

November 19, 2014

*I'm Norman Lévesque—happily married, a layperson of the Roman Catholic Church, a young ecumenist, 33 years old—and I expect to be at the 100th anniversary of the Canadian Council of Churches. When I imagine the future, I have no expectations, just hope and amazement on how the Spirit blows wherever it pleases and God makes things new. What could happen in 30 years?*

November 19, 2044

I am Reverend Norman Lévesque and I am thrilled to be here at the 100th anniversary of the Canadian Council of Churches. I am also amazed at all the work that has been accomplished. Today, we put on sunscreen, and had a wonderful day at 25°C. Thirty years ago I was here for the 70th anniversary, and believe it or not, there was a snow storm! The Earth has warmed so much faster, for better and worse, and we tackle the challenges together.

The CCC has been instrumental as well as the formerly known World Council of Churches, which had to change its name since the founding of the Lunar and Martian colonies, and is now of course called the Cosmic Council of Churches (which also causes us problems with acronyms). I extend a warm welcome to their representative here with us today.

I am of Roman spirituality—as we say now a days, since we don't feel the walls between our churches anymore—and I am thrilled to announce that at the age of 63, I am a grandfather of twins. I tell you... Luther and Ignatius are so cute together in their crib, and bring so much joy in my life.

One serious challenge today in the Christian Communion is to adapt to the unpredictability of the climate. It is beautiful how our spiritualities have come together after every superstorm to rebuild our places of worship. We have also worked together to counter the species collapse since we lost the beluga, the falcons, the bees, the polar bears, the loons, the caribou... basically the animals on our coins are a reminder of what we have lost.

These pressing challenges have consensus today, but I remember when the challenges of the CCC were heavy doctrinal questions like partaking in the Lord's supper together. Now all the spiritualities in the Christian Communion share the memory and presence of Jesus together. We often take for granted the struggles of the past.

So please put on your integrated 3D-glasses and I'll show you something. Speaking of technology, I remember a time when just understanding the importance of social media (Twitter, YouTube) for evangelization was a challenge. Everybody back then knew that an image is worth a thousand words, yet we were still writing long statements. Thankfully, some church leaders preached by example rather than just speech—people like Pope Francis, Patriarch Bartholomew, Archbishop Desmond Tutu...

Who are they? Oh dear, you are making me feel old.

Anyway, I'm proud of the CCC's role in the past 100 years, and especially the past 30 years, for being able to read the signs of the times and respond to pressing issues with our common faith. We used to be hopeful about achieving unity, but we've learned to be united and rather be hopeful for the coming of God's Kingdom.

Oh, and what a great idea the CCC had in coordinating the new episcopate of the Christian Communion in Canada with the names that the First Nations use to identify this land.

I'll be leaving tomorrow to assist in the consecration of an icon in a Pentecostal church, and the next day I'll be one of the ministers for a baptism in the Spirit in an Orthodox Church. Let us still be amazed at these new realities, because they would have been unthinkable 100 years ago... even 30 years ago.

We are now living Jesus' prayer in John 17:21. More and more people recognize we are Jesus' disciples because of the visible love we have for each other, and our willingness to wash each other's feet (Jn 13).

Thank you all, and thanks be to God.

Rev. Norman Lévesque