

Bishops apologize for priest's history of abuse

'This is only the first step,' says Skelton

By Diana Swift

For more than 50 years, the late Goichi Gordon Nakayama served as an Anglican priest in the dioceses of Calgary and New Westminster. But the outwardly affable

Japanese-born canon was an abusive priest, who preyed sexually on young boys in his spiritual care.

On June 15 in Vancouver, survivors of Nakayama's misconduct received a formal apology from the two dioceses.

In 1994, Nakayama, father of the poet and novelist Joy Kogawa, admitted his history of abuse, and shortly before his death in 1995 he signed a written confession of his misconduct to Archbishop Barry Curtis, then diocesan bishop of Calgary and metropolitan of Rupert's Land. "I made mistake. My moral life with my sexual bad behaviour. I sincerely sorry what I did to

so many people," he wrote. Charged with immorality by Archbishop Curtis, he never again exercised ministry. It is not known how many minors were molested, and no known complaints were reported during Nakayama's ministry.

Kogawa's 1995 novel *The Rain Ascends* chronicles a woman's painful struggle to
See Why, p. 15



PHOTO: ANDRÉ FORGET

Ruby Milanese and Gladys Adams talk to O'Della Grundy following a service at Brocklehurst Gemstone Care Centre in Kamloops, B.C.

Primate says TRC report 'far-reaching'

Staff

Archbishop Fred Hiltz, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, has commended the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) for issuing a final report that he described as "very comprehensive and far-reaching into the soul of the country" with respect to its prescriptions for fostering reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians.

Hiltz said he appreciated the direction and clarity of the 382-page report, and its 94 "Calls to Action" specifically aimed at holding to account Parliament, the federal, provincial and local governments, churches, civic institutions and all Canadians. The recommendations include the creation of a National Council for Reconciliation, a Royal Proclamation, a Covenant of Reconciliation and the establishment, by churches, of permanent funding for Aboriginal "community-controlled" healing and reconciliation projects. (See related story, page 3.)

"We need to take the recommendations of the TRC, which apply to the churches, and declare them to be priorities in our church," he told the *Anglican Journal*.

He called the release of the report on June 2 "an historic day for Canada, a sacred day for most of us," adding, "it [has to] be, for survivors of residential schools, an absolutely great day."

Hiltz said he felt "very challenged" by some of the calls to action directed specifically at churches, but also felt "encouraged that some initiatives are already in place." He cited the TRC's call for the government and churches to formally adopt and comply with the principles, norms and standards of the UN Declaration on the

See TRC, p. 2

Lay ministry 'a life's journey' for Kamloops senior

André Forget
STAFF WRITER

Kamloops, B.C.—"I'm one of the older lay ministers—I've been doing it since before they even called us lay ministers," O'Della Grundy said with a chuckle, while going over an order of service she will use for a memorial later in the day. "When I talk about [my] ministry to seniors, my daughter always says, 'Mom, you are one!'"

Grundy is a parishioner at St. George's Anglican Church in Kamloops, but she also has an extensive ministry of her own to the city's seniors. And given that 16.2% of Kamloopsians are over 65 (almost 2% more than the Canadian average), and that this percentage is projected to increase over the next 15 years, it is a vital area of ministry in which to be involved.

"In Kamloops, we are like the hub of a big wheel," Grundy said, explaining

When I talk about [my] ministry to seniors, my daughter always says, 'Mom, you are one!'

— O'Della Grundy,
St. George's Anglican Church

that seniors will often move to Kamloops from more remote communities so as to be closer to the hospital. "We have many seniors' facilities, whether it is for assisted living or full-time care."

While it is true that, in her mid-70s, Grundy occasionally finds herself performing memorial services for people who are younger than she is, she keeps very busy, offering regular services at three different seniors' residences and facilities across the city. Last year alone, she performed 44 me-

morials—many of which included tributes to several individuals, and many of which had been written, prepared and compiled by Grundy herself.

"When I first started, everything was on a single sheet of paper. So if you had three hymns, that was three pieces of paper, and then you've got your service [sheet]. Some of the seniors can only use one hand; some of them can't see," she said. "You had all kinds of problems, and it was driving me crazy. So I've made up a book. I've got about 30 copies, and I take this with me everywhere."

Being able to adapt to the very different needs of an older group of worshippers has been key, Grundy noted. "It's one of those things that unless you're doing it, you have no idea what the needs are."

An added complexity is that many of the
See A deep, p. 8



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CANADA ▶

Why did it take 20 years for truth to emerge?

See related opinion piece, *How to apologize for abuse*, at anglicanjournal.com

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come to terms with the moral turpitude of her priest-father.

In the context of today's zero tolerance it may be hard to understand, but the climate of silence around sexual abuse in Nakayama's day allowed the canon to continue for decades on his destructive path, then quietly resign from the priesthood. The abuse was not made public until this year, after members of the Japanese-Canadian community had begun to come forward.

It has taken 20 years for the elderly survivors of that abuse and their families to receive formal apologies from the church. On June 15, about 60 people gathered at the Vancouver Japanese Language School for the apology delivered by Calgary Archbishop Greg Kerr-Wilson and New Westminster Bishop Melissa Skelton. Among those present were representatives from the dioceses and the Japanese Canadian Working Group (JCWG)—formed to address the abuse issue.

Lorene Oikawa, the June 15 event's MC and a JCWG organizer, told the *Anglican Journal*: "The Japanese Canadian Working Group came together when members of the community started asking questions. We began to look for answers and how to support survivors and their families."

In a spirit of contrition and reconciliation, the two bishops took the stand to read out the 12 points of the apology, tracing the history and circumstances of Nakayama's ministry, confession, charging and resignation, and outlining the church's current strong position on sexual misconduct.

"We deeply regret that Mr. Nakayama while a priest committed these acts of immoral sexual behaviour," the apology stated. "... We deeply regret this Apology was not delivered to the Japanese Canadian Community at the time of Mr. Nakayama's



▲ Mary Kitagawa (left) accepted the apology document from Archbishop Greg Kerr-Wilson (right) and Bishop Melissa Skelton.

PHOTO: RANDY MURRAY

confession, the charge of immorality, and his subsequent resignation from the exercise of priestly ministry."

Expressing support for the survivors and their families, the bishops added their hope that the apology would encourage healing and wellness for all those affected by Nakayama's actions. They committed to participation in a healing and reconciliation process. "And we assure you that the Anglican Church takes these matters seriously, and takes steps to prevent this type of behaviour," the apology concluded.

The church's current no-tolerance policy requires all in the church to immediately report any knowledge or suspicion of sexual abuse of minors to appropriate authorities.

"I am grateful to have had this experience, offering the apology with [then] Bishop Greg Kerr-Wilson and knowing that the words were heard," Skelton told the *Anglican Journal*. "This is only a first step, and now the journey of healing begins."

Mary Kitagawa, 80, whose uncles were among Nakayama's victims, received the signed apology. While accepting the document as a good start, she expressed uncertainty about how survivors would interpret

its words as well as hope that the church's acknowledgment would bring comfort to the elderly survivors still reliving the experiences. They suffered in silence, she said, "... isolated... they were unable to share their experiences with their parents, they were and are very angry, filled with pain and frustration."

Kitagawa also asked why Archbishop Curtis did not report Nakayama to the authorities and why it took so long for the truth to emerge. Until recently, however, clergy and lay leaders of Japanese-Anglican churches had reportedly asked church officials not to make the abuse public. It is only in the past 18 months that clergy, lay leaders and the Japanese-Canadian community have asked the church to make public Nakayama's misconduct and formally apologize. Church officials worked co-operatively with the JCWG on the timing and wording of the apology, which will be distributed to the national Japanese-Canadian community.

"I was struck by the suffering that has gone on for so long," said Kerr-Wilson. "And by the little bit of hopefulness that the apology represents an open invitation so that some survivors will be able to come forward and perhaps find some peace."

"We are very grateful to the church for working on this with us and accepting responsibility," added Oikawa, noting that the JCWG would hold another meeting. "The apology event concluded June 15, but it is not the end. It is the beginning of a healing process." ■

Diana Swift is a regular contributor to the *Anglican Journal*.

—With files from Randy Murray, communications officer/Topic editor for the diocese of New Westminster

“ [Survivors were] isolated... unable to share their experiences... they were and are very angry, filled with pain and frustration.

—Mary Kitagawa, whose uncles were among the victims

October 2015 Bible Readings

Day Reading

- 01 Esther 6.14-7.10
- 02 Esther 8.1-17
- 03 Mark 9.38-50
- 04 Mark 10.1-16
- 05 Esther 9.1-19
- 06 Esther 9.20-10.3
- 07 Job 1.1-22
- 08 Job 2.1-13
- 09 Job 23.1-17
- 10 Mark 10.17-34
- 11 Psalm 65.1-13
- 12 Psalm 67.1-7
- 13 Hebrews 5.11-6.12
- 14 Hebrews 6.13-7.14
- 15 Hebrews 7.15-8.6
- 16 Hebrews 8.7-9.10
- 17 Job 38.1-21
- 18 Job 38.22-41
- 19 2 Timothy 4.1-18
- 20 Mark 10.46-52
- 21 Mark 12.1-17
- 22 Job 39.1-18
- 23 Job 39.19-40.6
- 24 Job 40.7-41.11
- 25 Job 41.12-34
- 26 Job 42.1-17
- 27 Hebrews 9.11-28
- 28 Jude 1-25
- 29 2 John 1-13
- 30 3 John 1-15
- 31 Romans 1.1-17

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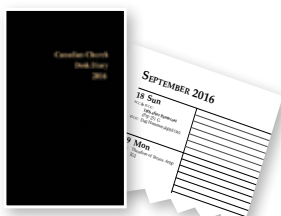


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