



## GREETINGS TO YOU ALL FROM MARTHA JUSTICE MINISTRY



*Greetings to you all! The cold is now settling in, though we have experienced an unusually warm start to November. While it was nice to delay the cold weather, it is very unsettling, knowing that this is part of the larger cycle of*

*the warming of our planet caused by human activity. We know the chaos and damage that this causes as we and our neighbours are still recovering from post-tropical storm Fiona. I had a chance to see the damage in PEI in late October, over a month after the storm. It is heartbreaking*

*knowing that some of the damage done will take generations to recover if it does at all. Still, we have much to be grateful for, and we remain actively hopeful, especially as we continue to find inspiration from so many groups doing good work!*

*In this edition of Standing4Justice, we'll let you know about the wonderful activities and events that we've been part of over the past few months, as well as those we look forward to.*

*We ask for your continued prayers and support as we share in the good work of our friends and colleagues in our community, region, country, and beyond – work for social and ecological justice at an urgent time! Peace and Blessings,*

*~Darlene O'Leary  
Coordinator, Martha Justice Ministry*





## UN NGO LIAISON: DARLENE IN HER NEW ROLE

In October, Darlene O’Leary and Sister Marion Sheridan were able to travel to New Jersey and New York for a gathering of the UN NGO Liaisons for the Sisters of Charity Federation.

This was the first opportunity for Darlene to meet many of the NGO Liaisons in person and to meet the outgoing UN NGO Representative, Sister Teresa Kotturan, SCN, as well as the incoming Representative, starting in January 2023, Dr. James (Jimmy) Walters. It was great to see the new UN NGO office, across from the UN in New York. We also had a chance to have a tour of the UN, where we walked through the many exhibits on display marking the important history of the institution. We visited the Security Council and General Assembly meeting rooms. And we even saw the UN Secretary General walk by our group as we started our tour!

Our trip also included a meeting of the NGO Liaisons with Sister Teresa and Jimmy, which helped us get to know each other a bit better and see how we will move forward with the NGO work. We ended our gathering with a celebration dinner marking the wonderful work that Sister Teresa has done as our UN NGO Representative for the past 8 years. We also celebrated some of the outgoing NGO Liaisons, including Sister Marion Sheridan. It was a great time together and there is much to look forward to in our ongoing work with the UN NGO!



Sr. Marion Sheridan with  
Darlene O’Leary





## AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPENING: SISTER MARION HONOURED

On September 13, we had the great pleasure of attending the opening of the common room at the new Appleseed Drive affordable housing location in Antigonish.

It was a particularly special event as it marked the dedication of the common room to Sister Marion Sheridan, who has spent many years working with the Affordable Housing Society of Antigonish (AAHS).

We had an opportunity to hear from members of the Antigonish Affordable Housing Society, from community members, and from Sister Marion herself, who saw this as a recognition for the Marthas whose dedication to serving the needs of the community has allowed for important projects like affordable housing to be realized.

A lovely photo of Sister Marion now hangs in the room marking the dedication. It will be a shared space that the tenants will enjoy for years to come!



We, like all who are connected to the AAHS, were heartbroken at the loss of Rachel MacFarlane, the chair of the Board of Directors for the Society. Rachel exemplified hospitality in her determination to create a home for all, and that no one was left behind. May her enduring legacy be in the continuation of Antigonish Affordable Housing Society through the support of volunteers and contributions to the *Rachel MacFarlane Memorial Fund*.



Affordable housing units at  
Appleseed Court



Rachel MacFarlane



## JPIC ATLANTIC GATHERING

On October 3-5, we were happy to be able to gather in person at Villa Madonna in Rothesay, NB, for our first in-person JPIC Atlantic event in three years!

Sister Donna Brady and Darlene O’Leary attended the JPIC event in person, and Sister Marion Sheridan was able to participate in part by Zoom. JPIC is a Network of members of the Canadian Religious Conference in Atlantic Canada working for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation.

The gathering was facilitated by Sabrina di Mateo from the Canadian Religious Conference. We began with prayer and reflection on the social and ecological challenges we have faced over the past few years. We were joined the next day by David Perley, a member of Tobique First Nation and retired director of the Mi’kmaw-Wolastoqey Centre at UNB. He led us in a wonderful presentation called “*A Season of Reconciliation*” as well as a powerful talking circle.

We also had the chance to hear from Kyla

Lohnes, a MA graduate, who shared her research findings on faith communities engaging in climate action – its challenges and opportunities.



We then had time to share some of the programs and projects that our communities have initiated, including on reconciliation, climate action, and poverty eradication. We ended our gathering discussing options for further collaboration, a shared action from our gathering, and future thinking on what might be next for JPIC Atlantic. It was a truly rich time together!

## NEW GROWERS UPDATE

This year’s New Growers - Meghan, David, Danielle, and Clayton - have been enjoying a surprisingly mild late growing season.

Luckily, they did not experience much damage to their crops or the hoop houses during Fiona, which is quite miraculous! They are continuing into the winter with growing microgreens, so they are extending their time with us. We had an opportunity to celebrate their great achievements at a Harvest Meal on December 6<sup>th</sup>.







## MARTHA JUSTICE MINISTRY CORE GROUP GOES WEST!

In the works for a couple of years, and delayed due to the pandemic, at long last, Sr. Marion Sheridan and Sr. Joanne O'Regan joined Mark Nixon, Martha Justice Ministry Core Group western representative, in Lethbridge for a few days in September.

We were invited to join the Grade 11 Religion class at Catholic Central High, Campus West, for two sessions around the theme *Bearing Witness*. Mark started off our time with a reflection on the Medicine Wheel and used it as a framework for our time together. Sr. Joanne offered a journey through the evolution of Catholic Social Teaching and Sr. Marion presented an overview of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the work that Youth at the UN have done and continue to do. We each found the students to be engaged, interested and willing to enter into the process with us.

That evening we gathered at Martha Retreat Centre and shared our presentations with folks who work in Education. It was a wonderful opportunity for conversation, sharing and learning together.

Marthas' relationship with "the West" goes back to 1929 when they first set out on Mission to Western Canada, in Lethbridge, Alberta. While there are no Sisters living in Lethbridge at this time, we maintain strong connections through our support of [Martha Retreat Centre Society](#), who operate the Centre, and through Mark Nixon.

It so happened that this was the day before the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, which provided us with the opportunity to honour those who are survivors of residential schools, and those who did not survive. We were blessed to be able to help share in a small way to educating ourselves, engaging in hard and essential conversations, and sharing our hopes for moving toward reconciliation.

### OPPORTUNITY!

We would like to form a subcommittee of our Martha Justice Ministry Core Group in Western Canada.

*Do you live in Lethbridge area?*

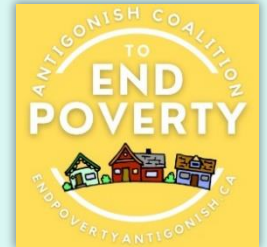
*Are you interested in being part of our Martha Justice Ministry?*

If you do, please contact Mark Nixon, who is our Western representative on our Core Group, at [mark.nixon53@gmail.com](mailto:mark.nixon53@gmail.com)



## ANTIGONISH COALITION TO END THE POVERTY WORKSHOP

October 17<sup>th</sup> is the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, and each year, the Antigonish Coalition to End Poverty marks this occasion with a public event.



This year, the coalition organized a “Lunch & Learn” event at the Antigonish People’s Place library featuring Catherine Hart from Engage Nova Scotia. Catherine gave a presentation on “Advancing the Sustainable Development Goals in Nova Scotia”. It was a great opportunity to share with participants how we think Nova Scotia and our community are doing in relation to our commitment to “leave no one behind”. Colleen Cameron moderated the workshop, and Wyanne

Sandler spoke about the importance of the work of the coalition, including the opening of a new community fridge and pantry at the Farmers’ Market. Darlene spoke about the Chew on This! campaign, calling for federal action to address food insecurity across Canada. The event was well attended and was a great opportunity to share lunch and learn together!

## SEASON OF CREATION EVENT

On Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, we had our annual Season of Creation prayer celebration at the Bethany Resource Centre Gathering Room.

**The Season of Creation** is marked each year from September 1 to October 4 (the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi) as a time to celebrate, pray, and advocate for our common home.

This year’s gathering was particularly reflective, as we were still recovering from the damage of post-tropical storm Fiona. We shared our grief at the loss of beautiful trees and the hardship experienced by so many across the region following this storm. We also shared our gratitude for the Earth in all its diversity and for those protecting our planet, particularly Indigenous peoples.

It was good to take time in prayer, contemplation, and love for creation as we continue in our work for social and ecological justice.







## BASIC INCOME ATLANTIC WEBINAR AND SUMMIT

On Wednesday, November 9, the Basic Income Now Atlantic Canada group held our Basic Income Atlantic Summit!



Our planning committee, which includes Sr. Marion Sheridan and Darlene O’Leary, worked hard for the past several months planning this virtual summit to bring together political representatives from all Atlantic provinces to discuss the basic income we want to see in place.

We held a webinar in September to share our proposed agenda for the summit with coalition members. Invitations were sent to elected and appointed officials at all levels of government, including Indigenous leaders.

The summit included video statements from Halifax Mayor Mike Savage, Minister and Central Nova MP Sean Fraser, as well as a video statement from Wayne McNaughton, a person with lived experience of poverty. We had a presentation by Mandy Kay-Raining Bird from Basic Income Nova Scotia on the coalition’s vision for basic income. Former MP Wayne Easter spoke on the PEI demonstration project being explored as the first province-wide basic income program.

We then had a panel on jurisdictional challenges and opportunities moderated by Sheila Regehr (Basic Income Network Canada) that included Lennox Island First

Watch Summit recordings and videos [here!](#)



Nation Chief Darlene Bernard (PEI), Halifax City Councillor Wayne Mason, PEI MP Sean Casey, Leader of the NB Green Party David Coon, NL Minister John Abbott, PEI MLA Trish Altass, and Senator Kim Pate.

It was quite an interesting event, and it provided our group with helpful information to move forward in our efforts to see a basic income program in Atlantic Canada.

Poverty is a policy choice & we can choose differently

A regular payment, made to people who need it, and distributed with minimal bureaucracy. A BIG is an essential component of a just society but must not replace the social supports and services that currently exist, and which, in many cases, should be strengthened.

Myth 1:  
People won't work.  
Not true!  
Finland pilot study → employment increased slightly (Allas et al., 2020)  
Less oversight → more people find permanent work (Verlaet et al., 2020)

Because the benefit declines gradually with paid work, it incentivizes employment  
↓  
Research from the Mincome pilot showed employment changed little  
Continue school | Provide care for family members  
(Segal, Forget, & Banting, 2020)



## COP27 / COP15

Two important international conferences are taking place this fall – one is the UN Conference on Climate Change (COP27), which took place in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt (November 6-18) and the other is the UN Conference on Biodiversity (COP15) happening in Montreal (December 7-19). These conferences are meant to be opportunities for countries to show progress on their commitments to address the climate crisis and to protect our planet.

### COP27



The final agreement from COP27 took steps forward, including the creation of a “loss and damage” fund to help poorer countries responding to the impacts of the climate crisis. However, the conference did not see a strengthening of ambition by countries to reduce emissions. Given the urgent need for significant reductions, the fear now is that the goal of keeping global temperature rise to no more than 1.5C might soon be out of reach.

*For the Love of Creation/Kairos Canada* sent a delegation of youth, Indigenous representatives, and global partners to COP27 to amplify the voices of those most impacted and to offer perspectives on the path forward.

To learn more about the delegates and their experiences at COP27, click [here](#)

For more on the outcomes of COP27 see the [Global Sisters Report articles](#)

### COP15



Darlene is taking part in a delegation to COP15 in Montreal, bringing the hopes of the Marthas to this global call to protect all of creation:

- 💧 We will be calling for the federal government to recognize the connection between biodiversity loss and the climate crisis.
- 💧 We want urgent action to protect species and habitats, knowing that our wellbeing is deeply interconnected.

For more information, check Sisters of St. Martha Facebook page.

For information about COP15, go to the [UN Biodiversity website](#)



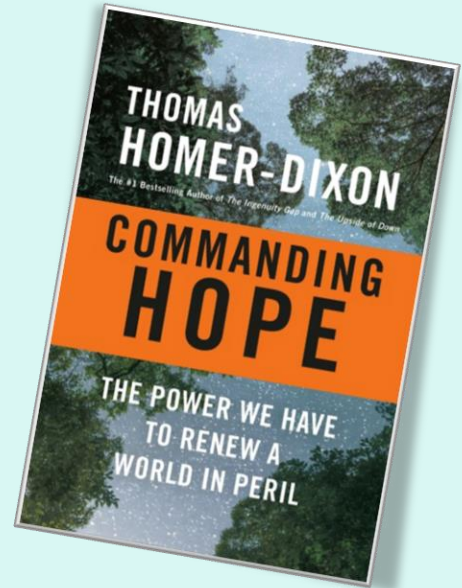
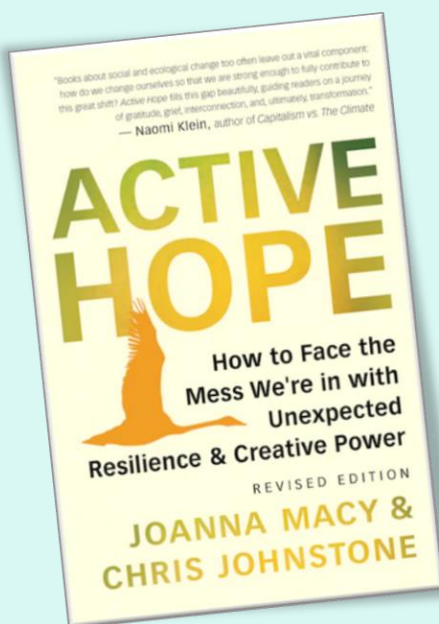


## RECOMMENDED BOOKS

### **ACTIVE HOPE: HOW TO FACE THE MESS WE'RE IN WITH UNEXPECTED RESILIENCE AND CREATIVE POWER (REVISED EDITION).**

*Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone*

Active Hope is a wonderfully pragmatic book that recognizes that the reality of what our planet is facing – namely the growing climate crisis and its many related impacts, like biodiversity loss and mass migration – are painful and often overwhelming. But, as the book outlines, we can reframe our view in a way that allows us to honour that pain and still be hopeful and ready to act, using a foundation of gratitude. Building on the “Spiral of the work that reconnects” the authors guide the reader through the process of active hope – leaving us feeling that we can fully face these challenges and remain hopeful and motivated to continue our efforts to care for creation.



### **COMMANDING HOPE: THE POWER WE HAVE TO RENEW A WORLD IN PERIL**

*Thomas Homer-Dixon*

Still on the theme of hope, a new book by Thomas Homer-Dixon similarly puts forward an argument that brings us to face the hard reality of multiple crises facing our world, but to do so with the worldview and tools offering “commanding hope.” He refers throughout the book to the example of a lone mother who took on global nuclear testing and created a movement to end it. Stephanie May, a housewife from Connecticut, had the power of commanding hope – which she passed on to her daughter, Green Party leader Elizabeth May. The book offers well researched observations for social change, along with personal stories that help illustrate the power we still have in the face of major challenges.