



A FAREWELL

After witnessing more than fifty years of service in Mont Laurier it is now time to say "farewell" to two sisters of Holy Cross

Though in the '50's "marriage and large families were almost the only option for women, Monique Bourgeault and Marie-Paule Laforest chose a life dedicated to God and to the folks in their community. Content with a full life, it is time for them to depart from Mont Laurier and experience a major letting go.

Sister Monique Bourgeault

Sister Monique spent much precious time with the underprivileged families and also with many others in need of support. The finest proof of her labor is the impressive legacy she left to the region, which is certainly the "Family Center of the Haute-Laurentides" that she founded 1986 with the help of Sister Marie-Claire Bazinet.

When asked what she hopes for the region she responds: "I hope that the locals will continue to blossom!" Conscious of the work of the Sisters of Holy Cross in the region, she added, "There will remain but one Sister of Holy Cross in Mont Laurier, but there are also many heartfelt women who will continue to help others and who will do it by way of several organizations. I hope that the governors will make better choices and that they will make wiser choices to favor those most in need."

Sister Marie-Paule Laforest

In 1984, though she shared her time teaching and preparing for the sacrament of Baptism, she was urged by Father Jacque Fortier to also baptize infants and children . . . which she did for fifteen years. It is likely that she was the first to be asked, although Sister Beatrice Lebeau of the Immaculate Heart of Mary was the first sister in the region to baptize a child. Nonetheless, Sister Monique Bourgeault states that there has been a true setback in this matter whereby "the more open period was followed by a closure."

Sister Marie-Paule considers the "Socio-pastoral" of the CHSLD as being her best accomplishment. "I realize how important 'duration' is in a milieu in order to build the ties that strengthen them." Until recently she assisted at the committee's encounters where her presence was always appreciated.

Alert and healthy in spite of her 85 years it is the death of her companion, Sister Ghislaine Grenier, that precipitated her decision to leave the region.

When questioned regarding the future of the region, Sister Marie-Paule has but one hope: "That the Church be more open." Pope Francis even asked his bishops to be open and be attentive."

Monique Paquette, CSC

SPEAK LORD, YOUR SERVANT IS LISTENING

The Region of Haiti is celebrating! It is indeed a celebration for the entire Congregation of Holy Cross and for the family of Ninive Charles, CSC.

On September 16, 2017, about 3:00 PM in the auditorium of Regina Assumpta College, Sister Ninive Charles, CSC, made her perpetual profession in the presence of two bishops, a large number of priests, collaborators, students from her school (Sainte-Croix de Thibeau), the family of Holy Cross and the representatives of several religious congregations, her family and friends who came to manifest their joy.

His Excellence, Monseigneur Max Leroy Mesidor was the main celebrant for the occasion. In his homily, he presented a God who is searching for men and women, regardless of age, social status or intellectual capacity. God's call is pure grace. He reminds us that the best way to respond is to declare oneself as the servant of God. The first reading from the first book of Samuel was chosen by Sister Ninive.

The main points of the perpetual profession:

- The calling forth of the professed by Sister Yanick Sylfradin, CSC, Regional Animator
- The invocation of the Holy Spirit
- The interrogation by his Excellence Monsignor Quesnel Alphonse to hear Sister Ninive's motivations
- The Litany of the Saints sung by Ugues Jadel Joseph, CSC
- The Profession
- The signing of the vows
- The ready-made phrase of the vows
- The presentation of the ring
- The welcoming of the professed
- The renewal of the vows by the perpetually-vowed sisters
- The expression of gratitude by Sister Ninive Charles, CSC

At the end of the celebration we enjoyed a friendly luncheon. The facial expressions confirmed the contentment of one and all!

Dadeline Jean, CSC



ASSOCIATES' RETREAT - ONTARIO SECTOR

“Called to Become a Person of Mercy” was the theme of the Ontario Sector Associate Retreat which was held September 15-17 in Pierrefonds and facilitated by Sister Denise Desrochers, CSC.

What a joy it was to have time to pray, reflect, ponder, and integrate all that Sister Denise presented. She developed the theme by looking at our relationship with the Father as one of mercy and God waiting for us. Mercy is the real name of God. She further developed that mercy is a question of relationship: Jesus related with the poor, the marginalized, the lost...and the final relationship was with Creation. Harmony is necessary for our Earth, our Common Home. We are to live in gratitude and feel connected to this loving gift from God. Three important words stressed by Pope Francis are communion, dialogue, and interdependence. We are called to live in harmony with each other all our lives.

Becoming a Person of Mercy is a journey of a lifetime. We ended the retreat with Sister Cecile Paquette calling forth each participant to receive a card with a blessing and a missioning which reads as follows:

*May the Mother/Father of Creation be with you.
May the Jesus of Compassion open your heart and
may the Spirit of Love and Understanding in-spire you
to be a person of Mercy.
Go forth and be a person of mercy to all those you
encounter and are sent to you.*

We enjoyed each other's company walking outside in the beautiful weather, playing cards and having a sing along in the evening with Ginny's talents used to the fullest. Sister Françoise made us popcorn as we sang golden oldies that we all remembered which tells tales about our generation and it was fun! We also enjoyed a platter of cookies baked by our Syrian family that resides in Ottawa. Ebtessam is a wonderful cook and presents her platters so beautifully you almost do not want to disturb them. However, they are too good to leave on the plate. All in all the retreat was a success in spirit, mind, heart, and body!

Cecile Paquette, CSC
Director of Associates



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