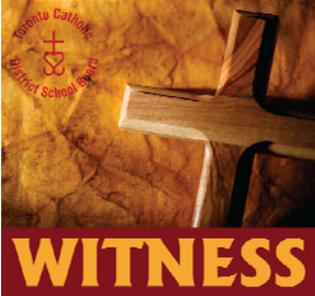


Nurturing Our Catholic Community through...



Notes on Big Yellow Taxi Song

(by Joni Mitchell)

Verse 1

- paradise – symbolizes nature
- parking lot – symbolizes urban development; we have destroyed nature by building concrete cities and suburbs (e.g. Mississauga sprawl and cookie-cutter housing); convenience is priority over environmentally friendly choices, thus we use cars (parking lot) which are polluting nature
- hotel, boutique – feeding our materialism is more important than nature

Chorus

- humans think and/or behave with short-term view vs. long-term view
- immediate gratification blinds us from seeing later consequences of our actions/decisions; we often notice when it's too late
- e.g. PC government saves money by cutting back on environmental inspectors and seven people die in Walkerton as a result
- we don't appreciate value of something when it's abundant; we begin to appreciate something when it becomes rare (e.g. pandas)

Verse 2

- we destroy beautiful nature in the name of rapid development (e.g. cut down old trees when building new homes then after construction, plant homogeneous trees along the street)
- the irony is we try to recreate the beauty of nature (e.g. zoos, botanic gardens) and charge admission to enjoy it

Verse 3

- food goes through so much processing and is far removed from consumers – many people can't describe how their food reaches their table
- many chemicals or unnatural produces are used to process food (e.g. fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, antibiotics, bone and blood meal, sheep offal, etc)
- current chemicals used in food processing can accumulate over lifetime and potentially cause cancer; also kill other wildlife
- specific cases for concern – DDT used in past lead to many birth defects and illnesses; feeding dead sheep offal to cows lead to mad cow disease passed onto humans; polyacrylamide used to make cereal crunchy?
- Organically grown fruits/vegetables are not naturally perfect looking; let's accept some spots and let the birds/bees/other animals live!

Verse 4

- "late last night" -> can again symbolize waiting or not realizing and/or acknowledging until the end what is happening with nature
- "heard screen door slam" -> a note of finality

- “big yellow taxi took away my old man” -> progress/development has taken away nature (our benefactor, our nurturer, someone we have taken for granted)