points of Light: Calling, professionalism, and shalom* (ICS, Toronto, 2000, 56 pages, ISBN 0-88958-050-2).

"We all already have a calling; our task is to find out how that calling may express itself, not in spite of our work or in addition to it, but in and through it."

Jonathan Chaplin, *Faith in the State, The Peril and Promise of Christian Politics* (ICS, Toronto, 2000, 36 pages, ISBN 0-88958-051-2).

Jonathan Chaplin explores the question: "Given the odds stacked against them, how did [Christians] keep faith with the possibility of a just state?"

ECUMENICAL JUBILEE (Continued from page 3)

lenges for Jubilee, and finally, discussed the future of "church" in light of Jubilee hope. The demanding schedule was tempered by meaningful and diverse music, singing and liturgy. Through worship, music, discussion and immersion in the biblical text, delegates experienced a common grounding in faith from which to express their diversities.

ICS provided support to the event through steering committee members **Jonathan Chaplin** (vice-chair), and **Connie Kuipers**, ICS's Conference and Communications Coordinator. **Sylvia Keesmaat** spoke on three occasions at the event, sharing her biblically rooted

analysis of Jubilee. ICS has been involved with the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative as a member of its multi-agency and multi-denominational working group since 1998. ICS doctoral candidate, **Peter Noteboom**, is on CEJI's steering committee as Treasurer, and played an integral role in developing this event as well. M.Phil.F. student, **Anthony Ricciutti**, also attended the event, and provided a commentary on one key biblical text on Jubilee themes, in addition to his contributions to Jubilee publications.

CEJI wins the 2000 International Co-operation Award for influencing public policy

The award was made by the Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC) and is sponsored by the International Development Research Centre. ICS has been a member of the CEJI working group of churches

and agencies since it began.

The award citation reads:

"In Canada, Jubilee 2000, a campaign to cancel the external debts of the poorest countries, was officially launched in September of 1998. Led by the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative (CEJI) in the context of the global Jubilee campaign, it had two objectives: for action at the grassroots, the objective of raising 400,000-500,000 signatures on the debt cancellation petition, and at the public policy level, the objective to have Canada take a leadership role among creditor countries, particularly with the G-7 grouping of countries. By June, 1999, 635,000 Canadians had signed the debt petition.

There were also a number of developments on the public policy front. In March, 1999, the Prime Minister announced that Canada would cancel all bilateral debts owed by a selected group of Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) once they had successfully completed the HIPC Initiative process. Since then, the United States, France and Britain have declared 100% bilateral debt cancellation for an even larger group of HIPC's. Extensive media coverage, international coordination, development education, timely action and global networking between churches, faith groups, and national justice groups are factors that led to the level of success of Jubilee 2000."

The Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative is a project of over 30 churches and ecumenical coalitions. Inspired by the theology of Jubilee, the Initiative integrates concerns for social justice, peace and ecological integrity.

calendar of events

Summer Conferences: Living and telling our story

Alberta Family Conference Story time for God's people

Keynote Speaker **Dr. James Schaap**, sets the stage:

Beneath everything lies story. When we search deeply into the nature of human experience, into the depth of our own identity, what we find is story.

Examine your most deeply held opinions, your faith, your view of life. Ask yourself why it is you believe what you do or how it is you've come to value some things over others, and you'll often answer with a story: "I believe in Jesus Christ because when I had cancer. . ." Or, "I am a believer because my parents showed me. . ." Or, "when I saw grinding poverty first-hand, I was



convinced that government. . ."

What's hidden behind what we know about ourselves is an often unkept scrapbook of short stories, none of which will slip from our memories, personal narratives whose real significance we often don't understand ourselves.

There's a story to how we believe.

But there's also a story to what we believe.

The Bible includes genealogy, poetry, wisdom literature, the letters of the apostles; but when we describe the whole book, most of us would say it's the story of redemption.

When the Old Testament Israelites would lose their way, they'd frequently ask one of their poets to

tell them, once again, the story of the Exodus. Story gave them identity.

The centerpiece of the Christian faith is not simply that God became man, but that this divine human was born in a barn, died on a cross, and one bright Sunday morning walked out of the grave. The good news is a story.

But what is story? Quite simply, it is sequential action: this happened, and then that happened. The queen died; the king died of grief. Even though it's that simple, nothing defines us or shapes us like the narratives of our own lives and others.

Why? How?

What's the value of story to our adult lives? Why

does a solid illustration often become the most memorable part of a sermon? Why did Christ use parables so often?

But simply to theorize about what story is and what story does keeps us behind the ropes, makes us little more than spectators in the joy and power of narrative. In addition to talking about story, conferees will become participants by way of their own imaginative engagement with narrative; simply put, they will also listen to stories.

Maybe that's too simply put—just "listen to stories." Engagement with powerful stories requires the participation of the reader's imagination. At least one significant difference between reading or hearing a story and watching a story on TV or video is the manner by which character and setting are constructed. Television and film creates the set, but reading requires some manual labor. While the writer creates concrete settings through careful and specific description, the reader's imagination must paint those words into visual images. Readers must create the scene themselves in order to "see" the action. When the imagination creates the world of the story, a reader becomes involved in the narrative in a completely different way than he or she is as a viewer.

John Gardner used to say that stories create models of behavior. They offer ways of being and acting that themselves become part of our own choice-making, part of the way we design to live our lives. What we experience through stories becomes part of our own identity.

One of the first rules of good writing is "show, don't tell." What that means is that the success of the writing will be determined, in great part, by the writer's ability to dramatize, not just theorize.

"Show, don't tell"—that's what we're hoping to do with story this summer at the ICS Alberta Family Conference.

James Schaap teaches English at Dordt College in Sioux

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Farewell to Carroll Guen Hart



Carroll Guen Hart's appointment as Senior Member in Worldview Studies and Director of the Worldview Studies program will formally be completed at the end of June. Guen Hart joined the ICS faculty in 1996. Students deeply appreciated her pedagogical sensitivity, particularly her willingness to listen to their interest and her willingness to encourage them to explore issues in terms of those interests. Faculty members appreciated her collegial spirit and her thoughtful participation in joint projects.

During the winter months the Institute conducted a review of the Worldview Studies program. The review committee recommended, among other things, that ICS consider developing a continuing education focus (i.e., short, non-credit seminars and workshops oriented to the interests of ICS supporters and others). While no firm decisions have been made concerning the future shape of the Worldview Studies program, Guen Hart's leaving provides an occasion to reassess the role and responsibilities of the director of the program.

In the fall Guen Hart will teach the intro-

ductory course in the Worldview Studies program (Worldview Foundations) on a part-time, adjunct faculty basis.

RECENT ACTIVITIES OF ICS SENIOR MEMBERS



Doug Blomberg (Philosophy of Education) published "Learning ... by heart" in *The Christian Teachers Journal*. ICS has printed Doug's keynote address from the 1999 Ontario Christian School Teachers' Association convention, "Not One of Them is Missing".



Jonathan Chaplin (Political Theory) published an article entitled 'Beyond Liberal Restraint: Defending Religiously-based Arguments in Law and Public Policy', in *University of British Columbia Law Review*, special issue on law, religion and morality. Jonathan visited Dordt College March 21-22: lecturing on 'cultural pluralism', and 'Christian democracy' in political science classes. He also gave a public lecture to

local chapter of the Association for Public Justice in Sioux Center on 'Silencing the Silencers: Reclaiming a Public Voice for Christian Faith'.



Adrienne Dengerink Chaplin (Philosophical Aesthetics) presented a paper entitled "The Cultural Relevance of Art as the Articulation of Affective Experience: the Contribution of Susanne K. Langer" at the Canadian Society for Aesthetics in Edmonton as part of the Congress of the Social Sciences and Humanities 2000 from May 24 to 31. While in Edmonton she also met with a group of Christian artists at the home of Daniel van Heyst, head of the arts and theater department at The Kings University College. Adrienne co-organised and co-chaired this year's Art Talks! lecture and one-day conference on the 18th and 19th of May (see cover story).



Hendrik Hart (Systematic Philosophy/Dean) participated in the teaching of a two week course at the Free

University in Amsterdam, dealing with the continuation of his debate with Canadian atheist Kai Nielsen. The text for the course consisted of essays by Nielsen and Hart and a number of others and was edited by Ron Kuipers of ICS. At the close of the course Henk debated Dutch atheist Herman Philipse. (See story p. 3) Henk is currently participating in teaching a three week Calvin/ICS sponsored course at ICS, together with Lambert Zuidervaart from Calvin College and Jim Olthuis from ICS. After that he will be preparing for a keynote address and workshops at the annual Ontario Family Conference and for a paper to be read at a conference at Redeemer college a week later.



Sylvia Keesmaat (Biblical Studies and Hermeneutics) presented two workshops for teachers at the Christian Schools Teachers' Professional Development day in Strathroy on April 7. On May 18 Sylvia presented "Talmon's Story" at a Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative public event at the Northrope Fry Auditorium at Emmanuel College in Toronto. She recently published an article entitled "Jubilee's Radical, Biblical Vision" in the Cambridge, MA-based magazine *re:generation quarterly* (Spring 2000 edition).

Jim Olthuis (Philosophical Theology) is currently engrossed in writing a new book in the area of psychotherapy: *Dancing in the Wild Spaces of Love*. He also co-taught the summer seminar "Language, Truth, & Postmodern Culture: Heidegger, Rorty, & Derrida" at ICS June 12 - 30.

Robert Sweetman (History of Philosophy) attended the 34th International Congress on Medieval Studies 4-7 May 2000 on the Western Michigan U. campus. He organized and presided over the two "Dominican Studies" sessions held there on May 5 and gave a formal response to a paper given by Sr. Ruth Caspar O.P. of Ohio Dominican College on Bartolomé de las Casas and his relationship to St. Dominic and the original charism of the Dominican Order. Bob taught a course "Love as a Way of Knowing: An Historical Exploration" for the ICS/Wycliffe Summer Session June 5-16.

George Vandervelde (Systematic Theology) attended the meeting of the Commission on Word Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches March 27 - April 4. George was one of several new members representing evangelical organizations. On May 7, George headed a delegation of three World Evangelical Fellowship representatives at the vesper service at the Colosseum in Rome, led by Pope John Paul II. The theme of the service was "The Ecumenical Commemoration of Witnesses to the Faith in the 20th Century." George took part in the liturgy by reading the testimony of a young Chinese woman jailed for her faith.

SUMMER CONFERENCES

(Continued from page 5)

Center, Iowa, and is the author of many books of fiction and non-fiction. For more information about the Alberta Family Conference, see the ICS website at www.icscanada.edu or email afc@icscanada.edu or call Registrar Elizabeth Kroon at 780-454-6030.

Ontario Summer Conference: Written not with ink: Living the Biblical story

You are a letter of Christ - written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts. 2 Corinthians 3.3.

This year's Ontario Summer Conference aims to encourage Christians as we live the Biblical story in today's culture. As followers of Christ, we read the Bible as a living story, one that calls us to new ways of being faithful as our lives and times unfold. Talks, workshops, entertainment and worship at the conference will encourage and challenge us to immerse ourselves in God's Word.

Henk Hart will offer the Keynote Address on Saturday: "The Authority of Scripture and the Authority to Change". He writes "the Spirit has led Christians to new understandings of the Scriptures as it remains the light on our personal and communal path. Does the Scripture authorize negotiating change?" This reflection is based on a chapter in his current book-in-process. Those who want to take up the conversation will have a chance to do so in the following workshop session.

"Reading Between the Lines" is the title of Sylvia Keesmaat's Sunday afternoon talk. She will address the question: "How can we remain faithful to Scriptures as the authoritative story of redemption while at the same time creatively telling the story anew to a changing culture and changing world?"

Each workshop leader will engage Scripture in the light of a contemporary issue. You will have the opportunity to interact with all of ICS's Senior Members, each of whom is presenting a workshop.

Saturday night's entertainment features Dan Steven, a young London-based singer/songwriter. His new album *Beggars and Kings* tells the story of struggle and hope in today's culture, in a groovy new-rock/folk style that appeals to all ages. On Sunday night, actor and writer Jason Hildebrand will perform his one-man show of the *Life of David*. He says, "its an hour of passion, rage, weeping, laughter, frustration and worship".

The weekend also features programs for teens and children, with childcare available to free parents up to participate in their program. Maple Grove's camping facilities, cabins, cafeteria meals, sports facilities, and swimming pool make it a comfortable place to experience fun, friendship, and fellowship.

For more information about the Ontario Conference, see the ICS website at www.icscanada.edu email events@icscanada.edu or call 1-888-326-5347 or 416-979-2331.

Student focus

From Ukraine to Canada: a faith journey

by Maxym Skybin, Junior Member

My wife Yana and I grew up in the Ukraine – a part of the former Soviet Union, and up until recently – a predominantly atheistic country. We grew up as atheists. Like most other children in the Soviet Union, at the age of seven we were encouraged to become members of a pro-communist organization known as Octyabriata—children of the October Revolution. We were taught atheism in secondary and high schools. We discovered Christ not in a Sunday school, but in the classroom of life. Yana became a Christian as a result of deep sense of emptiness and isolation in the society, in general, and in family life; and I—as a result of serious health problems caused by my belief that there was nothing beyond this world. The sense of non-existence that I faced was slowly destroying the very value of life, together with my physical and psycho-



ICS Junior Members:
Maxym Skybin and Yana
Filippenko

“
...as we
became
Christians, we
felt a need to
study
Christianity on
a deeper level.
Unfortunately,
there were not
many
opportunities
in Ukraine.”

logical well-being. Soon enough Communism collapsed, and a newborn country of Ukraine experienced revival of religion. We became familiar with the Bible. Missionaries from all over the world poured into our region with the teachings of Christ. They also taught us how to pray. Later, as we became Christians, we felt a need to study Christianity on a deeper level. Unfortunately, there were not many opportunities in Ukraine. Most of the Universities, although formally accepting plurality of beliefs, were still teaching their students Dialectical Materialism (a kind of Marxist philosophy). For example, I remember taking a course on Culture and Religion, taught by a professor, who used to teach Scientific Atheism during communist times! Of course, the whole course was dedicated to a critique of religion.

But God always helps those who seek Him. He helped us to find ICS and get enrolled in the M.Phil.F. program. There we found a loving and supportive community, sensitive to our needs as international students and growing Christians. Academically speaking we found here, probably, the most integral Christian scholarship. The foundational courses in Biblical studies (with Sylvia Keesmaat) and Philosophy (with Robert Sweetman) provided us with the introduction to Reformed perspective, while a number of specialized courses gave us such a wide scope of knowledge about Christianity, that it opened before us totally new horizons.

I have been especially fascinated by ICS's epistemological tradition, based primarily on the works of Herman Dooyeweerd. As a scientist I was interested in the question of knowledge, and how scientific knowledge relates to religious knowledge in

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Annie Vandezande, 1912 - 2000

A significant member of the founding generation of the Institute, Mrs. Annie Vandezande, passed away on June 16, 2000 at the age of 87. The second issue of *Perspective*, dated February, 1968, carried a picture of Mrs. Vandezande and several other women, accompanying an article about the "Women's Action for the A.R.S.S.*" This organization placed "penny-a-day" banks in homes across Canada so that women could encourage their families to contribute their small change to the cause of Christian higher education. Mrs. Vandezande was a leader in the "Women's Action" for many years. She also regularly attended summer conferences and other ICS events, and always took a keen interest in the issues under discussion. We thank God for letting ICS benefit from Mrs. Vandezande talent and vision, and we ask God to comfort and encourage her extended family.

* For a time ICS was known as the Association for Reformed Scientific Studies (ARRS).



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STUDENT FOCUS

(Continued from page 7)

particular. In his *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought* Dooyeweerd argues that scientific thought is only one possible way of knowing, and that it is secondary in relation to pre-theoretical, naive thought, in which reality is given to us in its integrity. Moreover, I have come to realize that the way I do science ultimately depends upon my basic religious commitments. My religious beliefs set up the boundaries of what I ultimately hold to be true or false.

Overall, we feel, that although our conversion to Christianity started already in Ukraine, we became practicing Christians, with understanding and full appreciation of what Christianity is about, only here at the ICS. We believe that what we have studied here is of great importance not only for North America, but also for countries going through a difficult period of transition like Ukraine.

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