



INFO-AFFILIATION

May 2017



Already the month of May, time passes by so quickly! You may be wondering why a world map? To show that despite the even with the distances we all live on the same earth, we are all part of the same family. For some, spring is well under way, for others the coldness of winter is slowly setting in; yet we are united by the same love for the Good Shepherd charism and the strength of the Venerable Marie Fitzbach, our beloved Foundress. In this last edition of 2016-2017, you can read news from Lesotho to Brazil via the United States with a few stops in Quebec. I hope that your year in the company of the Collaborators and Mr. Muir gave you the zest to deepen the mission entrusted to us as affiliates and that you will be as enthusiastic to start the year 2017-2018. The charism will continue to do its work even if we are physically far apart.

Enjoy your reading!



Maine, United-States

The birthday cards of the Collaborators

Happy Birthday

January 21st

Marie-Anne Fiset

Sr. St. Charles Borromeo

"All for God, nothing to satisfy myself."



When we received these birthday cards, it took us a while to decide what we would do to honor those courageous women who walked alongside our Foundress to give birth to the Good Shepherd Community. Our Affiliates live far and we do not get to see them much, outside of their monthly gatherings. We finally agreed on a way to do it without having to impose additional travel to our aging members.

On the occasion of our annual picnic, whether it would be at our Acton Camp or at the estate of one of our members, we will set time aside to present a summary of each of their stories and contributions to the fledging institute. Each of the team members will do a presentation and it will be followed by a group prayer in thanksgiving for each founder's gift to the Congregation and to the Church.

Our affiliates give monthly donations. Last week they contributed \$105 to help our Haitian Missions. Usually, their donations are directed to Esther House which they adopted for their apostolic endeavor last year and the current year as well. Because of the destruction resulting from the last hurricane a number of months ago, we had set aside the month of April to take up a collection for Haiti.

Sister Maddy D'Anjou, SCIM,
Anita Cote, Team Leader
Southern Maine

News from Lesotho



Newly established group

The LORD of the harvest that is God the Father... “sent out labourers into the harvest” (Mt 9:38). Vocations are born in prayer; and only through prayer can they persevere and bear fruit.

We are a group of affiliates in the Southern Region of Lesotho, about 172 km. from Maseru, the Capital City .We had been showing in different ways that we like this Congregation and we attended the jubilee at St. Rodrigue when the affiliates celebrated their 25th Anniversary. We pleaded with Sr. ArmelinaTsiki to enrol us as we strongly felt that we would not leave without being part of the Good Shepherd Affiliation. She promised to come to Mohale’s Hoek. On the 3rd September 2016, Sr. Armelina accompanied by two of the National Committee members, Mrs. Mathabo Ranyamatsana and Mr. Phosholi Lesala visited us. We held our first meeting at Bishop’s House. We were six, Sr Eusebia Mphoso our Mentor, Mrs ‘Marethabile Lydia Kelane, Miss Sebina Lebona, Mrs. Nthabiseng Tlali and Mr. Mojakhomo Patick Salang.

As new members, we felt motivated and loved as we learned that the motivating force in our lives comes from a sense of being loved by God and feeling particularly attracted to Christ in the Shepherding expression of His love. We also learned that our service, traditionally and currently, is particularly with women and children who have been wounded by life’s circumstances and live on the edge of society. As affiliates, we have to bear in mind the principle that each person is loved by God in a unique way. Today more than ever, we see the value and interconnection of all creation. Spirituality is the only way to live and express our faith actively. We want to recite the rosary daily.

Achivements:

We have sent one wounded girl to the Good Shepherd Centre for the teenage Mothers with her six-month-old baby boy to learn life-skills on how to take care of herself and the baby and supplement her COSC January this year 2017. Hopefully by 2019 she will be graduating.

- We have visited the homes of child-headed families and provide them with food and some of their basic needs.
- We were taking care of the baby who lost her mother. She had congenital abnormalities and the family abandoned her. We advocated that social development should assist, and eventually she was taken to a specialized home for palliative care.
- We are meeting every 2nd Sunday of the church calendar.

Challenges

- We were five in number when we started; however two went away to seek jobs in other districts but they are still part of us when they are home. As for Mr... he has not attended our meetings, and we are praying that he may join us soon.

Conclusion

- “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed we are perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed” (2 Co 4:8-9).

TOGETHER WE CAN AND TOGETHER WE SHALL.

Acknowledgements

- All sisters of Mohale’s Hoek Bishop’s House: for their guidance and remarkable support.
- Sr Armelina Tsiki: for the good foundation she instilled in our minds and hearts.



Mrs. Marethabile Lydia Kelane, affiliate
Southern Lesotho Group, Mohale’s Hoek

Provincial House Group (Maseru, Lesotho)



We invited Fr. Selbourne Pita, OMI, to be with us and the sisters at the Provincial Local House, Maseru, in order to rejoice with him and his family immediately after his ordination to the priesthood which was held at Cathedral.

We were deeply touched by his simplicity and humility, as he looked very happy and grateful on this occasion. Unlike other priests he did not have gifts from his family on this special event. He also could not have his first Mass at his family's parish. What impressed us the most was his speech on his background, how he got his call to the priesthood and his intention to follow in the footsteps of Jesus the Good Shepherd. Among the gifts we offered him were an alb, a chasuble and a stole. He thanked the Good Shepherd sisters and affiliates for their love and concern for him and promised to be a member of this family that showed him such love.

On the 6th November 2016 we visited the prisoners. We had Mass by Fr. Vincent Mosenye OMI. We had brought some small presents which they appreciated a lot. On the same day we also visited Mohlomi Hospital for mentally disturbed patients. We gave them small, simple gifts.



Madame Victoria Rasekoai
Secretary, Provinciale House Group, Maseru

Good news from Brazil



During our visit to our sisters in Brazil, Sister Agnès Dufour and I had the joy of meeting with affiliated members representing the three groups in this country: Natal, Baia Formosa and Jardim de Piranhas.

The life of each group is tangible not only by their attendance at monthly meetings but by their concern for new members and their commitment in the town.

Forty-two (42) affiliates and sixteen (16)

pre-affiliates are involved in communicating love and goodness to the tones of mercy. These include: participation in parish and diocesan initiatives for the poor, weekly adoration, organization of retreats and prayer time together, presence with the sisters at festivals and community events, family visits, a Mass to the intentions of the affiliated members on the 16th of each month, intergroup communications. Several expressed their appreciation for the *2016-2017 Annual Spiritual Guide* and their appreciation for the invitation to write in the book proposed by Donna Towle. This initiative allowed them to rename the reasons why they continue to be members of the Good Shepherd Affiliation, to belong to our spiritual family.

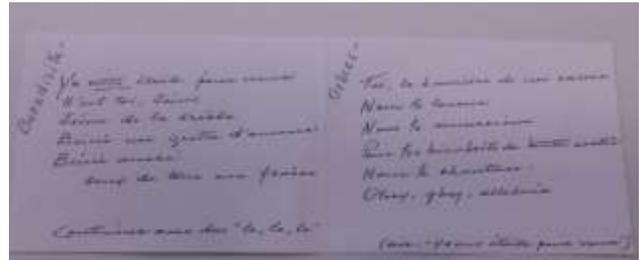
They asked me to greet affiliates everywhere; which I am doing here with pleasure. In order for the Good Shepherd's face to remain visible to the world, I ask Him to strengthen each affiliate in his/her call to make of our groups **cells of fraternity and spiritual growth** for the happiness of all .



Sister Lise Gagné. s.c.i.m.

News from the Beauce Region, Quebec

At our meeting on January 6th, Christmas was celebrated at the same time as the meeting on the Collaborator, Esther Ouimet. We remembered the 167th anniversary of foundation with a souvenir that surprised and interested everyone, the tradition of “the row of pins as a New Year’s present.” To illustrate it, we had prepared for each one a sheet of Christmas and seasonal songs, decorated with small symbols of Christmas.



We found tartan fabric in which we set 3 straight pins in parallel. We inserted the fabric in the song sheet. We added a brief written description of this tradition:



“The present of a row of pins, a tradition of the Good Shepherd Sisters of Quebec” <http://www.ipir.ulaval.ca/fiche.php?id=955>

“As early as the 1850s, Marie-Josephte Fitzbach offered each of her sisters a row of pins as a New Year’s gift, which gave birth to a tradition still honored today. That opening reminds us of the simplicity and poverty of the beginnings of the Good Shepherd Institute.”

It was a beautiful moment during which the atmosphere and the themes touched us, a beautiful acknowledgement of those who preceded us.

Céline Jacques, affiliate
Saint-Georges de Beauce Group

News from Matane, Quebec



For our January meeting, we went back in time with the characters of Mr. George Manly Muir and Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart. Two affiliates lent themselves to the game by donning the costume to make us relive the beginning of the wonderful history of the Good Shepherd work of mercy.

In introducing the character of Mr. Muir, we discovered a being with a good shepherd's heart, caring about persons and especially the vulnerable women released from prison. Thanks to his tenacity and perseverance, his inspiration was fulfilled in this formidable work. He accomplished it with the complicity of an extraordinary woman Marie-Josephte Fitzbach-Roy.

Mrs Fitzbach-Roy, who later became Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart, was the first pillar filled with mercy, love, and goodness with the heart of a good shepherdess.

An inspiring discussion took place about the difficulties encountered in this grandiose project. This magnificent work of mercy has existed for 167 years thanks to the dedication and courage of the collaborators of yesterday and today.



Lucie Lemieux, affiliate
Matane Group

News from Quebec City

Account of the annual retreat

We had our annual retreat from April 7 to 9. Some sisters joined us in this pilgrimage “To the heart of Mercy”.



Lucie Cliche led this retreat held at the Generalate. It was inspired and inspiring, the Spirit was at work. I can

say that we were welcomed with love, goodness and mercy. The sisters generously opened their doors and their hearts to us. We heard Pope Francis and some parables of the Bible. Teaching alternated judiciously with moments of integration and internalization.



What do we remember from this meeting? Some pearls...

- The justice of God works together with mercy, it cannot be otherwise.
- Love is the basis of God's justice. The justice of man works very differently.
- I recognize myself in the damaged icon; I am indeed imperfect though created in the image of God, in all honesty. [“Noblesse oblige” : the concept of honourable behaviour that is considered to be the responsibility of persons of status in society]
- God forgives with a caress and not a decree. Mercy leads me to forgiveness.
- God invites me tirelessly but never imposes himself. He respects my freedom; there is no love without freedom.
- I feel invited to review my commitments: am I merciful in his image? The kind of mercy that invites the one who crosses my path, that mercy which makes me kneel before my brothers and sisters, which makes me become His instrument.
- Yes, the time of mercy has come.
- I left with joy in my heart, well aware and determined that mercy may be translated into deeds in my life, with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Maryse Cyr, affiliate
Generalate Group, Quebec City

Charlesbourg Group

➤ A touching testimony

On Thursday, March 16, 2016, we affiliates of the Charlesbourg Group, had the joy of welcoming Sister Monique Ruel, who came to give us her testimony of the presence and the action of the Lord in her life. She told us the story of her vocation. She joined the Congregation “to do God’s will,” and Sister Monique constantly seeks that will in her life. She says she is both cheerful and serious, and affirms “that the Lord has always acted beyond my limitations”!

The missionary also told us about her experience in Rwanda with women in distress, reminding us that “whatever happens, the Lord knows better than us what we need.” We are therefore unanimously grateful to Sister Monique, because we very much appreciated her visit.

Jeanne d'Arc Cyr, affiliate
Charlesbourg Group

➤ Celebration of Consecrated Life

On Sunday, January 29, 2017, on the World Day of Consecrated Life, H el ene Tardif and I from the Affiliate Group of Charlesbourg attended the gathering held at the Church of the Holy Canadian Martyrs in Quebec City. The theme of that day: “Carried by the joy of the Gospel, becoming missionaries otherwise”. The day is celebrated in Quebec City since 1999.

Father Bertrand Roy, a former missionary in Indonesia and Cambodia, developed the theme for us. He emphasized the texts of the bishops of Quebec in 2016: "The missionary turn of Christian communities." He reminded us of the essence of our faith and the simplicity of the Gospel, along with the importance of discernment in recognizing those essential elements. Likewise, the joy of the Gospel must bring us to the Christian community: we cannot be Christians alone, salvation is communal. The joy of the Gospel leads us to “step away”, to leave our comfort and our habits. This joy leads us to initiate, to create, to make new, to be prophets, to raise new dawns in the mornings of tomorrow... There are things that must disappear such as nostalgia for the past, the “Savior” mentality, sadness, discouragement. The Church does not have it all, says Father Roy, “it is not God”!

What must continue is the discernment to distinguish what is essential from what is secondary, the testimony and joy of our faith, openness to differences, and quality before quantity. We must become close to one another, become prophets of hope.

In our group exchanges we emphasized: "being witnesses of hope." One lady suggested that we should give more attention to silence filled with the presence of God.

The afternoon ended with Solemn Vespers of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple presided by Bishop Louis Corriveau and sung by the Dominican Missionary Adorers. There was also a renewal of vows by the assembly which included a large number of religious men and women, lay people, and many Good Shepherd Sisters.

Jeanne d'Arc Cyr, affiliate
Charlesbourg Group

Remembering our dearly departed

All affiliates wish to extend their deepest and heartfelt condolences to the families and all those affected by these losses:

Mr. Amédée Fortin, affiliate through prayer, brother of Sister Solange Fortin, SCIM

Mrs. Nenza de Nascimento, affiliate, Natal, Brazil



*“Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom. And Jesus said to him, Verily I say to you, you shall be with me today in Paradise!”
(Lk 23: 42-43)*

That’s it for the latest news. Let us continue together to convey the charism of love and goodness that Marie-Josephite Fitzbach-Roy bequeathed to us.



Nancy Fournier
Community Assistant, Good Shepherd Affiliation
Quebec City
Tr:NF
Revision:alc