



Info-Affiliation

December 2017

Another issue ... another season ... another year...



During my trip to the United States, I had the chance to participate in the flea market at Esther Residence. It was an afternoon filled with joy. Knowing that I was making a small gesture to help women coming out of prison to resume the normal course of their lives, to regain their dignity and their place in our society, made me very happy. As our annual Guide says it so well: "Rejoice!" Well, this action brought me joy! Don't look for happiness in big things; it's not the goods you buy, it's in the little moments shared with people we like, in the sunshine of a beautiful day, in the smile of an enthusiastic volunteer, in the eyes of a child we hug, in the person we visit. It's everywhere... we just need to keep our eyes and hearts open. Sometimes life makes things difficult for us, but keep in mind the little spark that's ready to ignite the soul. When we stay open, it always comes back!



News from the St-Georges de Beauce Group

Mass on October 13, 2017 - Apparition of Our Lady of Fatima - Plenary Indulgence

At our meeting on October 13th, since we meet in a room adjacent to the church, we offered the affiliates the opportunity to participate in the Mass celebrated on the centenary of Mary's last apparition in Fatima, which they happily accepted. Pope Francis had mentioned that it was possible to gain a plenary indulgence if one met the conditions required. The program of the meeting was modified a little to be able to receive the Sacrament of Forgiveness, one of the conditions to benefit from the plenary indulgence.

- Gérard Lavoie read the word of welcome, in which 3 specific points were highlighted: the centenary of the last apparition of Mary at Fatima, the launching of the Pastoral Year, and our Good Shepherd Affiliation:

"Hello and welcome to this celebration of the Eucharist!

Today, October 13th, we celebrate the centennial of Mary's last apparition in Fatima. Mary asked the three children to pray because their country was at war. Even today, we are invited to pray Mary for peace in our world, but also in our families and in our hearts. And it's all together that we will succeed.

For the launching of the 2017-2018 Pastoral Year, the theme presented was: "Together, for the mission!" What is this mission? "To propose or renew our meeting with Christ."

Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart and the Good Shepherd Sisters have a particular devotion to Mary. Today, the Good Shepherd affiliates, along with the members of the community and through the intercession of Mary, we want to participate in this mission: to make Jesus known and loved.

*Céline Jacques will present the **Guide** for the year with the theme of "The Beatitudes," and Caroline Veilleux will present the picture of Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart.*

Let's enter into this celebration with Fr. Michel Paré and all the Good Shepherd affiliates.

By joining in the procession, we intended to have some visibility, that of a movement that carries on despite the ups and downs of life. There were about ten of us present, and those affiliated by prayer could join us on community television. Another visibility!

Prayer intentions, specially composed for this Mass, were truly in keeping with the goals of our participation in this celebration.

Intercessory Prayers - October 13th Mass

Introduction

Jesus, in giving us Mary as our Mother, you entrusted us with a mission: to make God our Father known. Give us the strength of your Spirit to help us overcome situations that prevent us from loving our brothers and sisters as you ask us.

RESPONSE: ***Lord, hear our prayer!***

- The fervent prayers and trust of the children of Fatima towards the Virgin Mary preserved the world from an escalation of war and other catastrophes. Let us ask Mary to obtain peace so that wars may cease in our present world, together let us pray.
- We pray to the Holy Spirit so that a new recruits may join the groups of lay affiliates and associates, so that they may pursue the works initiated by their founders for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Together let us pray.
- The poverty, self-esteem and misery of prostituted women touched Marie Fitzbach's heart. With prayer, and drawing compassion and maternal tenderness from the heart of the Virgin Mary, she was able to raise them up and restore dignity to these women. Let's ask Mary to deliver all people who struggle and to protect our children and grandchildren from the scourges of prostitution and drugs. Together let us pray.
- For our struggling communities, let us pray for the graces necessary so that "Together for the mission,' we can offer or renew people's encounters with Christ. Together let us pray.

God our Father, hear our prayers so that by walking in the footsteps of Jesus and with the intercession of the Virgin Mary and Marie Fitzbach, we may witness together to the love of God among those around us. Through Jesus, Christ, our Lord. Amen

A great interiority emanated from each one of us; it was tangible. We felt united together but also with the community. At the end of Mass, we had asked the choir for the song: "*Allez vous en sur les places*" by John Littleton. It was a surprise for the affiliates, and when the song began, there was joy and emotion in our group. This song confirmed our sending to the community in the footsteps of Marie Fitzbach.

Before Mass, there is always a rosary. We had proposed a special intention to the person who recites the rosary. She agreed to proclaim it.

Proposed intention to the rosary:

Let us ask the Virgin Mary and Marie Fitzbach (called in community: Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart) to bring back devotion to family prayer, to renew and transmit our devotion to Mary. As in Fatima, the rosary and our prayers are powerful allies for peace in the world and in our families.

It was a beautiful celebration with the parish community. Since it was the Mass in honor of Our Lady of Fatima, the affiliates could not take over the event. Therefore, we included the theme of the Launching of the Pastoral Year and also the other groups of associates of our parish in the intercessory prayers. So there was room for everyone.

Ginette Lachance, affiliate, St-Georges de Beauce Group

News from the Lac-St-Jean Region: Mistassini and Ste-Jeanne d'Arc

Even far from Quebec City, the two groups meet each month alternatively. Some ladies offer transportation to elders without cars, thanks to the **charism** of Marie-Fitzbach! We are holding our meetings in the basement of the rectory of St-Michel where the secretary, Mrs. Yolande, and the pastoral agent come to join us for coffee and cookies; or at the Golden Age Community Hall in the Ste-Jeanne d'Arc Residence. This afternoon, devoted to inner healing and sharing on the Beatitudes, soothed and nourished us spiritually. In addition, a very open-minded 90-year-old lady has been with us for almost a year now, a precious pearl!

Merry Christmas! Happy New Year! Joy and Health to Sr. Lise and Nancy, to all the team members who work in the shadows, and to the women in difficulty for whom we pray.

Micheline Tremblay, leader of the great Mistassini Group team!

News from Matane

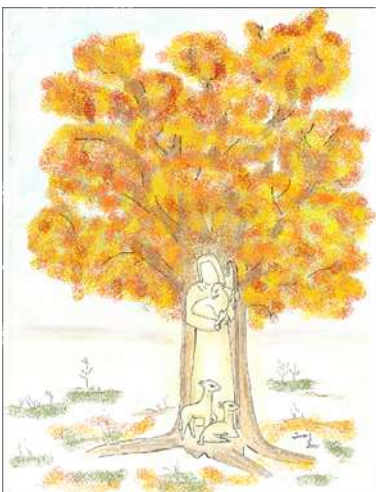
What were your reactions to receiving the Resource Guide entitled: “*The Beatitudes, Rejoice!*”?

That was the question asked of members of the Affiliation Group in Quebec’s Matane Region. As a compliment to its authors, Jeanne d’Arc Cyr and Ginette Crête, they share their answers with us here:



- I am happy because the subject enlightens my difficult situation.
- The title made me smile; happiness is so important.
- We journey trying to be happy.
- The theme sticks to my skin, to raise awareness of the big and small joys around me.
- A gift that will help my faith grow.
- An invitation to take time to take care of myself in order to grow spiritually.
- I don’t see life as before, I am calmer, more thoughtful, and I have more depth.
- A rewarding, relevant topic that is well-treated with simplicity.
- Another opportunity to be in touch with Marie Fitzbach.

Sr. Lise Gagné, S.C.I.M.



Back to our roots

Last October 29th, we had the joy and pleasure of participating in a day of renewal for our Affiliation, at the Generalate of the Good Shepherd Sisters in Quebec City.

The theme of this day was “Back to our roots”. After the usual greetings, Nancy presented us with some important announcements, such as a proposal for an Affiliation Charter, and our finances and charity sale project.

Sister Lise told us of a project to create a group of Good Shepherd volunteers and other projects by Mr. Denis Petitclerc. Sister Claudette Ledet presented the project of Christmas cards and gift cards for imprisoned women and those who receive services at the *Maison de Marthe*.



After the announcements, it was time to participate in the Community Eucharist. We all went to the chapel of the Generalate. After Mass, back at Marie Fitzbach Hall, Nancy introduced us to the tree entitled "Back to our roots": "The tree presented to you is a little different from the one you are used to seeing. It is decked out in its most beautiful autumn colors to match all the colors you bring to the Affiliation. Today, we will revisit our roots and review the foundations of our Affiliation." (Nancy)

By following the well-prepared *Guide*, we studied and shared our perceptions, our understanding, what reaches us especially in our roots of goodness, mercy and love, in connection with the Word of God. The participants put all their hearts into it and the exchanges were numerous, fruitful and very sincere. The presence of the sisters in our groups was very beneficial for all. The warm welcome and the hospitality of the community are always greatly appreciated.



With Sister Lise we ended this beautiful day on relevant and very important reflections: How to make the Good Shepherd charism come alive and grow in our environments and in the midst of the world?

We are invited to reflect together on this matter: how to enlarge our spiritual family, how to challenge those around us. Let us not forget to call upon the Holy Spirit through the intercession of Marie Fitzbach to discover new paths of love, goodness and mercy.

A well-filled and very fruitful day!

Jeanne d'Arc Cyr, affiliate, Charlesbourg Group

Meeting with Maine Affiliates

Between September 18th and 25th, Nancy and I had the good fortune to take part in the translation of the affiliate stories that will compose the book devised by Donna Towle. We had a week of intensive work, sharing, and joy at St. Joseph's Convent in Biddeford, Maine. With the help of Sister Madeleine D'Anjou, who did a great deal of translation of the Lesotho documents, we were supported by Sister Claire Ouellette and Sister Annette Nadeau who kept watch over our well-being, and by Donna, who warmly supported us. Nancy and I managed to do all the necessary work, except for the translation into Portuguese naturally.



Every day we shared the Eucharist with the community, as well as meals and well-deserved rest hours. Donna took us on a tour of the area and we visited Cape Elizabeth and Portland. She spoiled us with a dinner in a beautiful waterfront restaurant. We enjoyed seeing the beautiful waves of the Atlantic... after the hurricane.

On Saturday evening, we attended the African Gala, a drumming and traditional dance show at the Guild Hall of Portland Cathedral with Sister Madeleine. This event was organized for the benefit of Sacred Heart / Saint Dominic Parish, a central provider of food, clothing and resources in Portland. Our week passed very quickly and we keep a precious remembrance of it.



Following that excursion, a few days later, Sister Lise, Nancy and I left for Amos, in Quebec's Abitibi Region, to meet the affiliates in Manneville. As in the past, we stayed with the Sisters of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who welcomed us so generously and kindly. The day after our arrival, we went to Manneville where the affiliates welcomed us warmly. Our discussions were very fruitful and we shared the delicious buffet they had prepared to welcome us.



Upon our return from this meeting, we were treated to a magnificent guided tour of the Cathedral of Amos, by a very nice volunteer lady. We even visited the crypt and small secret places that nobody knows about.

In the evening, we visited two affiliates in residence, Mrs. Rose-Aimée, who was going to celebrate her hundredth birthday a few days later and Mrs. Aline and her daughter, all of them very nice ladies.

Jeanne d'Arc Cyr, affiliate, Charlesbourg Group

News from Southern Maine

We are very grateful that, in spite of the diminishing numbers of Sisters, the American Province leadership still maintains three of their members to journey with us. They are: Sisters Eileen Ward, for the Bangor/Old Town group, Pauline Demers, for the Massachusetts Affiliates and, Madeleine D'Anjou, (Sr. Maddy), with us, in the Southern Maine region. Their presence and participation contribute so much to our spiritual growth, as well as to the formation of our new members.

Speaking of new members, we also owe a debt of gratitude to our African Sisters. It is not without envy that we read repeatedly how their group was getting larger and larger, while ours, in spite of multiple efforts to recruit, remained at a standstill. Reading the story of their individual calling, we realized that the personal invitation was probably the key to their success. We tried it! Yes, the personal invitation works better than all the written info about the Affiliation, this vital limb of the Good Shepherd tree. We have welcomed 4 new members, in a matter of weeks and the more they hear about Marie Fitzbach and the Good Shepherd foundation the more they are anxious to spread her charism. Thank You, African Affiliates for sharing your calling with us.

On June 17, our group gathered at St. Joseph Convent for the annual Retreat Day, under the guidance of Father Bill Clark, sj. . Several Sisters joined us and together, we enjoyed a lively liturgy [Father writes his own music], and spiritually charged conferences on the theme of **Laudato Si**. Once again we thank our Sisters for their generous hospitality.

The summer months, for our spiritual family, are more relaxed, without planned monthly meetings to attend. Yet, we do not want to forget that those vacation months do not mean the end of our commitment to the Affiliation. Besides our Retreat, we generally schedule a picnic, either in July or in August. This year, as we had informed you we would, we set aside some time after our yummy barbecue meal, to do a presentation, on Mother Foundress's 1st collaborators, for the religious personnel of St. Joseph Convent. We must say that the event was one of the high points of the year. Six of us took turns to the ambo to relate a short summary of those beautiful souls, a summary sparkled with edifying anecdotes gleaned from the Annals of the Institute. The Sisters were very enthusiastic and complimentary about the event, and several stated that they had forgotten a lot of what was related. We missed the presence of our Canadian members [they had joined us for the Picnic 2016], but we hope they will be with us for the 2018 one.

Thanksgiving is on our threshold in the USA, and therefore it seems appropriate to thank all of you for your individual efforts in spreading the charism of our beloved and venerable Mother Foundress.

The members of the Leadership Team
Southern Maine Group, United States

Memories!

Two members of our group died at the end of the summer. We paid tribute to their families and friends in August and September.

Mrs. Denise Delisle passed away on August 10th at the age of 85. She had been affiliated since February 15, 1997. Her love for the Good Shepherd Community dates back to her youth when she volunteered at St-Vincent de Paul daycare. She has been a volunteer at Maison Zoé-Blais for many years in daycare and teaching French to immigrants.

A woman endowed with several talents among others for the writing, she left me a booklet of poems entitled: « *Au fil des ans, la vie qui bat* » (*Over the years, this living life*).

Here is a poem read at her funeral that shows us her greatness of soul and deep faith.

MY HANDS

*Here I am, Lord, I cannot fall asleep
because my hands make me suffer too
much.*

*They served me well for all those years,
when work never repelled them.*

*They knew how to be tender with everyone I
loved, to applaud, to caress, and to trace the
long poem of my life.*

*They ran alertly on the keyboard of the piano
or computer.*

They often joined to praise you Lord.

*My open hands have received so much from
you, Lord.*

*Those hands so gentle, so graceful that you
had given me are now deformed and
appalling to look at.*

*They will remain brave and ready to serve,
until the day I have to leave this life—*

*to finally reach you in a better world, where
love reigns, where all human beings are
brothers and sisters.*

*Then, for the last time, my hands will reach
out to you
to join you in the land of joy.*

*There my hands will regain their former
beauty.*



Denise

Mr. Jean-Paul Pépin passed away on September 27th at his home. He was 94 years old and had been an affiliate since May 1987. He too had loved the community of the Good Shepherd Sisters since childhood. Among them, he visited his dear Aunt, Sister Yvonne Pépin (Sr. St-Jacques) with joy. He was a man of great faith and he shared it for a long time with professionals at Prayer Breakfasts at Quebec City's famous Château Frontenac. Sister Rollande Villeneuve joined him to pray with those businessmen at the request of Mr. Pépin. His attendance at affiliate meetings with his wife Rita Giguère was faithful and challenging for the group.

Dear Mr. Pepin, dear Denise Delisle, we thank you for your loving and prayerful presence in our lives. Continue to watch over us, you who are near to our God whom you desired so much!

Sister Nicole Daigle, S.C.I.M. Zoe-Blais Group, November 1, 2017

Back to the meeting of October 2, 2017

That day, we were gathered in Manneville to welcome Sr. Lise Gagné, S.C.I.M., accompanied by Jeanne d'Arc Cyr and Nancy Fournier. After the reception and presentation of the theme, Jeanne d'Arc shared with us—in her singing voice from the Iles-de-la-Madeleine—her reflections on happiness. Allow me to add my own thoughts. Happiness for me is to be good to myself, with what I believe. It's to be surrounded by my children. Happiness is simple, it's about opening our eyes and receiving it with both hands. In my everyday life, I have the joy of being free to pray whenever and wherever I want.

Future of the group:

We are an aging group, there are no recruits; we strongly believe in canceling winter meetings and resuming in the spring for those whose health will allow it then. In the meantime, we will continue to be affiliates by prayer.

Liliane Lambert-Pelchat
Manneville Group, Abitibi, Quebec



We greatly appreciated your visit. It was motivating. We had very helpful exchanges. Thank you for coming to meet us. United in prayer.

Michel and Solange, affiliates, Abitibi

News from Lesotho

A good deed

“A passionate desire has ways of transmitting itself into its physical equivalent.”

On July 16, 2017, we visited a disadvantaged family in a community. The family had been identified by one of our affiliates during her daily work. This family of thirteen is composed of a grandmother, a daughter and her six-month-old baby girl, a son with a mental health disorder, a child under five, and eight children in school who seemed to suffer from malnutrition.



The baby, who had had no vaccination since birth, accidentally fell on a lamp and sustained head injury, a fresh wound with a clot. She was not brought to the hospital because of lack of money. They have a girl working in South Africa who does not support the family monetarily, as expected, mainly because she is a nanny and does not make a lot of money.

All share the same house, an unhealthy environment with cracked walls and a door that does not close well. They use a wood fire to cook, which is not acceptable. They manage to eat if the grandmother can get piece work.

We prayed together and had a friendly sharing on the Word of God. We brought them 12.5 kg of corn flour, 5 kg of beans and 2 liters of oil. A follow-up was done the next day for the baby who was taken to the hospital for wound care and vaccinations.

Recently, we asked the bishop for land to grow vegetables for the needy, to which he responded positively. We hope to start soon.

Mrs. Marethabile Lydia Kelane,
Mohale's Hoek Group, Lesotho

Renewal of promises in a village



On the 25th of May 2017, three Sisters from St. John Tlali Convent, Sr. Bernadette Seoaholimo, Sr. St. Sophia, Sr. Maria Makhetha accompanied by Fr. Laurence Moektsi, OMI, a parish priest, visited one of our affiliates, Mrs Alina Letsie who is partially deaf and blind.

Our main objectives were to visit Mrs Letsie, to celebrate Holy Mass for the sick and elderly villagers, and to give the affiliates there a chance to renew their promises with Mrs Letsie, who no longer attends monthly affiliate meetings because of ill health.

On our arrival at Mrs Letsie's home, the affiliates and villagers were already awaiting us in great number. The singing was uplifting and lively. Father gave a short but enriching homily. Seven affiliates renewed their promises with Mrs Letsie during Mass. She was so happy that she wished she could die and continue her joy in heaven with Jesus the Good Shepherd.



Thereafter we visited Mr Tieho, a cancer patient who was a son of one of our affiliates. We prayed for him and wished him well.

Sr. Armelina Tsiki, S.C.I.M.

The journey in faith for a new life

Does the experience of the journey in faith change a life? Those who experience it often respond by affirming that this experience gives them the certainty of being inhabited by God, and that all aspects of their lives are modified (philosophy of life, relationships with others, ways to face the struggles of life, etc.). This inner change is very difficult to describe or explain; you have to live it if you really want to understand it. To try to explain it, it seems easier for me to illustrate with a situation of life inspired by a personal experience:

I met my partner shortly after having moved into an apartment building where she was already living. In fact, I was given the parking space next to hers. Shortly after our meeting, she told me that before I arrived, there was a tenant taking such care of his car that he was always seen washing or shining it. He even went so far as to wash the engine, which proves how much he was attached to this precious object. However, when he was in his apartment, he was violent towards his spouse. The one who became my companion told me: "... I know because I lived in the apartment below, and I heard the noise."

Suppose now that a day comes when this tenant's spouse tells him that she is pregnant, and that he will be a father. He, thinking about it, suddenly discovers the joys of fatherhood and the happiness of family life. With this new life coming, he helps to prepare the baby's room and looks forward to the arrival of the newborn baby. Then, when the time comes, the expected joys of fatherhood and family life come alive for him.

Now imagine that one day, while youngsters are playing in the building's parking lot, the tenant's car is struck accidentally and that a wing is damaged. If the incident occurs before the tenant has discovered the joys of fatherhood, he will surely take it very badly. Overly loving his car, he will be prone to react excessively, going to replace the damaged wing with an original and more expensive product; and afterwards, if there appears to be a difference in hue between the color of the new wing and the rest of the car, he may go so far as to repaint the entire car so that any trace of the incident disappears. And that, not to mention the resentment he will feel about "those young thugs" who damaged his car.

But if the same incident occurs after he discovers the joys of fatherhood, there is a good chance that after the first frustrations, he will take the decision to act as most people do, that is to say to simply repair and repaint the damaged wing. His choice will then be based on logical and reasonable criteria, and not on the basis of an emotional reaction inspired by his excessive attachment to his most precious asset, his vehicle. Thus, with his new life and his own values, he will have given his car its rightful place, and the same could happen for many other aspects of his life.

The arrival of a newborn will have transformed the life of this tenant from an existence where an object had a predominant place, to a lifestyle much more humanizing, focused on the family, which will enrich the rest of his life much more than if he had spent it scrubbing and shining an object of greed.

In the experience of the journey in faith, the believer—in his quest for God and, as St. John says, “the truth that makes us free”—sees his relationships with his neighbors and other aspects of his life transformed. As with this new life centered on human values, the Christian experience, in addition to giving meaning to life, enriches it in that it makes the believer adhere to moral values and principles fully in agreement with the very foundations of his being. Only the experience of the journey in faith offers such an opportunity.

Claude Beauregard, pre-affiliate,
Notre-Dame-de-Foy Group, Quebec

In memory of our dearly departed

All Affiliates offer their deepest and most sincere condolences to the families and friends affected by these deaths:

Ms. Denise Delisle, August 10, 2017, Zoé-Blais Group, Quebec City

Mr. Jean-Paul Pépin, September 27, 2017, Zoe-Blais Group, Quebec City

Ms. Cécile Olivier, October 12, 2017, Lotbinière Group, Quebec

Mrs. Simone Rancourt, November 5, 2017, St-Georges de Beauce Group, Quebec

Mrs Liliane Lambert-Pelchat, November 14, 2017, Manneville Group, Abitibi, Quebec

