

# TEL-A-CROSS



Sisters of Holy Cross Newsletter

Winter 2016

## JUBILEE OF MERCY

Remembering, Reconciling, Returning Home

"3Rs" for all people of God

Elaine Poitras, CSC



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**O**n the Sunday of Divine Mercy, 2015, Pope Francis proclaimed an **Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy**, a *Holy Year*, beginning on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception and extending throughout the Church Year until the Feast of Christ the King.

*Also called Holy Years, Jubilees normally occur every 25 years. They feature special celebrations and pilgrimages, calls for conversion and repentance, and the offer of special opportunities to experience God's grace through the sacraments, especially confession. Extraordinary holy years, such as the Holy Year of Mercy, are less frequent but offer the same opportunities. . . The Year of Mercy called for by Pope Francis is the third "extraordinary" jubilees since the tradition began 700 years ago. <sup>1</sup> (<http://www.cruxnow.com/church/2015/12/07/everything-you-need-to-know-about-the-holy-year-of-mercy/>)*

What does a **Jubilee Year of Mercy** mean for you and me? In this **Jubilee Year of Mercy**, all who claim to be God's people and all who claim to be followers of Jesus Christ are called to retrieve our most sacred memory of "**Mercy**" drawn from Sacred Scripture and from the life of Jesus where the fullness of "**Mercy**" is revealed as God's very self. Mercy is not pity. Mercy is not merely forgiveness. Mercy is not reserved for some and withheld from others. Mercy is a profoundly divine and deeply human loving presence to the "other" whoever the "other" may be .

Mercy is essential to genuine love. Without mercy there is no genuine love. If God is love, then God is mercy. The sacred memory of God's merciful presence to us is recalled in Psalms 103:3-4, 146:7-9, 147:3,6. Psalm 136 repeats the refrain, "**for his mercy endures forever**" after each verse, Pope Francis states in his proclamation:

*To repeat continually "for his mercy endures forever," as the psalm does, seems to break through the dimensions of space and time, inserting everything into the eternal mystery of love. It is as if to say that not only in history, but for all eternity man (and woman) will always be under the merciful gaze of the Father.*<sup>2</sup> (Bishop of Rome, Francis (2015) Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy #7)

Jesus, himself the revelation of God's mercy, illuminates that reality in the parable of the Good Samaritan, in the call of the Apostle Matthew (a tax collector), in the healing of the bent woman, in the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin, and in the story of Mary Magdalene, among many others. Jesus' very presence gives flesh to the presence of God among God's people, gives definition to the virtue of **Mercy**, gives us the means to **remember**, and gives confident and inexorable voice to the truth that **God's "mercy endures forever"!**

Welcoming that sacred memory of God's merciful love reminds us that we are all God's beloved and nestles us in the loving embrace of our God. For all **who allow themselves** to feel the fullness of that embrace the experience is unforgettable. We are immersed in the depths of God's eternal love and forgiveness and are profoundly transformed. This transformation makes **reconciliation** not only possible but even inescapable. Reflect on the parable of the *Prodigal Son* and the joy of the father who welcomed home his errant son without question returning him to his place

in the family. There is, however, a caveat. Our just and compassionate God knows our hearts. **Mercy** extends from God to us and



through us to others. If we refuse to extend that mercy to others, than there can be no true **reconciliation**. Jesus reminds us of this truth in Matthew 18: 23-35. Remember the servant who owed his master a great debt, begged for his Master's patience and promised to pay him back? The master compassionately forgave him the debt. That same servant then threatened a fellow servant who owed him much less. When asked for patience he refused and has his fellow servant thrown into prison. When the master heard this, the first servant was delivered to the torturers until his full debt was repaid. **Mercy** that is genuinely sought and genuinely received expresses itself in genuine **reconciliation**. We know that it is genuine when we faithfully and compassionately "pay it forward", when we become the loving mercy of God for others.

When we find ourselves so fully immersed in God's loving mercy we know that we have truly **returned home**. When we are transformed by that mercy we don't want to be anywhere else. So as people of God and followers of Jesus, particularly in a time dominated by angry rhetoric, fear, and intolerance, let us be the prophetic presence of our all-merciful God in this world. May the graces of this **Year of Mercy** flow not only to us but also through us to the world so to ensure that everyone knows that **God's "mercy endures forever"**.

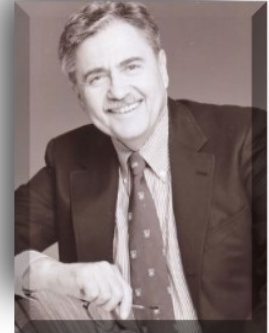
# New Digital Organ at the Manor

By Cecile Provost, CSC



**Sr. Cecile Tremblay, Mrs. Sally Woodford,  
Sr. Eleanor LaBranche.**

The Sisters at St. George Manor and Holy Cross Health Center experienced God's goodness in the gift of a new digital organ through the intervention of Sisters Cecile Tremblay and Cecile Provost. Realizing that the chapel at the Manor was in need of a new organ to enhance the liturgical celebrations, they approached their good friend, Mrs. Sally Woodford, who graciously donated the organ in memory of her



**Protase E. Woodford**

late husband Protase E. Woodford.

On Sunday September 27, 2015 a Blessing Ceremony was held in the Manor Chapel.

Following the blessing, Sr. Cecile Tremblay entertained with a wonderful concert. It was delightful!

Our prayers of thanksgiving remain with Sally for her kindness and generosity and we remember her husband in whose memory we will enjoy the sounds of a new organ.

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## A FORMER STUDENT REMEMBERS

As each year passes I realize more and more that the Sisters of Holy Cross had a profound impact on shaping me into the woman I am today! How blessed I was to have parents who sent me to St. Anthony Elementary and High School in New Bedford, MA and later to Notre Dame College in Manchester, NH. The Sisters truly nurtured and encouraged me. At present, as I teach music in Fairhaven, MA, I am well aware that my behaviors and faith life were instilled in me during those precious foundational years that are now a treasure that I draw from as I journey through life.



Thank you, Sisters, and be assured of my debt of gratitude.

Rita Jasnski Capole

# BECOMING UNITED STATES CITIZENS

Diane Dupere, CSC

**E**xiled from their native land along with hundreds of thousands of their fellow citizens in Bhutan and compelled to live in the refugee camps in Nepal for twenty years, Chura Acharya, his wife and their three daughters arrived in the United States in 2009. The challenges of becoming acclimated to their new environment did not escape this family; nonetheless, their goals were prioritized and, little by little, they adapted to life in Manchester, NH. Their ultimate goal – to attain US citizenship – was realized for the entire family in 2015.

Chura, a teacher by profession in his native Bhutan, admitted in glowing terms that, when he would become a citizen, he would be *"the happiest man in the world"* – and indeed he was when this event took place for him and his wife November 20, 2015! They were obviously full of gratitude and pride that accompanied their commitment to assume the responsibilities that U. S. citizenship requires.

To witness the naturalization process never gets old and it provides me with the opportunity to consider everything I take for granted as a natural-born U.S. citizen. Tears of joy on the part of new citizens challenge me to reach into the depths of my being to experience gratitude and pray that I express appreciation on a daily basis for what I've had all my life that others work so hard to achieve.



Chura & his wife the day they became citizens

Chura's connection to the Sisters of Holy Cross filters through Holy Cross Family Learning Center where he works as an interpreter during the week and as an ESL teacher (English as a Second Language) twice weekly when he teaches evening classes at the Center. The mission of the Sisters of Holy Cross, i.e., *"Education for Liberation"* is very pertinent in this context of providing an opportunity for the refugees to learn English to better navigate their surroundings and to reach their goals.

I have much to learn from the refugees whose plight brought them into my life, who teach me the deeper meaning of gratitude for the simple things in life, and where the common language that we share creates a genuine connection: a smile accompanied by *"Namaste"* which, in Hinduism, means *"I bow to the divine in you"*.

# The Congregations of Holy Cross are Celebrating 175 Years!

By Pauline Morneau, CSC

One look at the title and you will all agree that we have been at work for a very long time! Nonetheless, it is on a short time line that I've been asked to tell you about these many years. . . I will first invite you to turn to [www.Women of Holy Cross. Org](http://www.Women of Holy Cross. Org). The Menu will direct you to several choices. . .

The logo, a true work of art, was designed by Sr. Trinh Ta, CSC. It speaks volumes about who we are! We find there a background filled with light and life while the heart shaped rock reminds us of Jesus' call to build His Church. The heart also reminds us of the symbol long used by the Holy Cross Women. The three streams of water are a reminder that we are a family of three women's congregations: 1. The Sisters of Holy Cross that you, our readers know well, situated mostly in New Hampshire 2. The Marianites of Holy Cross based in New Orleans, LA and in LeMans, France where we originated, and 3. The Sisters of **the** Holy Cross in Indiana.



Yes, we also have our brothers who are celebrating these same years! The Fathers of Holy Cross and Brothers of Holy Cross are best known at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana. Like the Sisters, they also serve in missions throughout the U.S. and mission countries. Together, we are all known as the **Family of Holy Cross**. This is the fulfillment of Blessed Basile Moreau's dream.

If you click on "Prayer" you can join us in our remembering and thanksgiving! ( I composed this prayer 25 years ago for our 150<sup>th</sup> and it has been "resurrected"!)

"Celebration" has so many meanings. . . For us, it is primarily a time to remember and to be thankful for all that has been accomplished during these years. How wonderful it would be if Blessed Father Moreau were to be Canonized during this time!

This site will be updated throughout the year (until January 2017) and we are hoping that you will continue to spend some time with us. May you enjoy this opportunity to become acquainted with the history of the Family of Holy Cross!

Procession at the opening of our year of celebrating 175 years.



Marie Jalbert, CSC , Simone Poirier, CSC  
Judith Langevin, CSC

## BENEFIT CONCERT A GREAT SUCCESS!!!

**A**gain our concert with Josée Vachon and Donna Hébert was a winner! Over 200 attendees join in the singing, dancing, clogging and clapping in time with the measured beat of music and song.



Being together with family and friends while reliving our French Heritage of Christmases past and joys of the present kept all so warm and content.

Our heartfelt thanks to all who participated.



Sr. Pauline Lebel (center) with 2 of her former students from Springfield, MA who came to the concert.

L. Lucille Laberge

R Susan Miffitt



## Upcoming Events

**April 23, 2016 At Holy Cross Hall from 1 to 3:30**

Bingo to benefit the construction project being accomplished at St. George Manor . Prizes will be given (not money)

**May 12, 2016 At Holy Cross Hall at 6pm Cost \$15**

Spaghetti supper to benefit the Holy Cross Family learning Center.

Please check out Berakah website for retreat programs being offered during the Spring and Summer.

**FAIR OCTOBER 15, 2016**

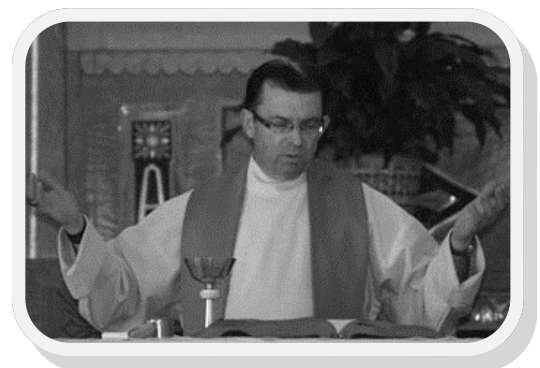
### THINGS NEEDED

- Penny Sale Prizes
- Old Jewelry
- Gift certificates of \$10 or more
- Knitted goods

**Your help is always greatly appreciated.**



**Mass is celebrated on the 26th of each month for you, our benefactors, by our Chaplain Father Bruce Collard.**



# 10 YEAR JOURNEY COMES TO FRUITION

BY Lydia Stavrinos, Executive Assistant to the Regional Animator

Let me acquaint you with a brief history of the Sisters of Holy Cross and the integral part they have played in New Hampshire history, especially in Manchester, NH. Their various ministries have reached the East Coast and throughout the world.

These women have been a pillar of our community

for over 134 years, having served in so many different ministries. They are primarily educators and teachers. Sisters in their late seventies, eighties and nineties are still actively engaged in various ministries. They have always strived to make things better for the community through education; ministering to the homeless and abused; mentoring refugees to our City; their ministries in hospitals, soup kitchens, wherever they found a need—they have been there .



At this time in their history, the Sisters are faced with a number of major issues; the most serious being their retirement home, better known as St. George Manor. Over the last 10 years they have been struggling with plans, projects, and neighbor rejection and eventually, the lack of funding needed to have a major overhaul/renovation of the Sisters' home.

Well, on November 3, 2015, the much needed renovation work at the Manor officially began. Each of the units has been enlarged to include: a bedroom area; a small sitting area, and a private 1/2 bath (sink and toilet,) as well as two large closets. The original quarters for the sisters consisted of a small bedroom furnished with a twin bed, bureau, small night stand, small closet and a single sink. Shared bathroom facilities were located down the hall. Each new unit/suite is equipped with its own thermostat to control heat and air conditioning. When all is said and done, 13 individual units will be ready for those Sisters who are current residents and for those who eventually will join them.

On October 21, 2015, a Capital Campaign was launched with a special fundraising brunch held in the main dining room of the Home. A brief video of the Sisters' history clearly depicting the needs was presented at that time, along with a tour of the facility which proved to be very enlightening to those in attendance.

Our main objective is to create an elder-friendly, handicapped accessible home for our aging Sisters . These long awaited renovations are a good beginning. If you would like to view the 13 minute video, please visit our website at : [www.sistersofholycross.org](http://www.sistersofholycross.org).



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**Contributing Editor:** Pauline Morneau, CSC  
**Layout/Photography:** Suzanne Levesque, CSC



## *Memorial Donations Given in Memory of:*

Prunier & Leduc Families	Dorothy Thompson	Norman Soucy
Paul Charron	Anne Buckley	Arthur Larose
Marie-Anne Bissailon, CSC	Irene Pohl	Nicole Siver
Lucy Rose	Camille Dionne	Adrien Lamarre
Mr. & Mrs. Luke Lamarre	Lorraine Rochette	Jeannette Gallant
Lorraine Jepson	Joseph Gagnon	Lolita Galipeau, CSC
Mr. & Mrs. Ted Lapienski	Elaine Clough	

Send a donation to the Development Fund in memory of a loved one who has been called home to God? Put a notice in the paper suggesting that friends of the deceased do the same. Your loved one will be included in the daily prayers of The Sisters of Holy Cross.

## **Memorials** **Why Not...**