

# COMMENT

“These tools will ultimately allow CSIS to conduct investigations into potential terrorists when they travel abroad, meaning that those individuals will be tracked, investigated, and ultimately prosecuted.

**PUBLIC SAFETY MINISTER STEVEN BLANEY**

The federal government will amend the law governing the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) to give the spy agency more authority to track suspected terrorists overseas.

## I am here to listen, to act and to get things done

Ancaster, it's time for a change

ANTHONY NICHOLL

Isn't it time for change in Ancaster? Stop and vote for someone new.

I greatly appreciate this opportunity provided by The Hamilton Spectator to share my ideas.

I am a resident of Ancaster, a loving husband of 11 years and father of two. Edward is our two-and-a-half-year-old son. He enjoys playing at the park in our neighbourhood and learning new phrases. Our youngest son, Michael, just turned one last month. He is walking and enjoying every moment as he learns something new every day. We are very blessed and proud of our children.

When deciding on the best place to raise our family, we chose the wonderful, picturesque village of Ancaster. It was the charm and friendly atmosphere of Ancaster that drew our attention. We wanted our children to live in a safe, caring community with plenty of recreation, activities, nature and history. We all care about Ancaster and the people who make it the greatest place to live.

Living in Ancaster, I noticed a need for better communication and collaboration between council and residents. Community members have approached me regarding issues that were never addressed. Therefore, I decided to run to accommodate the needs of the community and act on their behalf.

I want to ensure that your voices are heard and that the community is consulted on all projects that take place in Ancaster.

I will answer your calls and inquiries. Any issue big or small, I will listen to and address your concerns. I am dedicated to collaborating with community organizations, local development projects, sports and recreation groups, and schools. My ultimate goal is to ensure that the community continues to grow and thrive.

With more than 15 years experience in the telecommunications industry and more than 10 years experience in the restaurant industry, I have a strong background in business and technology.

Within the next four years, my priorities are as follows:

- Have your voice heard at council.
- Effectively manage your tax dollars and work toward lowering our high property taxes.
- Ensure fair wages, contracts and work for certified/licensed trades/union workers.
- Encourage economic growth by attracting businesses to relocate to Ancaster.
- Revisit fluoridation removal from our water.
- Reduce permit process red tape at city hall.
- Improve roads such as Sulphur Springs for greater accessibility.
- Increase bus service during morning and afternoon rush hours, plus Sunday service
- Consult with community members and residents regarding Memorial School plus all other community projects.
- Protect green space by adding more trees to new developments and maintain existing trees in established neighbourhoods.
- Ensure heritage buildings are protected and neighbourhood consultation.
- Establish rebate and incentive programs for energy and water conservation (example: rebates for low flow toilets, which many municipalities have offered).

I am here to listen. I am here to act on your behalf. I am here to get things done!

It's time for change in Ancaster.

Thank you for your time and to The Hamilton Spectator for their outstanding election coverage.

Anthony Nicholl is a candidate for councillor in Ward 12. [vote4nicholl.wordpress.com](http://vote4nicholl.wordpress.com)

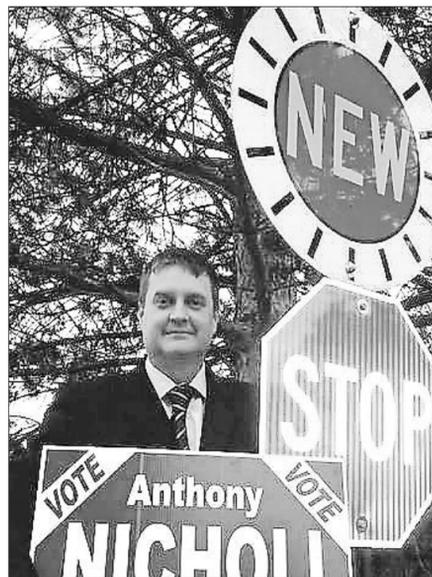


PHOTO COURTESY ANTHONY NICHOLL

Anthony Nicholl

## Words of welcome and openness

Vatican offers chance for priests to reach out to LBGTQ people



DEIRDRE PIKE

According to the American Psychiatric Association, I had a mental illness called homosexuality for the first 11 years of my life. The APA is responsible for editing the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, their version of the bible. But in 1973, the APA made a decision to remove homosexuality from its tome and in that instant, I was cured.

No one ever truly diagnosed me, but the fact is from 1952-1973 it was clearly written that gays and lesbians were mentally disordered. The impact of those words still reverberates today, as many people continue to believe we have an illness that can be cured. All we have to do is “pray the gay away.”

Words from lofty associations like the APA carry a lot of weight and can cause a magnitude of harm or good. The word homosexuality itself is still loaded with stigma as a medicalized term hearkening back to the days before the deletion in the DSM. Even for a lesbian, it's much nicer to be identified as gay than to be called a homosexual.

Recent words out of another lofty organization called the Vatican have the potential of undoing some of the harm that other choice words and phrases to describe gay and lesbian people have caused over the years.

When bishops from around the world emerged at the halfway point from their Synod last week, the words in their preliminary document were being hailed as a seismic shift; a pastoral earthquake; revolutionary acceptance.

I don't think I'd go as far as any of that, but I can assure you this newest document from Rome contains the most welcoming tone I've yet to read.

Traditionally, the phrase used by the Church to describe gay and lesbian people was “intrinsicly

### “Homosexuals have gifts and qualities to offer the Christian community. . . .”

VATICAN DRAFT STATEMENT ON FAMILY SYNOD

## The mysterious road to sainthood

Living with the mystery may be hard, but it's far more interesting



THOMAS FROESE

KAMPALA, UGANDA It's hard to know what it means to be human some days, let alone a saint, but there are clues here and there, like in this novel, “The Plague,” by Albert Camus, where two atheists — one a doctor, one a journalist — have a brief conversation.

They're in Africa fighting a devastating plague when one says to the other, “It comes down to this. What interests me is learning to become a saint.”

There's a mystery to the whole thing, a hunger, a longing not unlike what's in this other novel, by Graham Greene, “The Power and the Glory.” The hero, or nonhero, is a hopeless Catholic priest, a bum, really, an alcoholic and seedy sort of fellow you wouldn't want your children with.

Running from Mexican revolutionaries who are hunting religious figures, he's finally caught and brought to the eve of his execution. There, sitting alone with his tears and flask of brandy, the priest is overwhelmed not by fear as much as a profound sadness and disappointment when realizing he has nothing to present to God.

“It seemed to him at that moment that it would have been quite easy to become a saint,” Greene writes. “It would only have needed a little self-restraint and a little courage. He felt like he had missed happiness by seconds at an appointed place. He knew now that at the end there was only one thing that counted — to be a saint.”

These pictures aren't what we normally equate with sainthood, not like, say, the noble service of a Mother Teresa or gnarled hands folded in prayer or even glowing halos. They show more of that longing, longing for a new home, really, and a deep, almost buried, desire to show gratitude.

Of course, thanking God isn't easy in a culture of über-independence. “Dear God. We paid for all this stuff ourselves, so thanks for nothing,” is how Bart Simpson eloquently prayed once.

But maybe we aren't so different from the characters in these two novels, hopeless atheists and hopeless believers alike in the thick of our own war,

disordered.” Another favourite ditty was “love the sinner, hate the sin.”

It's going to take a lot of love to get past the pain of those words and the oppression and internalized homophobia associated with them. While I don't think the words in this new document will be able to go far enough to wipe that pain away, they are still staggering.

Echoing the tone of Pope Francis's open-hearted question last year: “Who am I to judge?,” this draft document states: “Homosexuals have gifts and qualities to offer the Christian community. Are we capable of welcoming them, guaranteeing to them a fraternal space within our communities?”

For once, the judgment is directed to the communities of the faithful and how they welcome their gay and lesbian sisters and brothers. (Not surprisingly, the document doesn't acknowledge bisexual or trans people.)

The other statement that really has people talking pertains to our relationships. While still upholding the teaching that marriage is only between a man and a woman, the bishops say: “Without denying the moral problems connected to homosexual unions, it has to be noted that there are cases in which mutual aid to the point of sacrifice constitutes a precious support in the life of the partners.”

There's a good chance the final document that comes out of the Synod will have some more major edits if the voices of more conservative bishops get their way as they already appear to have. Many have already condemned it, along with traditional Catholic organizations like Rorate Caeli, a blog that called the report “heresy, homoheresy.”

In the meantime, I think the document provides a great opportunity for priests on the ground, right here in Hamilton even, to say a few words of welcome and openness to LBGTQ people in their homilies this weekend.

Far too many of us have heard the other words of condemnation from the Church, from our families, in our workplaces and neighbourhoods, for far too long. It's time to out this conversation and for church leadership to show it is indeed capable of welcoming LBGTQ people and guaranteeing them a safe and loving space within our communities. What would Jesus do?

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not to conquer any person or place but a war to somehow live at peace in our own humanity, if not with the news of the day, even these autumn days now falling between Thanksgiving and Remembrance Day.

That news, as you know, is that thousands of West Africans have fallen to Ebola. And aid workers, not from fiction but from our very real world, are close enough to the edge of death that they surely can't help but think something of these inner-life matters.

The news here in Uganda, on Africa's other side, is that a case of Marburg, Ebola's just-as-deadly cousin, recently arrived.

Over your way, meanwhile, we've had the much publicized comments of adventurer company Amaruk Corp, including from manager Olaf Amundsen who wrote Trinity Western University graduate, Bethany Paquette, a Christian, no, she can't have a job with the B.C. company and, further, if he ever met Jesus he'd like to “f\*\*k him,” apparently to show what he thinks of Paquette's and the university's, in his view, intolerant views.

Which proves this world is full of all types, including those who sniff for even the slightest whiff of someone else's intolerance without noticing their own hot bigotry is a stink-bomb of national proportions.

True, some religious types also degrade the notion of sainthood by making it an onerous list of rules or a trite series of steps to follow, like a recipe for cupcakes, the men appearing like they have a great used car deal, the women like they could use considerably less makeup.

But most people, it seems to me, want to live somewhere different from either of these uninspiring destinations, in a different country, if you will, discovering a different sort of freedom where sainthood is, strangely enough, for the unworthy, where it's more of that divine mystery, like the wind blowing first here, then there, nobody knowing where it might go next.

Living with such mystery, of course, doesn't make anyone very comfortable either. It's not meant to. But it's far more worthwhile and interesting.

Author and journalist Thomas Froese is the keynote speaker at the Hamilton-Burlington-Brantford 2014 Peace Breakfast at the Hamilton Convention Centre, Nov. 25. Read him at [www.dailydad.net](http://www.dailydad.net) and [www.thomasfroese.com](http://www.thomasfroese.com).



## BRIEFLY

Short and excerpted comments sent to [letters@thespec.com](mailto:letters@thespec.com)

### Notice to all election candidates

The Spectator's editorial board would like to thank all the municipal election candidates for their submissions. We hope readers have found them useful. We have now received submissions for the remaining publication days between now and election day. We can't guarantee publication of any candidate submission received after yesterday. Thanks, and good luck to all candidates.

### Living our lives based on evidence, thought

The special report, A Test of Faith, states the proportion of Canadians with no religious affiliation has grown significantly and identifies consumerism and social change as culprits.

But a growing number of people simply choose to be non-religious. We seek to live our lives based on evidence and critical thought, not on faith in an incredible bronze age mythology. As Carl Sagan put it: “It is far better to grasp the universe as it really is than to persist in delusion, however satisfying and reassuring.” JOHN LAFFERTY, ANCASTER

### Constituent views should drive voting

With regard to the story about city council's voting record, aren't councillors elected, like their provincial and federal counterparts, to represent the concerns of the constituents who elected them? Rather than being concerned about councillors voting the same way on an issue, shouldn't we be more concerned about whether they have voted in accordance with their own conscience and the wishes of their constituents? Isn't the real test whether they've joined ranks after a vote for the good all citizens of Hamilton regardless of how they individually voted on any given issue?

JIM BEATTIE, HAMILTON