



The Leading Edge...

"Edge Thoughts"

Come to the edge.

We might fall.

Come to the edge.

It's too high!

COME TO THE EDGE.

And they came; and he pushed; and they flew.

Christopher Logue

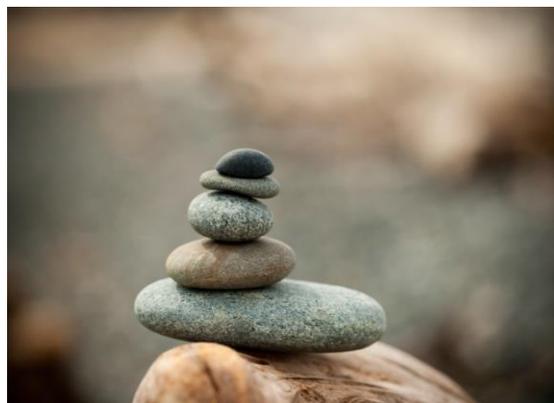
From: Ode to the Dodo - Poems from 1953 to 1978

ARCAN Logo Designed by: Phyllis Gallant, cnd

ARCAN NEWSLETTER #2- August, 2020 Atlantic Religious Congregations Associate Network

ARCAN VISION STATEMENT

The vision of ARCAN is to be a mutually supportive network of Associates and Sisters in Atlantic Canada living a new and dynamic expression of religious life and spirituality for the 21st century. We inspire to invite one another to a wider embrace of Gospel values and to live a commitment of love in relationship with all creation.



ARCAN MISSION STATEMENT

Rooted in Gospel values and inspired by the charisms of each religious congregation the mission of ARCAN is to provide a supportive network committed to adult learning, inclusive actions, embracing diversity, along with an awareness of the new consciousness that all life is sacred and connected.

WE REMEMBER AND WE CELEBRATE



Cora Shebib

We began our June 12th ARCAN meeting with a remembrance of Cora Shebib who served ARCAN for over 10 years. Cora was a wife, a mother, a grandmother, a strong woman and a dear friend. Cora's life was one of love, courage, commitment, deep friendship, laughter and "otherness". Cora never let cancer define who she was. She understood the pain and offered her services as a palliative care volunteer, a founder of the dragon boat races in Cape Breton and a member of the hospice committee.

She was a faith seeker and she believed strongly that women could and should have a place in a church oblivious to women's gifts. Cora's seeking would eventually lead her to become an associate with the Sisters of Charity of Halifax. I first met Cora when I became a member of ARCAN. Together with Margie Gillis we would go on to become the "unofficial" Executive for over 10 years.

Cora became the "financier" for the group although she would be the first to laugh at the title. Cora had a contagious laugh and she shared it often. She enjoyed a good conversation over a glass of wine. Cora's friendships were solid. She spoke her truth while respecting the truth of others. We are filled with gratitude for all the ways that she enriched our lives and for all the work that she did on behalf of ARCAN.

I/we grieve her loss and are consoled by her final message:

"If ever there comes a time when we can't be together,

Keep me in your heart,

I'll stay there forever!"

(Winnie the Pooh)

Submitted by Peggy Gorman, ARCAN Committee Member

MARTHA ASSOCIATES ANTIGONISH, NS



(l-r) Mary MacKinnon, Sr. Therese LeBlanc, CSM, Theresa Gillis, Michelle Finigan

As a member of the Martha Associates, I feel called to respond, to help, and to serve. The Sisters of St. Martha have responded to Gospel calls for years and do so in many ways, present day included. My faith and my belonging to the Associates are core reasons why I became involved in the ministry and work of St. Vincent de Paul.

Throughout this global pandemic the necessity to reach out and help others has become more and more evident. As associates and as Christians, we have a responsibility to love and serve one another. Through my work with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, we have

encountered many brothers and sisters who still need us to provide essential services despite what is happening outside our doors. Groups like St. Vincent de Paul who minister to many people throughout our world have continued to provide help and hope to people who are already marginalized. As Associates, we try to live the charisms of hospitality and charity.

That is why each of us can offer the gifts that we have been given to reach out to those around us and to be the face of Christ for all to see. This pandemic has taught us some important lessons. We have been taught the importance of service, the importance of faith and the importance of each other.

Submitted by: Michelle Finigan, Associate Member of the Sisters of St. Marthas



Volunteers working at Society of St. Vincent de Paul

SISTERS OF SAINT MARTHA OF ANTIGONISH, NS



It is my privilege, as a Sister of Saint Martha to share with you its spirit and charism. Needless to say, this will be given in a nutshell.

Our story has its beginnings in the later part of the 19th Century and is rooted in Saint Francis Xavier University. The University (it was a College) at that time was desperately in need of dedicated women to respond to the domestic and housekeeping needs of the College. Bishop John

Cameron, of the Diocese of Antigonish, N.S. put out a plea to the parishes for robust women and about thirty women responded. After being trained with the Sisters of Charity in Halifax, the women arrived by train and we are told, "walked up to the University with their meager belongings". On July 29, 1900, a small community of 15 was formed "with nothing but their energy, skill, and generosity, they made a home for the priests and students in the struggling College". They were reminded by Mother Faustina that: "they were to be earthy women, keeping their feet planted firmly on the ground".

In no time, the Marthas' mission grew to a fourfold apostolate of service to the sick, education, family service and household management. Later we were involved with Spiritual Direction and Retreat Centres. Doctor Coady and Doctor Jimmy Tomkins, the fathers of the Coady International Institute were the Marthas' teachers and mentors. It was through Doctor Coady that we undertook Education and Social Work. Dr. Coady at one time said, "give me ten Sisters of St. Martha and we can change the world". I believe we have through our Spirit and Charism of Hospitality made a concerted effort to make a difference wherever we were and are missioned. As we grew we became a strong witness in Canadian life in regards to hospitals, education, social work and parish work. Throughout our ministries our aim was always to make ourselves dispensable and to prepare others to replace us and to move on to fill new needs.



Sr. Claudette Gallant, CSM

Moving fast forward, today we are few in number and yet we continue through our chapters to move with the sign of the times with our Charism and Direction Statement. Our Martha Associates are an important Ministry within the congregation. In the Martha Associate Handbook we state, "Martha Associates are women and men who identify with the mission and values of the Sisters of St. Martha and affiliate for the purpose of assisting each other to deepen the living of their baptismal call in their respective life situation."

It is a mutual spiritual relationship where we do not expect the Associates to be involved with a ministry in the Marthas. The Handbook says, "at the heart of the association is a quiet dynamism which enlivens and develops people, helping all to the Source of our call to holiness." We encourage the Associates to live the 2019 Direction Statement in their own situation; believing that together we are called forth by the Spirit of the living God to:

Seek to deepen communion among ourselves and those we encounter

Desire to bring a contemplative and compassionate heart to our fractured world

Witness to life-giving choices and promote integral ecology

Broaden circles of hospitality

And in the face of our reality dare to stand in undaunted hope

As Marthas we are asked to reflect on this Direction Statement for the next four years and ask the Associates to join us in caring for all of life with the help of each other and the life-giving Spirit living in everything.

Hospitality is the Spirit's gift to us all. We as Marthas have it as our Charism and would love to witness it to the world, encouraging those we are involved with to pass it on...

If you were given a thirst for more on how the Marthas are responding today to its vision, please visit our website at: www.themarthas.com

Blessings to all and be safe.

Sister Claudette Gallant, C.S.M.

(Acknowledgement to Sr. Yvonne Vigneault C.S.M. : History of the Sisters of St. Martha, Feb. 28, 1986)

ASSOCIATES OF SACRED HEART OF HALIFAX



In the fall of 2019 we prepared our contribution for the Special Chapter 2021 in prayer and discussion on the Dream Catcher summary with members of Central team.

During the winter we enjoyed the video, Amazonia: **New Paths for the Church and for an Integral Ecology** by Socorro Martinez, RSCJ sharing her experience to the synod; mass and dinner

during the Christmas season.

2020 began with transformational work- the essentials of the associate relationship; learning about mental models and how they affect our thinking and acting in ordinary life. Kathy Conan rscj shared her US-Mexico border experience and the work of Women in ARISE (A Resource in Serving Equality). An eye-opening story of asylum seekers. Blandine

Barosa RSCJ, presented an overview of her Congo (DRC).

Our world changed in March when COVID-19 became our global reality. The remainder of our meetings were via Zoom. We prayed the Pandemic prayer by Lynn Ungar, we shared our personal stories dealing with protocols of COVID and new technology tips to stay connected.

Our last meeting was an opportunity for each of us to ponder, reflect and share our insights on



Blandine Barosa RSCJ

what the pandemic has taught us about ourselves, others, nations, and global community.

Submitted by: Sarah Cassidy, Associate RSCJ

YOUTH MINISTRY DURING A PANDEMIC

ST. IGNATIUS PARISH, NS



I typically have about 50 Jr. High students on a Sunday evening for Religious Education and Confirmation Classes. Since March of this year so much has changed. When we first began hearing about Covid-19, I kept in contact with my Youth via emails. Sending updates and lessons to be worked on at home and realizing that we would not be able to meet anytime soon, I very quickly had to learn the powers of ZOOM. Our first meeting was very exciting for everyone and almost all the students showed up. Zoom was an exciting new concept for them. We had some fun learning the ins and outs. Every week they had a different name and back drop. As the weeks went by the novelty soon wore off for many of them. They were doing online school for most of the week and had no interest to be online for Sunday School as well. I totally knew where they were coming from as I too was getting a little tired of all the work and family zoom calls all week long.

We ended up with a core group of about 12 who stuck it out till the end. But there were six faithful students who always had the great questions and always wanted to know more about their faith. We as a group decided to do a little Bible Study and what was more perfect than studying where it all began...The Acts of the Apostles. I thought I was pretty, well versed in the Acts just from hearing snippets at Sunday Mass but once we started reading from the beginning everything took on a whole new meaning and order.

The questions that my six young disciples came up with really got me thinking as well. One student asked, "I thought Judas hung himself when the guards wouldn't take the money back, so why does it say here that he fell to his death and his guts spilled out?" I had to go and look up Matthew and I'm still trying to work that one out.

Another asked, "Why would Ananias and Sapphira drop dead just for not sharing their own property? Didn't God and the Apostles believe in second chances?" Hmmm...

They came up with questions and comments that never occurred to me. They especially liked learning about the references to the Old Testament and the prophecies. So many things began to make sense for them. It was amazing to be there for their AHA moments. Their questions began to turn into educated comments. I could tell that they were beginning to understand a bit better how reading scripture works. Our plan was to end the Bible Study when classes ended but we are only a third of the way through Acts and they don't want to stop. I am kind of glad that they chose to continue because I'm excited to read to the end with them.

Submitted by: Peggy Dupuy, Associate SC Halifax

Religious Ed Director/ Youth Minister

St. Ignatius Parish

ASSOCIATES OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, NL



Our Presentation Associate relationship, living out the Charism of Nano Nagle, continues to be nurtured spiritually as we journey together in communion with each other during these uncharted times of COVID-19. When all meetings and gatherings were cancelled in March by Presentation Leadership, in their efforts to keep people safe and to abide by the Public Health Regulations, it meant that our monthly Associate group meetings could not go ahead. As well, the orientation process for new persons discerning the call to become Presentation Associates, was interrupted. As the term "social distancing" became part of our new reality, Associates adapted to the changing needs/times by connecting in prayer to support each other by email and phone. Emails were forwarded by Associates and Sisters to each other with

inspirational videos and poems. Phone call 'touch-ins' between the Associates and between Sisters and Associates reaffirmed that we are in this together. Our new persons in the orientation were not excluded as phone calls and emails kept us connected as a group. We received notices on an ongoing basis asking for prayers for individuals and families experiencing illness and death and we often "stormed heaven" with our prayers.

As the COVID-19 lockdown continued there was a growing desire among the group to gather by Zoom. The three Unit Coordinators of Newfoundland and Labrador, Bride Doyle, Stella Galway and I met with our Link Sister, Sister Ruth O'Reilly, and reviewed our past five years of ministry. In prayer and contemplative dialogue with each other we discussed how to move forward in supporting the new team beginning in July as it engages in the ministry of leadership to strengthen and build the Associate relationship and mission of the Presentation Congregation.

As Unit Coordinator in Newfoundland East I met with our group of six new persons by Zoom and, in contemplative dialogue, reviewed our orientation process to date, the impact of Covid-19 on the process and on our lives personally. We agreed that we would connect throughout the summer by each of us sharing a reflection for our group until we met in September by Zoom or by face to face.

With the generous help of Sister Sheila Leonard, a gathering for our three Associate groups for Newfoundland East was held by Zoom. For some, it was the first time to use Zoom. Sisters and Associates demonstrated the mutuality of our relationship as we gathered with smiles and gratitude, empowering and supporting each other. We began our gathering with "Steadfast Love" (music and lyrics by Miriam Martin, PBVM) and entered into contemplative dialogue on "Profile: Nano Nagle", by Raphael Consedine, PBVM, Melbourne, Australia (from: "Songs of the Journey" poetry collection, 1977). As we took time to reflect on who we are, during these days of Covid-19, we turned to the one who carried the light "...the greatest work meets with the greatest crosses..." (Nano Nagle).

In the face of fear, she chose to be daring.

In the face of anxiety, she chose to trust.

In the face of impossibility, she chose to begin.

To universal misery, she proposed ministry to persons,
to ignorance, knowledge,
to disillusionment, tenacity of purpose
and to multiple vexations, singleness of heart.
Faced with failure, she held fast to hope,
faced with death, she believed in a living future,
and a programme for that future, she gave in one word, LOVE.

Raphael Consedine, PBVM

*Submitted by Pauline Lake - Devine,
Associate PBVM*

SISTERS OF MERCY AND MERCY ASSOCIATE RELATIONSHIP, NL



Thomasina Cleal,
Associate

The Sisters of Mercy have always been an important part of my life and the lives of many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians .

I was born in St. Clare's Mercy Hospital in St. John's, a wonderful hospital which the Sisters opened in 1922. I recall my mother saying that the Sisters at St. Clare's knew more than any doctor!! The mothers and their babies were welcomed to a sparkling clean and efficiently run hospital which cared for their physical and spiritual health.

I attended Mercy Convent School on Military Road and Holy Heart of Mary High School both of which were run by the Sisters. My career spanned thirty years as an educator during which time I worked closely with the Sisters of Mercy.

I have no doubt that the Sisters of Mercy impacted my life in a very positive way.

The Sisters of Mercy came to St. John's in 1842, led by Marianne Creedon (Sr. M. Francis). She and two other Sisters came from Dublin where the Sisters of Mercy Congregation was begun by Catherine McAuley in the House of Mercy in 1827.

The children of our city, particularly the girls, benefitted from the teachings of these inspiring and dedicated women. In subsequent years, the Sisters of Mercy not only taught academics but also provided an education in the arts, particularly music. The musical character of our province owes much of its foundation to the Sisters.

In 1993, the Mercy Sisters in St. John's began an invitational program which saw lay women and men join the Mercy Associate Relationship. As stated in the handbook, they were "inspired by the vision and ideals of Catherine McAuley and responding to the call of VaticanII for increased involvement of all the people of God in the saving mission of Christ".

Since then, nine Associate Circles have been formed which bring Associates and Sisters together providing a spiritual environment where members' gifts are nurtured to touch the lives of others in "love, justice and mercy".

The Sisters of Mercy have always been known for their sense of the practical and for looking to the future. It is with this perspective in mind that the Leadership Team of the Sisters of Mercy, under the guidance of Sister Elizabeth Davis RSM, formed an Advisory Committee on the Associate Relationship in 2020. Co-Coordinator, Sister Maureen O'Keefe RSM, and Barbara Hawley, offer wonderful leadership to the Committee.

The mandate of this Advisory Committee is to provide advice and make recommendations to the Leadership Team of the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy regarding the future and matters relating to the life and work of the Associate Relationship.

The fourteen members of the Advisory Committee spent the first couple of months reviewing the history of the Sisters of Mercy in Newfoundland. As well, information on the various current ministries of Associates and Sisters was reviewed. In other words, we reviewed the past and the present!

It is the Committee's hope that the Holy Spirit will assist in the following months as a plan for the future of the Associate Relationship unfolds.

St. John's is indeed a different place from the city which welcomed Sister Francis and her two assisting Sisters. There has been progress in both education and health, no doubt, but the Associate Relationship may still identify areas where the spiritual and the practical can meet. In other words, the future is before us and we endeavor to be guided by the same dedication and charism of Catherine McAuley!

Catherine's maxim will enable us to holdfast - "We have one solid source of comfort amidst this little tripping about, our hearts can always be in the same place, centered in God, for whom alone we go forward or stay back".

Submitted by: Thomasina Cleal, Chair - Advisory Committee, Mercy Associate

LIVING THROUGH THE 2020 COVID-19 PANDEMIC PE MARTHAS

"Protect me O God; I trust in you for safety" (Psalm 16.1)



Mary MacLean, Eileen Cow,
Sr. Gemma Dunn

God calls us to be hopeful during this difficult time. Our last Associate meeting was in February, just prior to COVID-19 shut-down. Not one of the Associates or Sisters ever imagined we would be living through a pandemic. We have the history and stories of the Spanish flu over 100 years ago. I am sure we believed that type of crisis was a thing of the past, but history is repeating itself. Here we are, now almost four months later, still doing very well. The officials here on our little island are doing a marvelous job of keeping all residents safe.

During this shut-down we kept in touch with each other by phone and other social media. We participated in daily mass virtually. We are resilient Christians and trusted in God to be with us on this journey. One of the most difficult things was not being able to visit our Sisters living at the Mount Continuing Care facility. They were confined to their rooms, not even going to the cafeteria. It was very challenging for them.

We all spent more time in conversation with God.

Our co-coordinator, Eileen, travelled to another province for surgery and is now recovering at home. Several associates lost loved ones and were unable to have a normal wake and funeral, thus affecting their grief process. Bernie lost her beloved brother-in-law; Ann's sister died very suddenly; Anita's son died of a sudden heart attack; and my brother-in-law passed away after a long illness. MAY PERPETUAL LIGHT SHINE UPON THEM.



Sr. Rose Setter, Associate, Sheila
MacDonald, Sr. Wanda MacDonald

Now that our trusted authorities have opened our province to Phase 4, we can gather in larger groups, and since we have a large meeting space, our executive may plan a gathering in the near future. We are looking forward to seeing each other in person.

Co-coordinator, Mary MacLean and Sheila MacDonald attended the ARCAN zoom meeting. I went to Mary's home to participate. Zoom was a new experience for me and I enjoyed it. Many of our members volunteered by sewing masks, making meals for others, picking up groceries for those stay-at-home folks, and various other errands.

We are people of faith and as we move on we can only pray the past months will become a 'MEMORY' to pass on as story telling to our grandchildren.

Submitted by: Sheila MacDonald - Associate of Sisters of St. Martha, PE

Co-ordinating Committee for PE Marthas: Mary MacLean, Eileen Clow, Sr. Gemma Dunn

400TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF ST. MARGUERITE BOURGEOYS, CND

Congregation-wide Retreat In the Garden of our Common Home with Marguerite

To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven... Ecclesiastes 3:1



One of the many celebrations to honour the birth of St Marguerite Bourgeoys (1620-2020) is the Congregation-wide retreat...In the Garden with Marguerite- the garden being as much the garden of creation as our common home. An intercultural and intergenerational team of sisters prepared this retreat. Sisters Josephine Badali, Yvonne Bergeron, Kathleen P. Deignan, Claudia Margarita Juarez Juarez, Brigitte Minkada Onana, Kikuko Margarita Takahashi and Sophie Mbougoum answered the call to share their skills, talents and time to create this fruitful retreat, which encourages a prayerful and sharing approach between sisters and brothers, communion and united action. The online retreat is in four movements that together form a whole but can also be followed one movement at a time. Truro Associate, Anna Rowley, hosted a virtual retreat for Visitation Province East Associates and soon other Visitation Province Associates and Sisters participated. Zoom meetings were scheduled beginning Tuesday, May 19, 2020 and every second Tuesday thereafter ending Tuesday, June,30, 2020.

Each movement had its own title for the Reflection and Sharing exercises:

- Movement I- A Time to Contemplate the Garden
- Movement II- A Time for Surveying the Soils of Our Garden
- Movement III- A Time for Sowing Seeds
- Movement IV- A Time for Anticipating the Harvest

Throughout each movement there was time for Prayer, Song, Scripture, Invoking the Holy Spirit, Listening Deeply to Discern Wisely, Listening Mindfully for a Call to Action, Seeing Deeply-Lectio Divina and Guided Meditation. We experienced being with Marguerite in the Garden of her season and being with Marguerite in the Garden of our season. We had time to reflect on what Marguerite was showing and saying to us. Break out rooms were created for smaller groups to share what they have seen or heard in their contemplative moments.

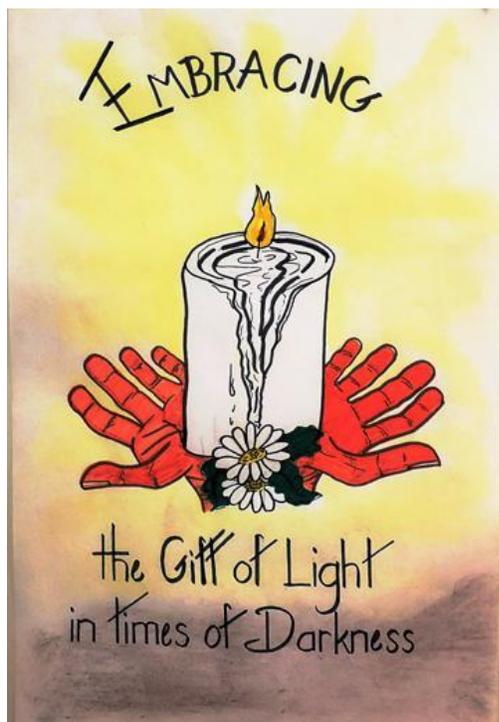
Special thanks to Anna Rowley, CND Associate and Sr. Eleanor McCloskey, CND who graciously answered the call within their hearts to share this Retreat among the Associates and Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame. "May your hands be blessed to tend your Garden, the Garden within you and the Garden all around."

"May the soil of your heart remain moist and life-giving, may you flourish like a lily of the field."

Submitted by: Theresa Ann MacNeil, Associate Coordinator Visitation Province East

SISTERS OF CHARITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Activities During COVID-19, 2020



Invited by Sister Mary Beth McCurdy, SCIC congregational leader, the Sisters took turns facilitating daily midday prayer in their dining room. Themes and awareness included feast and saints' days, as well as Canadian and international observances focusing on social and ecological justice. Many Sisters appreciate daily TV and online liturgies. An attempt was made to gather while socially distanced via Zoom for reflection and prayer with the Sisters of Charity Federation.

Although no guests or liturgies were permitted for almost four months, Sisters are now celebrating with weekly outdoor Mass and outdoor visits with guests.

One artistic Sister created two colourful posters for outer residence doors to thank service providers and delivery persons. She also creates many artistic posters which offer beauty, awareness and inspiration.

Sisters collected in-house donations for Hospice Greater Saint John, in lieu of former hospice fundraising barbecues. Sisters also continued collecting donations for grandmothers in Swaziland, Africa raising grandchildren whose parents died of AIDS (offered via Hampton-Piggs Peak Partnership). SCIC staff prepared casseroles for Outflow shelter, a Saint John inner city outreach ministry.

Two Sisters died of natural causes this spring. While no liturgies were possible, Sister Mary Beth offered prayer at the cemetery. Another Sister in Saint John prepared photo discs highlighting their lives and ministries.

Special messages of hope and encouragement were shared during the pandemic via the electronic newsletter, Conway Communications, which reaches Sisters and Associates in eastern, western and northern Canada.

Submitted from Notes of the SCIC

Artwork by Muriel Buckley, SCIC St. Vincent Residence, Saint John, N.B.

SISTERS OF CHARITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION NB

Charism and Mission



Pat Poole,
SCIC, Saint John

One time I was with a few of our Associates having tea. I'm not sure how we got to talking about words we use that are so common to us in religious communities, like charism and discernment, but I certainly remember one of the women saying, "Why don't you Sisters use language that people understand?" Good question! Sometimes we take for granted that everyone understands what we're saying. That quote "I'm not sure you understand that what I said is really what I meant." sums it up for me.

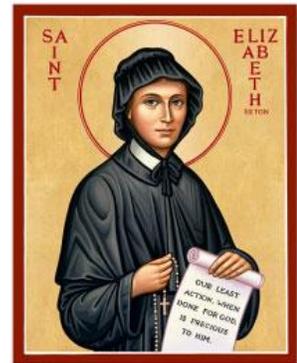
That's what the word charism sometimes does...it's not one used in "ordinary" language! Being an English teacher for years, I'm always curious about where words came from and what's their original meaning. So what about "charism"? Its roots are Greek, (kháris) which means "a freely given gift by the grace of God." When it's used in relation to religious communities, it's a gift of the Spirit given for the sake of the world and the church. It's based on the vision of the Foundress(er) and a response to the "signs of the times". To me, it's the "life breath and heartbeat of the community" and in mine, it's the Charism of Charity.



Historically, our roots are in the prophetic vision of St. Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac who saw a need for a community of women to reach out in the love of Jesus Christ with compassion to the marginalized, sick, homeless and outcasts of their society.



St. Elizabeth Ann Seton followed the same spirituality and founded the Sisters of Charity of New York.



Our Foundress, Honoria Conway, was formed in their Novitiate and returned to Saint John to help Bishop Connelly respond to their "sign of the times" ~caring for the children left orphaned by parents who had died during the cholera epidemic. She was already looking after orphans before she went to New York so obviously the charism of charity had found her earlier!

And today? We continue "to respond with justice and mercy to the cry of Mother Earth and emerging world and local needs" (The Call of Chapter 2018)...our "signs of the times"!

Submitted by: Pat Poole, SCIC, Saint John

SAINT JOHN AND DIGBY SCIC ASSOCIATES' SPRING ACTIVITIES



Du

ring these COVID days, we focus on two areas - maintaining contact with the Sisters and helping to feed the hungry. During Lent, each Sister was held in daily prayer by an Associate. Throughout the spring and summer, we continue to send cards and pictures and make phone calls to Sisters.

Because we could not visit with the Sisters, we had to become creative! On May 17 and June 20, Saint John Associates visited the Sisters on an "outside walk about". Women, men, children, and the dog Fenway walked, sang, and carried balloons, signs, and flags around the homes. Sisters came out on balconies, looked out windows, and a great experience was had by all!



Saint John Associates and Sisters continue with our community Outflow ministry. On the first Sunday of each month, we prepare 120 supper meals for people who do not have enough to eat. At first, we made bag suppers consisting of a sandwich, cookies, a piece of fruit, and a cold drink. Now we prepare casseroles and provide fruit, drink and dessert. Working with other community groups, they are packaged in individual containers and distributed. As Saint Vincent de Paul said, "Go to the poor: you will find God."

Associates in Digby and Saint John call or e-mail and pray for each other to maintain emotional and spiritual support.

Submitted by Denise Isaacs, Saint John Associate Coordinator

BECOMING STILLNESS

A Video Lecture by Friar Richard Rohr, OFM



An American, Richard Rohr is a world-renowned author, writer, and speaker on Spirituality. He is founding Director and Academic Dean of the Centre for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA. ***Becoming Stillness***, a video recorded in 2015, is a compelling lecture which invites one to reflect on how we think and how we pray .

Reminding us of the dualistic, all or nothing , black or white way we all use our minds, Friar Richard suggests we, as Christians , need a "different set of eyes" with which to understand spiritual reality. He suggests we need to find, to be taught a different strategy. He encourages us to observe how our minds operate so we may see in ourselves how trapped we are in our way of thinking. He offers guidance to help in the process of early contemplation clearly explaining and illustrating what is meant. Going into the "Stillness" or time in mindful Silence, he reminds us, must be taught, and needs practice. In doing this, he tells us, " you become a prayer and can look out in a conscious union with God " Prayer beyond words, he tells us , is " The Spirit growing in us".

This gentle, brilliant man shares many anecdotes which serve to inform. Many are key messages which are touching, and which excite and instruct. His talk, which is just one hour long, also includes a ten-minute practice of becoming Stillness. He encourages us to attempt to "keep out of the Way" and to "Let God" with this Contemplative Prayer:

Be still and know that I am God.

Be still and know that I am...

Be still and know...

Be Still...

He tells us to come out of the Silence without "losing the Silence." He reminds us that many gifts, although given by God, are not received. Friar

Rohr shares some of his life experiences to enable recognition, understanding and appreciation of God's many gifts which we have been given, should we be wise enough to accept them .

Having watched this video now several times, I can say I have been stirred and delighted by the experience. Please give yourself this beautiful gift.

You Tube Link:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9TGS-JD80nE>

Submitted by: Barbara A. Hawley, Mercy Associate Coordinator, Newfoundland and Labrador

RECAP OF ARCAN MEETINGS



The Steering Committee of ARCAN met via ZOOM on Friday-Saturday June 12-13, 2020. Seven Congregations and Associates were represented. This was the first ever 'virtual' meeting so it was set up as 7 sessions of 40 minutes with an additional 2 sessions added to complete business matters.

The first session featured an homage to former long-time member Cora Shebib, who passed away in February 2020. Peggy Gorman, a dear friend and colleague of Cora's, gave a heartfelt tribute, reflective of their many years of friendship and service together in ARCAN. The opportunity was then given to others to share their thoughts about Cora's courage, loyalty, humour, leadership, service and friendship. Tears were shed listening to members speak from the heart and laughter shared at humorous incidents recalled.

The second session was the standard 'Check-In' during which the various groups give an update on how their charisms are being lived in their communities through their ministries. There was discussion also on how reaching out and communication was happening in these COVID times.

In the evening a "Zoom" social was held, giving attendees the chance to say hello to fellow members and meet the new ones. While not the same as a face to face gathering, it was a good substitute.

On the Saturday morning the focus started with the purpose of ARCAN and exploring the opportunity for more collaboration with NACAR (North American Conference of Associates and Religious). Linda Longmire also led the group through a sharing of the question "What Feeds Your Soul"?

An important part of ARCAN SC gatherings involve a Spiritual Component. Attendees were asked to review Richard Rohr's YouTube video on "Becoming Stillness" and time was allotted to share thoughts on the uplifting video.

The session on the Newsletter, aptly led by Julia Townsend, produced concrete results. It was agreed to produce a newsletter twice a year and there would be a new group responsible for the newsletter each time, in order to share the workload. ARCAN members are encourage to submit articles.

The last session of the meetings presented the financial status of ARCAN, the Executive Terms of Office, set the date for the next (still virtual) meetings at Oct 2/3 and said Thank You and Goodbye to those committee members finishing their term on ARCAN.

Submitted by Anne Bown - ARCAN Steering Committee

Sites of Interest	Books of Interest
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Canadian Religious Conference (CRC)</u>• <u>Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR)</u>• <u>Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception, Saint John, New Brunswick</u>• <u>Sisters of Mercy, Newfoundland</u>• <u>Sisters of Charity, Halifax</u>• <u>Sisters of St. Martha, Antigonish</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joan Chitister: On Women• Macrina Wiederkehr: The Flowing Grace of Now• Thomas Merton: Choosing To Love The World, Life and Holiness• Thomas Berry: The Sacred Universe, The Great Work• Phillip J. Newell: Celtic Benediction, Listening For The Heartbeat of God• Pema Chodron: The Places That Scare You

- [Society of the Sacred Heart](#)
- [Presentation Sisters, Newfoundland](#)
- [Sisters of St. Martha, Prince Edward Island](#)
- [Congregation of Notre Dame](#)
- [North American Congregations of Associates and Religious \(NACAR\)](#)

- **Neil Douglas-Klotz: Blessings of the Cosmos**
- **Michael Morwood: Tomorrows Catholic, Children Praying A New Story, From Sand to Solid Ground**
- **Michael Dowd: Earthspirit**
- **David Suzuki: Sacred Balance**

ARCAN Executive Committee: Ronnie (Eileen MacDonald), Linda Longmire, Anne Bown

Newsletter #2 Editing Committee: Julia Townsend, Denise Isaacs, Sharon Jacquard

Published August, 2020

Contact:

Sharon Jacquard
 ARCAN Steering Committee
 20 Parks St., Apt. 5
 Saint John, NB
 E2K 4Z8
 Email: sharonjacquard@gmail.com