



Port Alberni Nuggets

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Baha'i Quote of the Month

Let all associate,
therefore, in this great
human garden even as
flowers grow and blend
together side by side
without discord or
disagreement between
them.

Abdu'l-Bahá

Baha'i

Baha'i Stories:

Bahá'u'lláh - Sulaymaniyyih

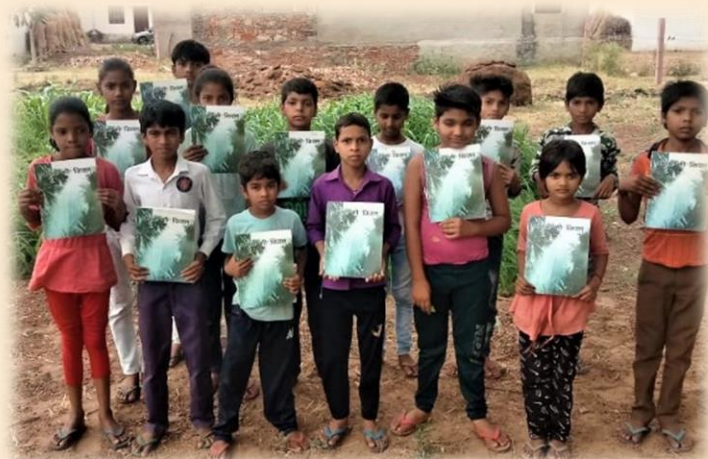
One day, near a village in the mountains, Bahá'u'lláh saw a young boy weeping bitterly. My father, always compassionate for anyone in sorrow, especially if it were a child, said, "Little man, why art thou weeping?" The boy looked up at the one who spoke, and saw a dervish! "Oh Sir!" and he fell to weeping afresh. "The schoolmaster has punished me for writing so badly. I cannot write, and now I have no copy! I dare not go back to school" "Weep no longer. I will set a copy for thee, and show thee how to imitate it. And now thou canst take this; show it to thy schoolmaster.' When the schoolmaster saw the writing which the boy had brought, he was astonished, for he recognized it as of the royal penmanship, this amazing script. "Who gave this to thee?" said the master. "He wrote it for me, the dervish on the mountain." "He is no dervish the writer of this, but a royal personage," said the schoolmaster. This story being noised abroad, caused certain of the people to set out to find this one, of whom many wonderful things were said. So great was the throng which pressed in upon him, that he had to go further away;

again and again, he moved from place to place, hiding himself from the crowds, in the caves of the mountains, and in the desert places of that desolate land. -Lady Blomfield, The Chosen Highway

News and Events:

News from our twin community of Jaipur, India

The many children's classes, youth activities, and devotionals continue as well as many conferences.



Bahá'í World News Service

Global Conferences: Youth provide a hopeful outlook for the future

BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTRE — Recent stories of the News Service have reported on a wave of conferences bringing together diverse people in localities throughout the world to explore how they will intensify their efforts toward building unity and fostering more peaceful societies. As the gatherings—both large and small—continue, young people in particular are stepping to the fore, offering fresh insights from their experience in Bahá'í community-building activities and providing a hopeful outlook for the future.

In Croatia, at the conclusion of a local conference titled “The Betterment of the World,” young participants undertook a social action initiative to beautify a rundown public space because they believe that more beauty in the world inspires peaceful thoughts.

Meanwhile in Bahrain, a conference dedicated to youth enabled participants from different backgrounds to explore a vision for the future of their society based on the principle of the oneness of humanity. “I think we can foster peaceful communities through more dialogue and inclusive discussions, and by serving alongside our fellow citizens,” said one of the participants.

In the Marshall Islands, where youth are spearheading Bahá’i educational programs that aim to build capacity for service to humanity, the Minister of Education, Kitlang Kabua, expressed her appreciation for the conferences, stating: “Unity, human welfare, and world solidarity are the pillars of this faith. As the Minister of Education... I stand by these pillars and strongly believe in cultivating our people to be competent and compassionate global citizens with a strong cultural and spiritual foundation.”



Sharing:

Anne's sharing:

This tri-board is a representation of how our community was disunified for a very long time, and our progress from disintegration to integration.

The angels represent those who have passed into the next world and who are assisting us: Roxanne Timbrell, Mabel Sport, Willy Sport, Ethel Goodwin, Gordon Goodwin, Gordon Nash, Marjorie McKenzie, and Maryan LaRoque.

The rainbow, created when we have sunshine through rain, represents the twin processes of crisis and victory. Waves can be a symbol of our cluster, Pacific Rim Oceanside, but truly indicate how we ride the ebbs and flows, the peaks and lows, the unexpected tides that have characterized the distance we travelled as Baha'i communities.

The flowers demonstrate our institutional, individual, and community growth, initiative, and development. Please notice there are more flowers as we progress! While bugs are an important part of our ecosystem, these ones also indicate tests and difficulties.

A few initiatives our community is involved with include: Ruhi, devotionals, The Nuggets, Times Colonist and numerous online articles, regular study of the Writings with friends far and near, varied

teaching opportunities in our community, and deepening friendships and support through life's journey.

The angels, flowers, and bugs were created by high school students from grades 8 - 12. A grade 9 student, Isabella, painted the background and glued the objects in place.



Poem of the month

Poem by Tahera (India)

God's Blessings

I sat under the shade of God's tree
And gasped in delight as
The breeze of His love stirred me up,
The fruits of His knowledge quenched my hunger,
The canopy of His leaves
sheltered me from blazing tests,
The fragrance of His flowers
awakened my inner being,
The dew drops refreshed
my drooping soul,
And the song of the birds gave joyful tidings.
And then under His Graceful Abundant shade,
Seeds of gratitude, of happiness,
of humility, of hope ,
of strength , of eternal love
Were gently sowed in the soil of my heart
And a new life began to unfold
A life where each breath pulsates
To the rhythm of only His name .

Tahera

News and Nuggets from our First Nations Community



Finally': Residential school survivors react to Pope's apology



This morning Barney Williams shed tears, as an apology from Pope Francis summoned distant emotions from his childhood in residential school.

"I think that there's a lot of happy people like myself, breathing a sigh of relief and saying, 'Finally'," said the Tla-o-qui-aht elder, who attended Christie Residential School on Meares Island as a child, followed by a stint in Kamloops at a Catholic-run high school. "I feel better that it's happened now."

After a week of hearing from Canada's First Nations, Métis and Inuit delegations who travelled to the Vatican, Pope Francis addressed the effects of the Catholic Church's role in running most of Canada's residential schools for over a century.

"I also feel shame...sorrow and shame for the role that a number of Catholics - particularly those with educational responsibilities - have had in all these things that wounded you, and the abuses you suffered and the lack of respect shown for your identity, your culture and even your spiritual values," said the Pope. "For the deplorable conduct of these members of the Catholic Church, I ask for God's forgiveness and I want to say to you with all my heart, I am very sorry. And I join my brothers, the Canadian bishops, in asking your pardon."

The papal apology follows an unsuccessful request from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who travelled to the Vatican in May 2017. Ten months later the Prime Minister received a letter from a top representative of the Catholic Church in Canada, saying that an apology would not be issued, giving no explanation.

But requests proved to be more successful after the remains 215 people were found in the former grounds of the Kamloops Indian Residential School in late May 2021. After the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc

First Nation announced this finding on its land, a series of similar discoveries followed on former residential school sites across Western Canada.

An apology from the Catholic Church was among the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action in 2015. As a member of the survivors committee, Williams had an integral role in the TRC. He doesn't expect that the papal apology will satisfy everyone.

"I'm not sure it's going to help everybody," said Williams. "A lot of people are still angry that a lot of things weren't done before. We think of families we've lost from alcoholism, drug abuse – it all stems from that dark chapter in Canadian history."

Bernard Jack continues to feel the effects of his time at Christie, and was shaken when the Pope's address was publicized.

"It just made me think of all those priests and nuns that touched me," said Jack, who saw the assimilationist nature of residential school create distance within his family. "We just lost all connection with people, with our own relatives."

Multiple accounts of abuse also came from residential schools run by other churches, such as the Alberni Indian Residential School, which was managed by the United Church when Charlie Thompson attended.

"Some of us were being abused by boys and girls too," he said. "That's what space was created, they made us into something that we weren't supposed to be."

"We didn't know how to be parents when we started having children. We put our children through what we went through, and worse," continued Thompson, referencing a tragedy that hit his Ditidaht community on Nitinaht Lake March 26. "Take an example at my village, this young man got stabbed by his brother for over drinking. Alcohol and drugs are a way over the years of taking care of the abuse, taking care of the pain to try and hide it, try and cover it up."

Now that the Catholic Church has addressed the abuses of some of its members at the institutions, Williams would like to see more mental health supports for school survivors who often face multi-week waiting periods when they seek help.

"It's still a waiting list when you go in," he said. "The guy needs help right now."

"Voicing an apology is never enough unless you take responsibility for what happened to innocent children," stressed Thompson. "What is that abuse worth? How can you be compensated for something that you had no part of? That you were an innocent child taken advantage of by men and women. You can't leave the nuns out of this, they were part of it too."

Although the traditions were introduced under forced circumstances, some former residential school students continue to use Catholic practices as they recover from past abuse. Jack sometimes wears a rosary as he leaves his recovery group home in Calgary to talk walks around the block.

"I had really nothing to believe in, and I only wore that rosary when I was feeling lost," said the former Christie student, although he hopes to benefit from more Indigenous culture as pandemic measures are eased. "I just had a session yesterday with my elder, now that the restrictions have been lifted, I'm

going to try to get back to their spirituality: smudges, drumming and even back to the sweats. I'd rather go that way than kneel down and hold my rosary, that's hard to forgive that way."

During his address to the Indigenous delegations, Pope Francis noted that he hoped to visit Canada to address the issue further, some time around the Feast of St. Anne on July 26.

From the editor's desk:

Spirituality: The Surprising Solution to Our Economic Problems

Everyone knows we have bodies—but many aren't so sure about the existence of the soul.

Of course, the body has needs—food, clothing, shelter, health care—and it has traditionally been the job of economics to satisfy those needs.

Consider this, though: what if the soul and the body are both equally valid realities? Even further, what if the soul lives eternally? If that's true, shouldn't we prioritize the eternal needs of the soul over the temporary needs of the body—or at least make them equal in importance?

With these assumptions, the needs of the soul to become a priority. The body's role—to support the soul by living longer in a healthy manner, so the soul gets the chance to achieve more in this lifetime—means we can't ignore our bodies. We need to take care of them because the body supports the soul; it is the temple of the soul. This basic assumption, from a Baha'i perspective, needs to underpin all economic systems:

"The inordinate disparity between rich and poor, a source of acute suffering, keeps the world in a state of instability, virtually on the brink of war. Few societies have dealt effectively with this situation. The solution calls for the combined application of spiritual, moral and practical approaches. A fresh look at the problem is required, entailing consultation with experts from a wide spectrum of disciplines, devoid of economic and ideological polemics, and involving the people directly affected in the decisions that must urgently be made. It is an issue that is bound up not only with the necessity for eliminating extremes of wealth and poverty but also with those spiritual verities the understanding of which can produce a new universal attitude. Fostering such an attitude is itself a major part of the solution." – *The Universal House of Justice, The Promise of World Peace*, pp. 10-11.

Adam Smith, considered the father of modern economics, also made some basic assumptions in order to provide more goods for man's needs. Based on his observations, Smith built his theoretical economic system. One of the assumptions he made was that man always acts in his own interests and wants to maximize his satisfaction, so he believed that unfettered self-interest in free-market economies leads to economic prosperity.

*The other assumptions Smith mentioned in his famous book **The Wealth of the Nations** included the use of the term "invisible hand," a metaphor to describe the self-regulation of capitalist markets. He also advocated "laissez-faire economics," which meant that governments should not interfere and economic markets should be left alone to take care of any problems. He expounded upon how rational self-interest and competition can lead to economic prosperity.*

Other economists adopted these two fundamental principles of the economic system introduced by Adam Smith. The principle of maximizing satisfaction created a sense of individualism which was praised and was the source of inspiration for many. But this trend of economic thought, without any interference from governments or other agencies, created a breeding ground for greed and exploitation. It resulted in societies which lacked empathy and ignored the plight of the poor and needy. In those societies, the spirit of giving and sharing waned, and gradually the gap between the rich and poor grew greater. Accumulating wealth began to be considered as the highest achievement in a person's life. Becoming rich became the goal of every man and the cost of achieving this goal was not questioned.

But if the body and its needs become a barrier or hindrance to the progress of the soul, then there is a serious problem. These days, in the economic life of humanity, the body and its wants have taken over the needs and desires of the soul. The servant has become the master, and precious human lives are being wasted in the pursuit of the desires of the body. The Baha'i teachings explain:

“The soul of man is the sun by which his body is illumined, and from which it draweth its sustenance, and should be so regarded.” – Baha'u'llah, *Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah*, p. 155.

Because we've prioritized the needs of the body over the needs of the soul, the economic situation of the world has spun out of control. Because of the great economic disparities this over-emphasis on the body has caused, we have to admit that only spirituality can deal with the worldwide spread of this disease of greed and self-centeredness. Because of the massive suffering of the poor, we have to find ways to bring a new sense of justice to the world. To do all that, we need to take a few steps back and define the purpose and the nature of economics and then try to find remedies for its problems:

“The secrets of the whole economic question are Divine in nature, and are concerned with the world of the heart and spirit.” – Abdu'l-Baha, *The Baha'i World, Volume IV*, p. 448.

“In the past, we've looked in the wrong direction for the solutions to the world's economic problems. But as the economic situation gets worse and more desperate for so many people around the globe, we can start to consider spiritual and moral solutions to our civilization's economic problems. The soul knows, and it can guide us to build a new economic system that can accommodate all aspects of human life—for all humans. The Baha'i teachings say: Through the power of the rational soul, man can discover the realities of things, comprehend their properties, and penetrate the mysteries of existence. All the sciences, branches of learning, arts, inventions, institutions, undertakings, and discoveries have resulted from the comprehension of the rational soul.” – Abdu'l-Baha, *Some Answered Questions*, newly revised edition, p. 219.

Where do we start? Maybe by accepting the fact that there is more to humanity than our physical needs and that our spiritual needs have to be recognized and become the focal point of our attention. By recognizing our inner spiritual needs and combining them with physical needs, we will have the impetus and the insight to create a balanced economic system that covers all aspects of our lives and allows us to attain the desires of our souls.

The history of economics has shown us that a system without spiritual guidance can lose its effectiveness and eventually become oppressive and cruel. The Baha'i teachings provide the guidance the world needs to remedy the injustices done to society's poor and underprivileged people. By implementing spiritual solutions to our economic problems, we can resolve those injustices.

Famous quotes:



Upcoming Events:

Next feast, Nur/Light, June 5, 2022

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