Statement to be Read at St. Boniface Cathedral Press Conference

April 11, 2012

When I dream of the world as it could be—and, as I believe, it’s actually becoming—I think of gatherings like this one: people from different faith traditions, united in a spirit of good will, in order to help birth a project dedicated to fostering peace on earth, and good will among human beings everywhere.

I eagerly accepted the invitation from Archbishop LeGatt to sit on the Cabinet Committee for the renovation of the St. Boniface Cathedral. I believe this may be the first time in the history of the Catholic Church that such an invitation has been issued, and accepted.

To me, this invitation is a message straight from the Holy Spirit. For so many centuries, mankind has been seeking peace, but only has succeeded in plunging further into war. But the message for ***this*** generation—a message, being broadcast by this multi-faith Cabinet Committee--is this: what we share in common is so much more important than anything that may divide us.

A rose has so many different, highly contrasting components--stem, petals, leaves, thorns, root—yet each contributes, in its unique way, to the overall beauty of the rose. Just so, each culture, each nationality, each faith tradition on earth, contributes to the overall beauty of the tapestry of humanity. So--where can we find peace amidst all this diversity?

All the different parts of the rose are supported and nourished by the same formless, colorless sap. Similarly, all the different aspects of humanity, are nourished and supported by the same God. Therefore, let us work ***together*** to bring more of God into this world. God ***isn’t*** Jewish. God isn’t Christian, Hindu, Muslim, or Buddhist. God isn’t First Nations. But God upholds and nurtures ***all*** of these traditions.

And nothing gives God greater joy than when ***all*** His Children gather together for a common good purpose. When this happens, God is actually ***tempted*** to come ***down*** from heaven. And I believe: God rejoices in anticipation of fulfilling His dream of establishing a dwelling place, within each one of ***us***—His children--right here, on this earth.

Oh Lord--let this St. Boniface Cathedral renovation help to usher in a new, gentler spiritual era for this troubled planet—one in which peace will reign; and war will be the forgotten nightmare, of a bygone era. AMEN.