

Sr. Claire MacNeil

## EVOLVING MINISTRY OF SPIRITUALITY

*We work for the development of persons, for the improvement of human and social conditions, with special concern for the poor, so the world and its peoples, may continue to grow in Christ.*

*Constitutions #6, CSM*

I did not know a thing about that quote, which is found in our 1983 Constitutions, when I entered the Sisters of St. Martha. I do believe, though, that the energy and grace of those words have supported my ministry and the ministry of all Marthas over the years.

“*Development of persons*” and “*grow in Christ*” have energized me in the ministries to which I was called. I began my Martha service as a teacher in elementary schools where my desire always was to develop the talents and gifts of children. That desire continued through all my teaching career from Grade Primary to University so that the students would feel good about who they were and grow in Christ and in deepening awareness that they are loved by God.

My formal ministry with adults began when I became a Pastoral Associate in a parish in Lethbridge, AB. I moved into the ministry of Spirituality through liturgy and music, RCIA and sacramental preparation. Being director at Martha Center in Lethbridge, AB and Bethany Center in Antigonish, NS were the bridges which took me to the ministry of Spirituality full time. Those ministries also evolved. With the closure of Bethany Center, we, as a Congregation, were called to continue as the Martha Ministry of Spirituality which operates out of one of our convent homes in Antigonish - Marian Community. Each sister in the community has a part in the ministry, all through prayer and three in attending to the spiritual growth and needs of those who come to us.



*Sr. Claire teaching in Lethbridge elementary school in 1980s*

Our ministry offers space and teaching for a Centering Prayer group, Workshops on Centering Prayer, Oasis Retreat Days, and Spiritual Direction. Two Hermitages are available for anyone who wishes to “come away and rest a while” in the presence of their God. On occasion, we are able to offer programs given by others. We are also happy to receive individuals or small groups who wish to come to pray on their own. To find out more about our Martha Ministry of Spirituality at Marian Community, please find us on Facebook or on our website [www.themarthas.com](http://www.themarthas.com) where you will find our Brochure.

Our Direction Statement from Chapter 2019 encourages us to “*bring a contemplative and compassionate heart to our fractured world*” and to “*broaden circles of Gospel Hospitality*”. This is what we desire to do at Marian Community following in the steps of our Patroness, St. Martha who “*welcomed Jesus into her home*”.