



The Eagle

Advent/Christmas 2022

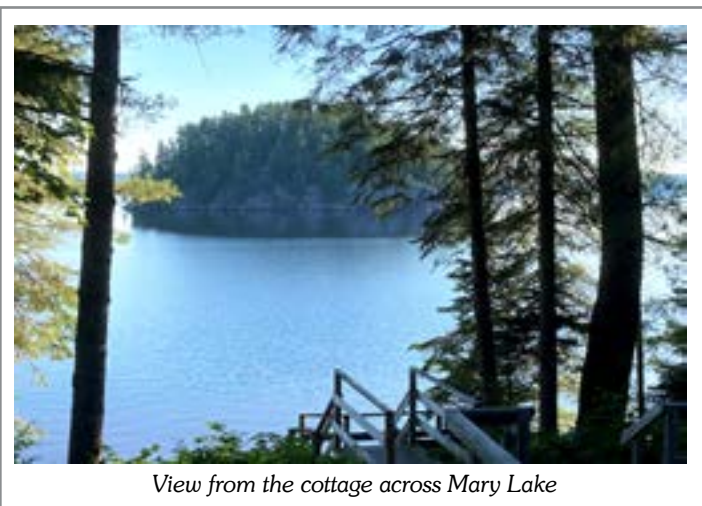
Dear Associates, Oblates and Friends,



Advent Wreath

It's hard to believe that it is almost time for Advent. So much has happened since the last *Eagle* was mailed. Many sisters enjoyed holiday time during the summer, either with family or at our cottage, Bally

Croy, on the edge of Mary Lake in the Muskokas.



View from the cottage across Mary Lake

In late August we had our Annual Chapter during which we had several important discussions. First of all, how can we attract new vocations to the Sisterhood? This is vitally important for our future. We need help from those of you who know us well, especially our Associates and Oblates. Do you know any young people (ages 25 – 45) who you feel might have a vocation to the religious life? There is a great deal of information on our website and we will be holding Women at a Crossroads in July, 2023 which gives women the opportunity to learn methods of discernment to help them in making major life decisions. The last one was in 2018. We also hope to have a couple of “Come and See” weekends next year for anyone who has a full-time job and might be considering a vocation. Both Women at a Crossroads and Come and See

weekends are free of charge and are great opportunities to learn more about the religious life.

Another major discussion was about our plans to renovate the Guest House. We dedicated three whole days to this topic. As most of you know we hired M&M International to do a Feasibility Study for us. Their team of people interviewed 68 individuals or couples and hosted three open forums online and one at the convent; these were attended by approximately 90 people. M&M received a total of 83 survey responses from the on-line and in-person sessions which was an excellent response. We want to thank all of you who took time to be part of this study and provided us with feedback. We received a 30-page detailed report just before the beginning of Chapter which gave us time to “read, mark, learn and inwardly digest” the material before our discussions mid-way through Chapter.

We used the **ORID** [Objective, Reflective, Interpretive, Decisional] process for our discussion. We have used this process before to make major decisions. First of all, what are the facts (**O**bjective)? Martha Asselin, a partner of M&M International, took us through the extensive report they had provided and answered many questions from the sisters. In the afternoon, the sisters shared their feelings (**R**eflective) about everything we had read and heard in the Feasibility Study. The next day was a silent retreat to give each of us the opportunity to think further about the proposed renovations and what God was calling us to do. On day three I shared what I felt I had heard from the sisters and asked for feedback. This led to more discussion on our values as they related to the Feasibility Study (**I**nterpretive). Finally we came up with three resolutions concerning the ministry and the proposed renovations of the Guest House (**D**ecisional).

Following Chapter we had the Sisters' long retreat which was led by the Very Rev. Peter Elliott,

Continued on page 2

former Dean of Christ Church Cathedral in Vancouver, BC. He spoke on Embracing Transition, a very topical theme for all of us following 30 months of a pandemic with no clear end in sight. It was also appropriate for us as we move into a Capital Campaign and detailed planning for the renovations of the Guest House. We were happy to welcome members of other religious communities as well as several of our Oblates to participate in the long retreat.

On September 8th we had a family supper party to celebrate the Foundation of our Community 138 years ago. Sr. Amy Joy took a very casual photo of the sisters.



Casual photo of Sisters

Also in September we began our second year of our Companions Online program but with one residential companion, Rose Henbest, and eight other women. They come from New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island in the east to British Columbia in the west. They all meet online on Sunday afternoons for classes and discussions on many different topics: Benedictine Spirituality, the Enneagram, Julian of Norwich, Images of God, and forms of Prayer. This year we were able to bring most of them together for a weekend at the convent so that they could begin to form community.

In September and October we admitted two women as Associates of our Community. Lonna Labelle Harper, from Hamilton, was admitted on September 24th and Mavis McKenna from Bowmanville was admitted on October 1st.



Rose Henbest, Companion, and Sr. Elizabeth

As we were putting this issue of *The Eagle* together, our Sr. Patricia died peacefully on October 29 at the convent after a prolonged illness. Please join with us as we give thanks for her 48 years of religious profession. Her obituary will be in the next issue of *The Eagle*.



Sr. Helen Claire puts Associate cross on Mavis McKenna

I wish you the blessings of hope, peace, love and joy this Advent and Christmas,

**Sister Elizabeth, SSJD
Reverend Mother**

St. John's Convent Guest House

"Welcoming people to our community isn't a duty; it's a way to encounter the mystery and wonder of life." (David Rynick, author)



Sr. Florence, Sr. Susanne and Jeanette Strong

It was another year of balancing the protocols due to the pandemic and the desire to provide hospitality to those looking for spiritual refreshment. From September 2021 to December 26, 2021, the Guest House limited guests to only those well known to the Community. On Boxing Day, we closed completely once again due to another wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. As of March 21, 2022, we were able to accommodate a maximum of 32 guests at any time as the refectory continues to seat a maximum of four guests per table.

In deep gratitude, we were able to welcome guests for our Easter fire at the Easter Vigil. It was a clear, cold morning for the lighting of the Easter fire as we all processed around the Guest courtyard and through the first floor of the Sisters' enclosure as we raised our voices in proclaiming: "The Light of Christ... Thanks be to God!"

We have had several Food for the Soul online events this past year with two Kathleen Norris retreats, a silent directed retreat by our Oblate, Barbara Sheppard, the Diocese of Toronto's Bishop Andrew Asbil's Advent Quiet Day, and a Grief workshop, presented by the Rev. Joanne Davies, Chaplain at Sunnybrook's St. John's Rehab. We also had in-person events—a directed silent retreat, a Grief workshop and our beautiful Quiet Garden Days, which were very well attended this year.

Our first group booking for an outside organization was a diocesan event in May and we have resumed

offering hospitality to various church groups in our mission to support the church as a whole. Our friends, Oblates, and Associates are so happy to be able to come and join the community.

Planning for Guest House renovations by the Guest House Renovations and the Capital Campaign Committees are ongoing. See the article on pages 6-7 of this *Eagle*.

As I continue my work as Guest House Coordinator, I am continually grateful for the faithful and competent staff and sisters who support our Guest House ministry: Jeanette Strong, our friendly and competent Administrative Assistant, our house-keeping staff, Sr. Wendy Grace for her monthly thoughtful reflections in our "Home for the Heart" email newsletter, Ms. Shannon Frank-Epp, for her exceptional website management skills in the advertising and registration processes of our Food for the Soul events. Sr. Florence joined the team this September.

We are excited that John Bell will lead an in-person retreat April 25-27, 2023 on "The Engaged Spirituality of Jesus". Information will follow on our website. We look forward to welcoming our guests who love to spend Christmas, New Year's Eve, and Holy Week and the Triduum with us. The Retreat Planning Committee continues to plan events only six months in advance due to the uncertainty of the course of the pandemic and our plans for the future of the Guest House building. We will keep you informed through our SSJD website.

Practicing hospitality expresses our belief in the inherent worth and dignity of each person. Through our actions of hospitality, we move towards creating a world in which we are all treated with justice, equality, and compassion.
~ David Rynick

Sr. Susanne Prue, SSJD
Guest House Coordinator

Western and Overseas Associates news

The COVID-tide experience has continued to highlight many changes for working with Associates and for the Associates themselves. For all of us it has been a difficult time. We have learned new things, and have discovered what is of most value in our relationships with each other and of the world in which we live. In many ways it has also been a time of discovering just how important keeping in touch with each other really is! Whether it is through the internet, email, zoom, cards or letters, I really believe that it has brought us all closer together across the Western provinces and Overseas.

Our Oblate Dorothy Dahli continues to be an invaluable support to me in working with the Associates. She continues to be an able contact person and continues to help me keep our records up to date. Many of the Associates now know her, and appreciate all that she does in supporting them as well as myself. I am very grateful to her.

At present we have six discerning Associates: Norma Horrocks of Kenora, Ontario, Jacquie Parker-Snedker of Gabriola Island, BC, Colleen Doerksen of Kenora, Ontario, the Rev. Linda Varin of Aldergrove, BC., Leslie Ann Van Humbeck of Vancouver, and the Very Rev. Peter Elliott of Vancouver. There are also several enquirers.

We give thanks for the continuing call of people seeking to deepen their spiritual life in connection with a monastic community, and are especially glad to welcome them into our extended community family. We have continued to use Zoom to keep in touch, and have had several meetings with Associates, attended several events sponsored by

Associates, and have had Advent and Lent Zoom Quiet Days. The convenors of Associates had a meeting together with Dorothy Dahli and myself while we shared information and gave them opportunities to ask questions and share activities of interest or their concerns.

While internet communication hasn't the more intimate fellowship of being together in one place, it has enabled all of us to enjoy being together while also having the opportunity of a quiet day, and enabled those who would perhaps not be able to attend a local quiet day or a meeting due to distance or lack of transportation to attend. One



Ordination of the Rev. Susan Smandych, front right

Associate, Luanne Hrywkiw (Yorkton, SK) was ordained a priest and the service was livestreamed; and two Associates have been ordained deacons: Susan Roe-Finlay and Susan Smandych (Winnipeg, MB), both services were livestreamed. I have enjoyed the opportunity to actually meet and see Associates that I have corresponded with, but have never met! The Associates have appreciated these Zoom quiet days, and their own events on Zoom, while covid restrictions were in place. Little by little over the summer months and now looking forward to Advent and Christmas being able to meet in person and at church has added its own blessings.

Now that the COVID-19 restrictions have eased in most places, some Associates have begun getting together. Sisters Beryl and Brenda were able to visit with a gathering of Calgary and area Associates in the summer while they were at a family



Some Victoria Associates gather for a meal

reunion holiday near Calgary, and they enjoyed meeting with those who were able to gather. We give thanks to Dianne Frayne who did the organizing for this event.

While some Associates do not have internet or the opportunity to use Zoom, I have offered to send them the notes used for the quiet days or some reflections, and these have been appreciated. This year all the Associates have appreciated periodic seasonal newsletters in the mail, mailed anniversary cards and of course correspondence via email or

snail mail.

It is indeed a blessing for me as I delight in my work with Associates and the relationships that are formed with these supportive and faith-filled people, with thanksgiving for the opportunity to share life and ministry with the Western and Overseas Associates.

Sr. Doreen McGuff, SSJD
Director, Western & Overseas Associates

Central & Eastern Associates News

Another year has rolled around and finally the words, “She has COVID-19,” is mentioned almost casually. It’s a simple statement of fact without the terror it would have caused two years ago. We have come a long way, COVID-19 is loosening its impact on us and we’re experiencing another wave as the new normal.



Convent grounds in autumn

What does that mean for Associates? We continue to have a few Food for the Soul programs online and some new people are visiting us, as well as regulars for whom the convent is their spiritual home. The Guest House is slowly reopening, a few guests weekly. Several of the new guests are younger, in their 50s. They have heard about the convent and have come to see and experience it for themselves.

I continue to connect with Associates by phone, email, real mail and increasingly in person. In September 2021 we admitted two women, whose proposed admission

date had been April 2020. Annette Procnier was admitted in October 2021 and Brenda Hamilton in May 2022. Lonna Labelle Harper became an associate during the Companions’ retreat (she is an online companion) and Mavis McKenna received her associate cross at the beginning of October.

Associates have been pleased to attend in-person Quiet Garden days, and there will be an Advent Quiet Day led by Bishop Riscylla Shaw. We have tentatively scheduled the Epiphany Tea Party for January 7, 2023 and hope many Associates will attend. It’s been a long time since we’ve been able to get together in person.

I have greatly appreciated Sr. Kathryn’s assistance in the office, and I look forward to more in-person visits from Associates in the coming year.

Many blessings as you prepare for the return of the Christ Child.

Sr. Helen Claire, SSJD
Director, Central & Eastern Associates

RENOVATING THE GUEST HOUSE—A HOME FOR THE HEART

All guests who present themselves are to be welcomed as Christ, who said, “I was a stranger and you welcomed me (Matthew 25:35).

Once guests arrive, they are to be met and treated with all the courtesy of love.
(from the Rule of Benedict, Chapter 53)

Plans to renovate our Guest House are underway. A building constructed in 1956, as you might imagine, even as lovingly maintained as ours has been, inevitably needs major upgrades and renovations necessary to keep the building viable as well as more comfortable and welcoming for our guests. Most of these have to do with accessibility, with more efficient and environmentally friendly building systems, and with necessary outdoor upgrades, especially repointing of some of the brick work.



Proposed Guest House entrance

Earlier in the year, we explored a number of possibilities, including demolishing the old building and constructing a new one, which would have been more cost-effective long-term (especially in terms of reducing our carbon footprint). We had architectural plans drawn up and costed, we then hired an excellent fund-raising consultancy, M&M International, to undertake a feasibility study. That study showed we should be able to raise enough for a \$3.5 million project, but not enough for a new building or even for a total gut and rebuild of the current building which would have cost about \$5.4 million. We are taking a significant risk in launching a campaign at this time with the economic

downturn in Canada and around the world, but we are confident we should be able to raise what we need for the reduced funds.



Proposed Guest House lobby

We are deeply grateful to all of you who responded to our invitation to participate in the feasibility study. Your feedback was invaluable. We learned that we were “highly valued in the Anglican Church and beyond for [our] hospitality, life of prayer and connectedness.” Respondents cited the monastic way of life, silence, and leadership as key strengths, as well as [our] connection to St. John’s



Proposed Guest House bedroom

Rehab Hospital.” Respondents also appreciated our retreats, the labyrinth and the location in an urban setting and easy to reach by public transportation. There was a strong feeling that people would support a capital campaign to keep the building functional for many more years, and would allow us to continue and strengthen the mission of the Guest House.

Continued next page

SO WHAT NEXT?

We are in the initial stages of a Capital Campaign using the same company as we did for the Feasibility Study, M&M International. Many of you may already have been contacted to help us out in a variety of ways. Sr. Constance Joanna and Archbishop Fred Hiltz are the co-chairs of the Campaign Committee. Archbishop Linda Nicholls is our honorary chair. We have also decided to continue with Section Architects; they are drawing up new schematics for the Guest House renovations. Sr. Elizabeth will chair the Renovations Committee. Sisters are serving on both the Renovations Committee and the Campaign Committee along with friends, Associates and Oblates.

While we can't do everything we had originally envisioned, we have agreed on the following renovations and upgrades:

1. A new roof (badly needed almost immediately)
2. A new boiler and HVAC system that will be more efficient, cost less, and also reduce our carbon footprint
3. New windows that will be more efficient, easier for our guests to operate, and more secure.
4. Changing the 1950s multi-stall washrooms and showers into three-piece bathrooms to allow for more privacy. (We had originally hoped to

have private bathrooms for each bedroom, but that idea was not practical, both because of the cost, and because we would have lost too many bedrooms and would have been unable to accommodate the size of groups we have previously had.)

5. New flooring to replace old worn-out carpets and 1950s terrazzo and which will help to insulate the building as well as make housekeeping easier.
6. A new accessible entrance for the Guest House, similar to the one at the main Convent entrance
7. Modification of some bedrooms to be fully accessible (including private bathrooms)

With all these changes we are focussing both on increased accessibility and on energy-efficiency.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Would you be willing to serve on one of our working committees? While committee work can sound very onerous and even dull, M&M International is so well organized and so enthusiastic that assisting in the campaign will be creative and fun. Please email Sr. Connie (cj@ssjd.ca) if you are interested in knowing how you can help.

Sr. Constance Joanna, SSJD
Co-Chair, Campaign Committee

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR WOMEN AT A CROSSROADS

Are you at a crossroads in your life? Searching for "something more" in life? Longing for a change in career? Thirsting for God? Hungry for prayer? Desiring a life of service?

Women may apply by **April 10, 2023** to Women at a Crossroads 2023 (July 7 - July 30) - a 3^{1/2} week program to help you discern your options.

For more information and application forms, please contact:

Sr. Dorothy, SSJD

Phone: 416-226-2201, Ext. 301. Email: convent@ssjd.ca

The Sisterhood of Saint John the Divine, St. John's Convent

233 Cummer Ave, Toronto, ON M2M 2E8

Website: www.ssjd.ca



Associate Milestones 2021 – 2022

Admissions:

Brenda Hamilton of Waldoboro, Maine, USA – May 5, 2022

Lonna Labelle Harper of Hamilton, ON - Sept 24, 2022

Mavis McKenna of Bowmanville, ON - Oct 1, 2022

Special Anniversaries

(Calendar year 2022)

25 years: Rev Allison Cline-Dean, Rev Canon Maureen Crerar, Rev Maureen Hair, Marion Holmes, Rev Canon Christine McMaster, Elizabeth Othen, Most Rev John Privett, Frances Richardson, Beverley Sawyer

30 years: Elizabeth Abraham, Etta Christian, Rev Annette Gillies, Patricia Leader, Rev Canon David Pilling, Wendy Pilling, Sarah Quinton, Maureen Ruthen, Sheri Souter, Rev Dr April Stanley, Rev Canon Susan Storey, Kathleen Von Kanel

35 years: Frances Bennett, Marilyn Black, Rev Canon Jacqueline Boutheon, Kathleen Brown, Rev Margaret Cole, Most Rev Colin Johnson, Kathleen Jolly, Joan Kristjansson, Diane Marshall, Judith McPherson, Beverley Myers, Virginia Rodrigues, Rev Heather Westbrook

40 years: Ven Kathleen Bowman, Jane Maskell, Wendy Nelems, Christine Goodman, Joan Steer, Rev Canon Robert Wright

45 years: Ruth Brown, Joan Duckett, Jill Ebsworth, Rev Michael Ebsworth, Sarahann Raymond, Barbara Reckord, Doreen Sullivan

50 years: Beverley Barnes, Betty Harris

55 years: Genevieve Ashwell, Hazel Birt, Margaret Seaborn

60 years: Rev Joyce Hilton, Vivian Hilton, Ven Peter O'Flynn

62 years: Most Rev Michael Peers, Lois Powell, Rev Canon Frederick Roberts

63 years: Rt Rev Barry Curtis, Rev Canon Thomas James, Rev Canon William Rainey, Rev Donald Anderson

66 years: Rev Canon Brian Freeland, Rev Roy Nixon, Doris Saunders

67 years: Very Rev Duncan Abraham

69 years: Margaret Reid

71 years: Mary Graham

Deaths

July 1, 2021 – Oct 31, 2022

Rev William Linley, Wasaga Beach, ON (Jan 23, 1958)

Josette Attia, Ottawa, ON (Sep 24, 1988)

Dianne Werner, Toronto, ON (Jun 12, 1996)

Margaret Adamson, Sherwood Park, AB (Nov 30, 1963)

Rev Elsie Stephenson, D, Lindsay, ON (Dec 10, 1958)

Linda Fay Shattuck, Peterborough, ON (Jan 2, 1988)

Norman Gurr, Southampton, ON (Feb 14, 1982)

Rev Joan Lawrence Simms, Victoria, BC (Jan 6, 1991)

Rev Matthew Borden, Kanata, ON (June 5, 1981)

Evelyn Moore, Abbotsford, BC (Nov 21, 1985)

Rev Robert Griffiths, High River, AB (Jan 28, 1969)

Margaret Attwell (Smiths Falls, ON (Jan 29, 1986)

Bernice Logan, Tangier, NS (May 20, 1967)

Mary Lobb, Winnipeg, MB (Jan 15, 1972)

Mary Hazell, St Catharines, ON (Oct 2, 1983)

Diane Law, Kingston, ON (June 29, 1989)

Rev William Hutton, St Francis Xavier, MB (April 6, 1961)

Patricia Cook, Toronto, ON (Feb 19, 2011)

Rev Jane Morton, Brandon, MB (Mar 12, 1988)

Dorothy Bell, Winnipeg, MB (Jan 2, 1988)

Cora Richards, Lindsay, ON (Apr 1, 1985)

St. John's Rehab Spiritual Care

In July 2021 the Sisters returned to St. John's Rehab after a long absence due to the pandemic. We have still had long weeks of outbreaks and sometimes four units at a time. The hospital remains concerned about the coming fall and winter. But our infection prevention and control team has learned much about protocols and precautions specifically for a rehab setting, And, as a Spiritual Care department, we continue to learn how we can safely manage this time of pandemic together. At the time of this writing the Sisters who work in St. John's Rehab are Sister Florence, Sister Louise, Sister Kathryn, and Sister Amy Joy.

On Sundays the Sisters and I visit patient bedsides offering prayers, accompaniment, anointing, blessings and communion. It is a very busy time for all of us but a time of blessedness as we visit so many patients of diverse backgrounds and are gifted by openness, their smiles, tears, gratitude and hope. Sometimes we join with more than one patient at a time in a shared room with family members or friends present, and we can all share in the time together, a heart-warming, though bittersweet, reminder of the joy in gathering with patients in our chapel.

Just like last year, we could not have a service for Ash Wednesday, but I was able to offer small resealable plastic bags of ashes-to-go and a personal prayer service for one or to be shared with families. Many staff members also took these home to share with their families. My students and I also visited patients sharing the prayers, and imposition of ashes in person, for those who requested it. We were all very moved by that time and witness.

Spiritual Care oversees the Bigwood patient library and the Angel Cupboard (needed clothing and toiletries). Both thrive through the leadership of Sister Louise. All is supported by donations from the Volunteer Association, the hospital Foundation and amazing donations from many generous folks, friends of the hospital, past patients, visitors.

Through the vision and work of Joy Alloway, an Oblate, and Spiritual Care visitor volunteer, we developed a gift to brighten hospital days. Inspired by artist Michael Pendry's installation

Les Colombes consisting of two thousand origami doves, and with the help of many Sisters, Joy packaged together coloured origami paper and inspirational instructions to create origami doves. We delivered the packages to all the hospital units and continue to give them to our new patients. We had hoped patients and staff might return some doves to us so we could create an installation in our chapel but not yet. We have not let go of making that installation happen. Perhaps for a celebration in the future. It was delightful to see a nursing station draped in origami doves.

Sister Kathryn has sought out new resources, including meditation, finger labyrinths and prayer booklets creating new handouts for patients to add to our colouring pages and other calming and engaging activities. She has also made us beautiful rosaries to give to patients. All traditions are appreciative of the presence of prayers given in something they can hold.

The Sisters and I have added Lavender Alerts to our staff care. These alerts are for emotional and spiritual support following upsetting work-related situations. Responding to the alerts we arrange and facilitate gatherings with staff. For our own self-care, we now meet monthly at a regular time. We honour the fact that visiting patients and providing for spiritual needs can drain personal energy. In our shared work we can offer mutual support and name how someone's spiritual pain touched us. In this way we are benefiting ourselves, our spiritual growth and the care we give the patients and staff.

Though we cannot gather patients, the hospital chapel, open 24/7, has individual visitors from all faiths, and none, seeking a time of quiet, solace and prayer. Wearing masks, respecting space and time are integrated into need and care. Life in SJR has so many God-filled moments.

**The Rev. Canon Joanne Davies
Priest-Chaplain
Spiritual Care Coordinator
St. John's Rehab Program
at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre**

The Oblate Journey

Oblates of the Sisterhood of St. John the Divine are Christian women who discern a vocation to make a self-offering to God alongside and in partnership with the Sisterhood. This self-offering includes a life of Prayer (liturgical, intercessory, and contemplative) and Service both to the Sisterhood and to the Oblate's local community.

The Oblate's promises of Prayer and Service take shape through her individualized Rule of Life or "Life Plan" as one Oblate likes to call it. The Rule/Plan is meant to be an expression of the Oblate's deepest desires with regard to her relationship with God. It reflects her particular way of living out the gospel in partnership with SSJD, in the tradition of St. Benedict, and rooted in her own baptismal covenant. It is not meant to be a list of things to DO that we jump through hoops to accomplish, but how to BE.

How do I wish to grow in my relationship with God? How do I wish to grow in my relationship with my Community/Communities and my Neighbour? It is not about perfection but balance in sharing in God's love with my Communities, learning to love my Neighbour as myself, but above all nurturing my BEING WITH GOD. It's discerning how to love my Beloved where "*Dilectus meus mihi et ego illi*" (My Beloved is mine and I am my Beloved's - which is engraved on the inside of the ring of a Life Professed Sister). That life-long journey of discipleship/learning of the story of our Creator, Beloved, Companion, Jesus and the sharing of God's Word, and following the Spirit of God working in their lives.

It is looking at my inner being and asking myself:

Do I love what I see?

How do I choose to abide in God?

How do I choose to share God's Love?

How do I offer hospitality? What makes me comfortable? What takes me out of my comfort zone?

Am I grateful?

How do I keep connected to my family/my neighbour/my community?

How do I live a life of simplicity?

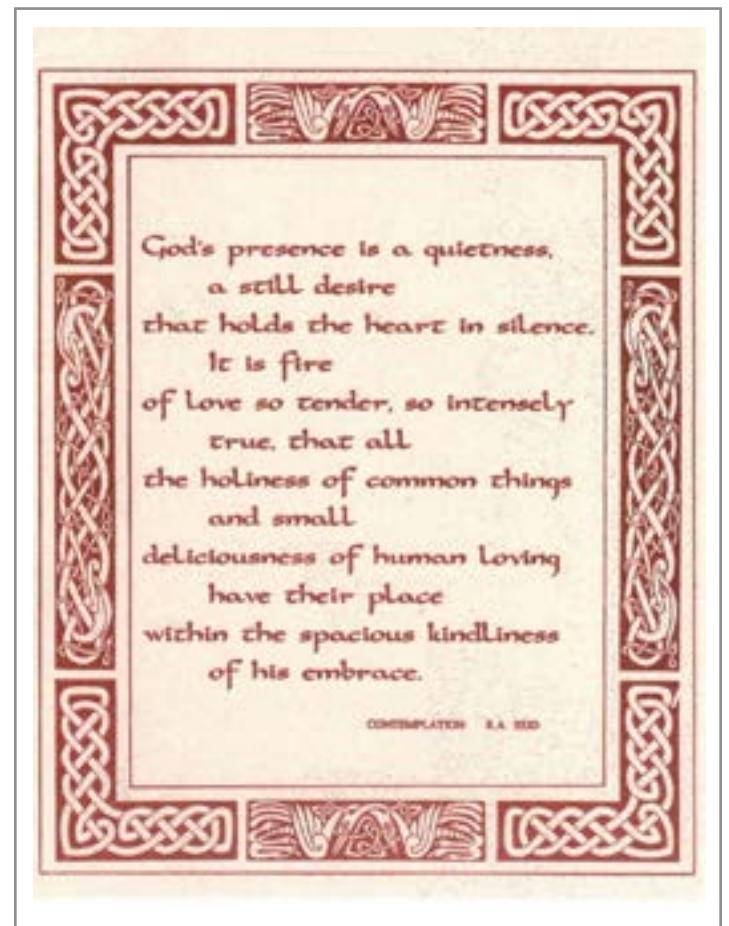
What gives me joy?

Am I open to the indescribable wonder of God and God's Creation?

How is God encouraging me to BE the person I was made to BE? Am I listening with both my ear and the ear of my heart? Am I seeing with my eyes and the eyes of my heart?

"People are not beautiful for the way they look, walk or talk. They are beautiful for the way they Love, Care and Share."

There is a special poem by Sr. Rosemary Anne that I am particularly fond of that says it all:



Oblates learn that it is a lifetime of evolving, being and discipleship. It is about sharing the story of LOVE with each other.

Love, Prayers and Blessings,

Sr. Dorothy Handrigan, SSJD
Oblate Director

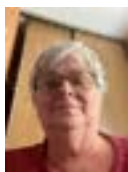
Companions 2022 – 2023

It has been a busy summer! As you may know, last year's Companions program was the first time that we offered the program online. During the past summer Sr. Connie, Sr. Elizabeth, Frances Drolet-Smith and I prepared for a new Companions year, adding new elements to the program as well as processing applications. As the leaves turned, we began the 2022-2023 Companions program and in early September the cohort met for the first time. This cohort is a hybrid of the residential and online streams and nine women join together weekly from across the country. Eight are in the online stream and one lives at the convent in the residential stream. As September drew to a close, we gathered at the convent for a weekend of introductions, learning and fun. Sr. Elizabeth and Sr. Connie led the group in an "Art as Prayer" series. We learned to pray with creativity drawing mandalas and Zentangles. We watched a film together, talked and enjoyed getting to know each other. Thanks to Zoom, those who were unable to come in-person joined virtually and, by the accounts I've heard, a good time was had by all. I look forward to journeying with these fascinating women throughout the coming months.

I am excited to introduce you to this year's Companions cohort:



Barbara



Carol



Gail



Joan



Joy



Kandice



Lonna



Marion



Rose

Barbara: Born in Toronto, Barbara holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Master's degree in Human Development. She has recently retired from her work in Student Services as a disability advisor. Throughout her life, Barbara has attended several Christian denominations. She is currently a member of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.

Carol: Carol lives in Ontario and is a retired Library Technician, mother and grandmother. She recently graduated from Journalism school and works part-time for the *Chesterville Record*. A life-long Anglican, her hobbies include reading, researching, writing, gardening, watching documentaries and spending time with family and friends.

Gail: A retired accountant, Gail lives in Alberta. She is a widow, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She attends the Anglican Church.

Joan: Born and raised in Ontario, Joan is a mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and spiritual director. She retired from active ministry as an Anglican priest two years ago.

Joy: A lifelong Anglican, Joy enjoys nature, reading, music, art and contemplation. She has served as a missionary in Africa and is a doctor and mother. Joy lives in British Columbia.

Kandice: A life-long Anglican, Kandice lives in New Brunswick. She is married and works for the local School board.

Lonna: Lonna lives in Ontario. A wife, mother and homemaker, she teaches piano and attends both the Roman Catholic and Anglican Church.

Marion: A resident of Winnipeg, Marion is a retired psychiatric nurse. She attends the Anglican church.

Rose: Rose is working towards a Master's degree of English in Creative Writing at the University of New Brunswick. She loves flowers, tea with milk and dancing to Tina Turner's "The Best." She is a residential companion.

Please keep the Companions and the coordinators in your prayers this coming year.

With thanks,

Shannon Frank-Epp, Companions Coordinator



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM THE SISTERS



Front row: Sisters Jessica, Sarah Jean, Wilma, Jocelyn, Anitra

Second row: Sisters Wendy Grace, Anne, Florence, Beryl, Helen Claire, Margaret Ruth, Amy Joy

Back row: Sisters Elizabeth Ann, Susanne, Brenda, Dorothy, Doreen, Kathryn, Louise,
Constance Joanna, Suzanne Marie, Elizabeth (Rev. Mother)

WE WISH YOU ALL A VERY BLESSED CHRISTMAS.
MAY GOD'S LOVE, JOY AND PEACE BE
THE GIFTS THAT YOU OPEN ON CHRISTMAS,
AND THE GIFTS THAT YOU SHARE WITH THOSE AROUND YOU
AND WITH OUR WORLD.



The Sisterhood of St. John the Divine

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