

## THE VISIT:

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Unless we have been living with our heads in the sand for the last few years, we should all appreciate the enormity of the AIDS problem. Last week the University of Prince Edward Island was graced with the presence of a Mr. Mike McDonald. He came to talk to us about the Acquired Immune Deficiency Disease, otherwise known as A.I.D.S., the disease which depletes the body's immune system. Mr. McDonald himself suffers from the virus and felt it was important to speak to us to make us more aware of this increasingly global problem.

Mr. McDonald presented us with a personal yet informative account of his life as a person with Aids' (P.W.A.) as he terms it. He himself is a homosexual priest who contracted the Aids virus approximately three years ago. He is still in, what is known as the symptomatic stage of the disease, where actual visible symptoms are minimal.

He first realized something was wrong when he found that a certain cold persisted and would not go away. It was only a good deal later that he fell seriously ill was taken into hospital, asked for an Aids test and was diagnosed as being HIV+. The initial devastation of this news however did not destroy him, on the contrary, it seems from any observers standpoint, that it 'changed' his life in appositive way. It has obviously been an uphill struggle for him to deal with the loss of a great part of his Priesthood, as he is no longer allowed to preach or give the

Euchevist on a Sunday, which he has resigned himself to this and has turned the focus in his life be educating himself, about the disease from which he suffers and those around him who complacently sit back feeling that, 'it will never happen to me'.

In his talk he stressed the necessity to cast aside our fears and delusions about the disease, that it is merely a disease contracted and spread by the homosexual community- We should instead realize that we are all at risk if we act irresponsibly by exchanging intavenous drug needled or practice unsafe sex etc. It is also important to realize according to Mr. McDonald that the disease has a lengthy incubation period. This means that even if you are tested for the HIV virus and that results are negative then you may still be carrying the disease, as it takes a period of perhaps at least three months to manifest itself in the blood sample taken during the test.

At present in this country an Aids test will not be carried out unless the doctor or whoever has the patient's permission. However the results of such a test will be reported to the Medical Officer in the province. There is comfort though, in that no named are mentioned, so it is fairly confidential.

At the moment the fight against Aids is to be fought on two fronts. Firstly it is of dire necessity to arrest the spread of disease by coming for the sufferers and finding a treatment to cure the ill. Secondly and equally