



The Eagle

Michaelmas 2011

Dear Friends, Associates and Oblates,



What news we have to share with you! This May Sr. Elizabeth and I attended the annual Leaders' Meeting of CAROA in Racine, Wisconsin. We heard a presentation by Br. Don Bisson, FMS, on the choices facing conscious communities today. He said that Religious Orders, both in

the Anglican and Roman Catholic traditions, have a short window of opportunity to face the truth about themselves and to make a conscious decision to die or to choose life. To be unconscious in our choice is to choose death. Some communities are so small that they have consciously chosen to end the covenant and not accept new members. We, in SSJD, believe that we have both the vitality and viability to move into the future as one of the inherited monastic communities in spite of the many changes evident in the social and cultural climate of today. We have strong roots in historical monasticism and the early church, as well as a lived wisdom with which to encounter and be in relationship with people today. This Sisterhood has chosen life in all its fullness, choosing to learn and to grow into the future. To that end, this year is to be one of education and learning for us.



Life at the Convent has been exciting in many ways. Noted author and speaker, **Kathleen Norris**, was at the Convent for several events in May, including a fully booked weekend retreat and a public lecture with a book signing on the Sunday evening. She is an engaging speaker and wonderful writer and poet. Many have said how helpful her book, *Acedia and Me*, has been for them. In June, John Bell of the Iona Community returned to the Convent to give another retreat. The music, song and laughter arising during his talks is testament to how engaging a speaker he is.

Sr. Elizabeth went to the Diocese of Moosonee as chaplain for their Synod in June. We appreciate making these connections with other dioceses. They give us a fresh look at the wider church and help us to become aware of what we can pray for in our intercessions. In this case we were asked to pray especially for many young people at risk of suicide in the North and for the Diocese as decisions are made about their future.

Sr. Madeleine Mary Salter, SSJD died peacefully in the Convent infirmary on June 10th. We are so appreciative for the loving support of our friends, Associates and Oblates with the many deaths the Sisterhood has suffered this past year. Sr. Madeleine Mary is remembered for her lovely sense of humour and beautiful bright smile and for the many years she served as a nurse in Pangnirtung, Nunavut, before responding to her call to the Sisterhood. Thank you for the many who have donated to the Mother Hannah Fund to help support the work and loving care we provide for our Sisters in the Infirmary who have served so faithfully over the years.

We held the **Women at a Crossroads** program in July. This year we had seven women participating who will take what they have learned on discernment into their own lives and into their communities. We give thanks for this artistic group of women who worked, prayed, and played alongside us throughout the program.



Back Row: *Srs. Doreen, Elizabeth, Jessica, Sue, Constance Joanna, Elizabeth Ann and Beryl.*
Front Row: *Candy Shelley, Sara Faulhafer, Mervat Iskander, Carman Ho, Pat Johnston, Amanda Taylor, and Julie Foster.*

We have hosted many groups this year including the **Indaba Encounter Group**, established at the last Lambeth Conference. We had representatives here from the Dioceses of Jamaica and Hong Kong who were meeting with representatives from the Diocese of Toronto. It is wonderful for the Sisterhood to be able to support the work of the church throughout the Anglican Communion by hosting these groups.



We were also privileged to host a group of **Anglican Dominicans** from across North America and beyond, for their Annual

General Chapter. They are part of the new monastic movement. Later this fall we will be hosting the Community of the Sisters of the Church gathering at our Convent for their General Chapter with Sisters coming from England, Australia, the Solomon Islands, and Canada.

Many will have heard the news of the possible merger of **St. John's Rehabilitation Hospital and Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre**. The Sisters are supportive of this merger and see it as a way that patient care will be enhanced while keeping the values of excellence of care for the whole human person. We are working with both SJRH and SHSC as these talks go forward to ensure the ongoing work of the Sisters' spiritual care at the hospital.

Each August the Sisters gather for our **Annual General Chapter** where we discuss our life and ministries. We made several decisions this year which I'd like to share with you. We started each day during Chapter in small groups using a modified Morning Prayer with time for reflection and sharing on our Rule of Life. This was a valuable part of our daily discussions as it led us deeper into listening to where the Spirit is leading us as a community.

We have made a change in the titles for the roles carried by **Srs. Elizabeth and Doreen**. Sr. Elizabeth, who assists me in my work and especially with Vocations, will now be referred to as the **Prioress**. Sr. Doreen, who assists me with the Financial Management of the Sisterhood and in Human Resources, will be referred to as the **Sub-Prioress**. They were installed in their new offices at the close of Chapter. These titles come from the Benedictine understanding of officers who assist the leader of the community, the abbot or abbess. In our case, as we are not a Benedictine community, but share the Benedictine ethos, these are the officers I, as the elected leader, the Reverend Mother of the Sisterhood, have appointed to help in the leadership of the Sisterhood.

We recommitted ourselves at Chapter to be more intentional about visiting churches in the Diocese on Sundays—as one

Sister put it, our own style of "Back-to-Church-Sunday". We want to connect with parish life throughout the Diocese and hopefully beyond. We would be open to invitations to come to your parish especially those in the Greater Toronto Area, although we will not be able to accept all invitations at once!

At chapter we ratified the change in our statutes regarding admission into the Sisterhood of women who are not Anglican but in a denomination in full-communication with the Anglican Church in Canada such as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC). **Sr. Debra**, received as a Novice in June, is a Lutheran Pastor who has joined the Sisterhood on a special call from the ELCIC, so this change is already bearing fruit. We also celebrate with the ELCIC the 25th anniversary year of their formation.



For a number of years we have had a Taizé service combined with a service for healing one Friday night a month. We have made the decision this Chapter to suspend these for a time after the Taizé services in September and October. We feel that we need to take a rest from this service. We'll see what the Spirit moves us to begin over the next year.

We affirmed our intent to work more collaboratively with the other Anglican Religious Orders throughout North America and more closely with the Canadian Anglican Religious Orders. This is good news because together we are stronger and can visit more places than each Order is able to manage on their own. Sr. Sue has gone on mission events with Br. David Bryan, OHC, and with Br. Eric Michael, SSF. We are looking forward to more opportunities to work collaboratively in the future.



On September 1st we launched our new Alongsider program by welcoming **Susan Murphy** into the extended family of the Sisters. Susan is a graduate student at Tyndale University, enrolled in an M.Div. program in spiritual direction. As an Alongsider, she will be working and praying, studying and playing alongside the Sisters. Her presence among us will be a blessing in a number of ways.

It will give Susan the opportunity to explore a deeper relationship with God in community, to know more about

the Sisterhood or the monastic life in general, and to take some of the values of monastic life out “into the world”. For the Sisters, Susan’s presence will enhance our extended community family and the way we model community life for the church and our culture by having women living “at the edge”, moving back and forth between the monastery and the world outside.

Later this fall we will be welcoming **Susanne Prue** as a Postulant in the Sisterhood. We ask your prayers for her as she prepares to enter in October. This will make for three in the Novitiate and more work for Sr. Elizabeth as she continues as Novice Director.

There are some changes to note in Sisters’ assignments this fall. We are joining Provinces of Associates together: Central and Eastern Associates with Sr. Sue as the new Associate Director for these two regions while the Western and Prairie and Overseas Associates will be overseen by the Sisters at St. John’s House, Victoria. We thank Srs. Patricia and Helen Claire for their many faithful years of work with the Associates. We were able to make this announcement to some of the Toronto area Associates at the wonderful Associate Picnic on August 20th.

This fall, **Sr. Louise** will be moving back to the household in Victoria, BC. In October **Sr. Jocelyn** will be moving back to the Convent in Toronto bringing her white work with her. She has enjoyed her time out west but is looking forward to new challenges in Toronto. In November, **Sr. Dorothy** will also move out west to make the household four Sisters with one Oblate, Doreen Davidson, who lives alongside the Sisters. **Sr. Anne** will be working in the Finance Office and **Sr. Margaret Ruth** in the Library. **Sr. Constance Joanna** takes on the mantle once again of Guest House and Retreat Director. **Sr. Helen Claire** begins working in the Chapel as sacristan this fall taking over from **Sr. Jessica**, whose main responsibility will be for the Infirmary. **Sr. Anitra** is presently on a leave of absence. The two novices, **Srs. Rhonda and Debra**, will join Srs. Amy and Beryl in their work in spiritual care at SJRH.

Please pray for all these Sisters as we make these changes. Change is always hard but it is necessary for growth. To not change is to choose to die. We have chosen life.

**Sr. Elizabeth Ann, SSJD
Reverend Mother**



Our newly reburbished bell at the Convent and our new oil-burning candles.



Chapter wasn’t all work as you can see below:



Badminton turned out to be a very energetic game.



Croquet was easier, but is one allowed to use a cane?



I think I’m too old for this.



The sensible ones just watched it all.

St. John's House, B.C.

Last September, Srs. Doreen and Louise returned to the Convent and Sr. Sarah Jean and Brenda joined Sr. Jocelyn and Doreen Davidson (our Oblate-in-residence) at the BC House.



Srs. Brenda , Sarah Jean, Jocelyn, and Doreen Davidson.

The Sisters have a variety of ministries in the diocese and beyond. Sr. Jocelyn has become known in Victoria for her hospitality as a steward at Christ Church Cathedral as well as her on-going White Work ministry. She, along with several other women, has also been checking and providing an inventory of the linens in each of the churches that has been closed. Sr. Sarah Jean has taken on the role of Director of Associates for BC and Alberta and also does most of the cooking. I have the responsibility of being Head-of-House and have also had the opportunity of attending the "Returning to Spirit Workshop" which focuses on reconciliation between First Nations people and Non-First Nations people especially those who belong to churches that ran Residential Schools. Doreen Davidson continues to help prepare lunch, to serve at Our Place and to work at the synod office.

We are most grateful to our Associates and friends who help on our "Gardening Days" to keep the gardens looking beautiful. This year we had record snowfalls and cold weather, but through their help, the garden survived.



During Advent and Lent, we all conducted retreats or quiet days in various churches. Associate Marion Parker joined us in giving an address during our Wednesday Evenings in Lent. We also all attended "Epiphany Explorations", a weekend conference in January sponsored by First Metropolitan United Church in Victoria. We thoroughly enjoyed the speakers and workshops, especially Marty Haugen who was also the guest musician, Raheel Raza, a Muslim woman from Toronto, and Naomi Tutu, daughter of Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Also in January, we were blessed to receive two tickets to the Canadian National Figure Skating Championships held in Victoria. Sr. Sarah Jean and Doreen won the draw and enjoyed this once in a lifetime opportunity.

In February the Associates, Oblates and Sisters, including Sr. Elizabeth Ann who was visiting the House, celebrated the Feast Day of Mother Hannah during which we had an animated discussion on the topic: "What would you look for if a person expressed an interest in the Religious Life?"



Each year we have the privilege of visiting different parishes on Vancouver Island. The most adventurous journey this year was to Sooke. We were one of the last cars to get through to Sooke on the flooded highway before it was closed. Then we had to wait until the road was re-opened before we could return home—much later than expected! It is a delight to worship with people in the various parishes and meet those Associates who are only known by name until we have a chance to come together.

The Sisters enjoyed the opportunity to meet and have a discussion about community with some teens at Camp Columbia. They had great fun teaching us how to play Ninja which they soon called Nunja.



In the spring all the Sisters attended a series of talks on earthquake preparedness, made more relevant by the news of major earthquakes in New Zealand and Japan.

**Sr. Brenda, SSJD
Head-of-House**

St. John's Rehab Hospital

Last September there were many changes for the Sisters who work at the hospital. Sr. Brenda and Sr. Jessica both left SJRH to take up new work in Victoria or at the Convent and Sr. Louise and I both started the year re-learning the ropes of pastoral care as well as learning new jobs. Sr. Louise, on A-1, looks after the Angel Cupboard and sits on the Quality of Work Life Committee. Sr. Beryl, on A-3, coordinates the Bigwood Library and is the contact person for our milk bag project (milk bags are collected and picked up by a third party and then shipped overseas to be made into sleeping mats). Sr. Dorothy, on A-4, is sacristan for our chapel and sits on the Ethics Committee. I am on A-2, and am also the Coordinator of Spiritual Care. I sit on the Professional Advisory Committee, Patient Programs, Corporate Action Team and the working group for Corporate Objective-Interprofessional Model of Care. I attend the professional practices team meetings and help with chart audits. As you can imagine, this has been a steep learning curve.



Srs. Louise, Amy, Dorothy and Beryl

This past year has been a mixed one for the staff at St. John's Rehab. There has been a shortfall in funding which resulted in letting go some staff and moving others to different floors within the physiotherapy and occupational therapy departments. We have tried to be available for our teams during this time of transition and be that listening ear for their concerns and fears.

We have also seen an increase of patients coming in sooner after their surgery, accident or stroke. The teams have risen to the demands of a heavier case load and more complex care. We have all seen what awesome teams populate each of our floors and are continually thankful for their dedication to the patients. We have also seen a trend to get people home as soon as possible with support. This

means that patients are going home with varied degrees of weight bearing and using CCAC and other community supports. This is based on the belief that people heal better in their own environment and with family and friends close by. I think most of us would agree with this but it has been a stress for patients to get those needed supports in place while not feeling ready to leave the safety of the hospital. This has added a new dimension to our work.

Over the year the hospital has been readying itself for the move to electronic patient records and documentation. This means that all disciplines that make entries on the patients' charts have been developing assessment forms or reformatting their present forms. Since we see and assess every patient who comes, we have found that we had information about the patient that was difficult to communicate to the team. We designed a spiritual care assessment form which enables us to document all the information that we collect during our initial assessment and has made our work and our presence on the floor better known to the staff.

It has been a very full year filled with many success stories and we as a team are providing the inner strength and spiritual hope to support the rehabilitation of each patient, focusing on patients' individual faith needs and helping them on their healing journey. We find this a very rewarding ministry.



One of the regular patient services at SJRH

We are looking forward to exciting developments at SJRH in the coming year: the opening of our brand new facility, the Horsfall-Eaton Centre for Ambulatory Care to open in November, and discussions regarding a possible merger with Sunnybrook Hospital.



**Sr. Amy, SSJD
Coordinator of
Spiritual Care**

*Sr. Amy visiting a
patient at Christmas*

Guest House: Welcoming Angels

Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that, some people have entertained angels without knowing it.” (Hebrews 13.2)



This quotation from Hebrews reminds me of the famous Russian icon by Rublev. It depicts the story from Genesis in which three strangers (really angels) come to visit Abraham and Sarah and tell them that they will shortly have a child in their old age. It reminds me that in offering prayerful and loving hospitality to others, we

are also the recipients of our guests' hospitality to us, as they bring their faith, their longing, and their openness to the Spirit. As we open ourselves to the Christ in them, we too receive the loving hospitality of God who reaches out to all of us, Sisters and guests.

In the Guest House we have many opportunities to welcome angels—messengers of God to us. Thanks to an article in the *Toronto Star* by Valerie Hauch on December 29, 2010, the registration for the New Year's retreat skyrocketed and we had a long waiting list. The people who came comprised a diverse group—Christians, seekers, and those of other faiths. What they shared was a longing for a new approach to New Year's—not the usual social bash, but an opportunity to reflect on the year just past and create a new vision for the new year. They were people who longed to get in touch with the spiritual side of their lives, and through them we realized anew the value of our ministry of hospitality—providing a safe and sacred place where people can find rest and renewal, where they share with us their vulnerabilities and strengths, their fears and faith, their doubts and hopes, their pain and joy. What greater privilege can there be than to entertain angels?

Groups and Individual Guests

More and more people are finding the Convent Guest House “A Home for the Heart”, as our brochure calls it, and more and more we have seekers come to us either by word of mouth or through our web site. Like the church as a whole, we need to be open to new ways of sharing Jesus' gospel of love with others, and the increase in the numbers of people coming on retreat, and seeking spiritual direction, is one indicator of that. Four years ago we had our first group come for a Buddhist meditation retreat. This year we have three different groups coming (and all three have booked ahead as well). Their level of comfort in being in an openly Christian environment is a good sign of our openness and inclusivity as a community.

We continue to have many Anglican church groups meet here—our bishops and clergy, Diocesan groups, ordination retreats for several dioceses, and national church committees. And this past year we saw an increase in international groups, including the Diocese of Bermuda Clergy Retreat and the Continuing Indaba Encounter with representatives from Jamaica and Hong Kong as well as Toronto.

Churches of many denominations continue to find the Guest House a place of quiet peacefulness for their retreats, and more and more individuals are coming on retreat, including many for the first time.

We have seen an increase in groups from the theological colleges (Trinity, Wycliffe, and especially Tyndale), and we continue to host ordination retreats for Toronto and other nearby dioceses. Many of these people refer others, and Tyndale in particular recommends the Guest House as a place of retreat in several of their courses.

Family members of patients at SJRH have found comfort in being able to stay in a quiet, peaceful place close to their family during rehabilitation from accidents and illnesses, and occasionally patients or ex-patients stay with us as well.

Food for the Soul

Our SSJD-sponsored retreats, Quiet Saturdays, and Quiet Garden Days have grown over the past several years. In addition to the Sisters and many of our local bishops, clergy and lay people who lead retreats, we also schedule one or two “anchor” events each year with well-known retreat leaders who often draw new people to the Convent who then come back for other retreats. We are grateful to the Diocese of Toronto which helps us fund some of these retreats. This past year we had both Kathleen Norris and the return of John Bell of the Iona Community in Scotland—both of them leading extremely popular events.

Retreat and Spiritual Direction Outreach

We continue to receive many requests for Sisters to lead retreats for parish groups who come to the Convent, and for Sisters to lead retreats outside the Convent. The Guest House is also a connecting point for people seeking spiritual direction—either while they are here in retreat, or on a regular basis. In the first six months of 2011 we have had as many requests for spiritual direction (ongoing as well as retreats) as we had in all of 2010. Both Sisters and other spiritual directors whom we screen are a part of this ministry.

St. Margaret's Chapel

Last September we completed the renovations and furnishing of St. Margaret's Chapel (formerly known as the Retreat Chapel), and in February we had a beautiful service

of dedication, with Bishop Linda Nicholls presiding. The chapel is greatly appreciated by our guests as a quiet place for prayer and meditation, and we also use it for parish retreat gatherings.



St. Margaret's Chapel with the new furniture

The Guest House Courtyard

The Guest House Courtyard has become a major focus of our hospitality, especially now that we have comfortable and flexible patio furniture to use. It is a living symbol of God's abundant beauty and care for us, and of the reciprocal hospitality between guests and Sisters. I am continually grateful for the generosity of the donors who made this possible.



Picnic with Holy Cross Brothers on May 23rd using our new patio furniture

And Into the Future

Thanks to many people, not least our guests, the Guest House will continue to be a meeting place where the Sisters offer hospitality to others, and where strangers and friends provide spiritual hospitality to us. We are tremendously grateful for our donors who contribute to the Guest House Bursary, because they enable many more people to come here who would otherwise be unable to enjoy a retreat. We are also grateful for our staff—Frisca Ozorio, our competent and cheerful Administrator, and Gloria Echeverria, our Housekeeper. And we give hearty thanks for all the volunteers who assist in the Guest House and in

our wider ministry of hospitality, including the Reception Desk, and to the many Sisters who assist in our ministry of hospitality.

Sr. Constance Joanna, SSJD
Guest House and Retreat Director

The Garden Shrine

Can you imagine our joy and delight at seeing the Garden Shrine once again in its place of honour at 233 Cummer Avenue? We have waited long to see this accomplished, and we rejoice, along with the generous donors who have made it happen!



The figures were made by our Associate, Annie Morris, wife of the Rev. H. S. C. Morris, Chaplain of the Community (1916 - 1932). She modelled Our Lady after Sister Beatrice, in the habit of SSJD; and St. John is a portrait of her husband. This Calvary is a memorial from our Associates to Sr. Winifred, First Warden of Associates (1922 - 1929).

The shrine, must now, therefore, be approximately 80 years old. Its first home was in the garden of the Convent at 28 Major Street, in an enclosed area surrounded by the Convent and St. John's Hospital on Major Street, and by the SSJD Guest Houses on Brunswick Avenue. When the Convent moved to Botham Road in June of 1953 the shrine was brought along, too.

When I arrived at the Convent in August, 1953, the figures were propped up against a tree near the Old House by the ravine, and they remained there for some time. In the late 1950's, when Sr. Rosemary Anne was the Assistant to Mother Aquila, she organized the more permanent placement of the shrine in a secluded, but visible, corner of the lawn near the Chapel. Rocks were brought from Muskoka and our maintenance man, Vladimir (Val) Dawidowich, built the raised base upon which the three figures were placed. At the base of the cross, the urn that had held the Blessed Sacrament Light in the Major Street Chapel was placed and flowers were planted in it each year.

History tends to repeat itself; after 6½ years, the shrine, which still includes the precious urn, has once again found its place of honour, in a secluded, but visible place on the east side of the property which is accessible to both Sisters and guests.

Sr. Wilma, SSJD

“We, being many,

1st Row: Srs. Margaret Mary & Sue;
and Sr. Merle;
2nd Row: Srs. Doreen, Jessica,
and Margaret Ruth;
3rd Row: Srs. Anne, Dorothy,
and Constance Joanna
4th Row: Srs. Amy,
Helen Claire, Louise and Jean



are one body...”



1st Row: Srs. Louise & Constance, and Joyce;
2nd Row: Srs. Jocelyn, Beryl, and Debra;
3rd Row: Srs. Elizabeth, Rhonda, and Brenda;
4th Row: Srs. Sarah Jean, Patricia, and Wilma



Our Associates from Coast to Coast and Overseas

Eastern Associates

By and large, it's been a good year for the Eastern Associates. We have had two very special anniversaries since last September. C Russell Elliott celebrated his 65th anniversary last October, and Mary Ann Graham her 60th in April. We also admitted four new Associates. Our Associate Davena Davis officiated at the admission of Linda Downing and Marilyn Hamlin on April 16 in Timberlea, NS. The admission took place at a Quiet Day led by one of our new discerning Associates, the Rt. Rev. Ron Cutler, Suffragan Bishop of Nova Scotia. On June 4, I was privileged to admit Yolande Ferron and Maggie Smith during a Quiet Day at St. George's, Place du Canada. Ralph Leavitt, an Associate and Rector of St. George's presided at the Eucharist.



Yolande Ferron and Maggie Smith at their admission.

After my trip to Atlantic Canada last summer, three women began discernment: Judy Beaver from Murphy's Cove, NS and Helen Maynard and Edna Parsons, both members of Karen Laldin's church in Corner Brook, NL. I hope that all three will be admitted on September 8, 2011. We have had two formal inquiries since I returned from Montreal, and several other people have expressed an interest in starting discernment.

Early in the new year, we were shocked by the news of the Rev. Betty Marshall's death. I am very grateful that I had a chance to meet her during my stay in Newfoundland in June 2010; she was a vibrant and devoted Associate.

As Eastern Associate Director, I have had several occasions to visit Montreal, attending the Synod last October, acting as a chaplain at their clergy retreat in April and spending thirteen days there in June to meet with Associates and carry out various missions within the Diocese.

As of September 1, I will be Director of the Central as well as the Eastern Associates. It is a great honour for me to be entrusted with this work, and a pleasure to come to know the many interesting and devout people who are our Associates.

God be with you all,

Sr. Sue, SSJD
Director of Eastern Associates

Prairie and Overseas Associates

Last November when I visited Winnipeg, I admitted four Associates and met several women interested in becoming Associates. This June was my last visit to the Prairies, which made the visit bitter sweet. In Regina I admitted one Associate and afterwards spent three days' rest time with Evelyn, my friend of 77 years. The Regina Associates are getting organized to meet together and they hope to have more Associates in the future. I am happy to report that the Winnipeg Associates also are growing, with two Discerners so far this year, and three more in the inquiry stage.

It has been a great pleasure for me to work these many years with Associates in the Prairies and Overseas. I know that you will welcome Sister Dorothy, who will take over this work in November, as you have always welcomed me. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you this day and always.

Sr. Patricia, SSJD
Director of Prairie and Overseas Associates

Western Associates

Since September 2010 I have been settling in to life in Victoria and getting to know a lot of new people. I met with the Vancouver Associates last fall and again this spring for three admissions, and travelled to Port McNeill for a Quiet Day and admission, and some preaching. Vancouver Island is striking in its beauty and wildness and filled with wonderful people. Our Associates are very much part of our life at St. John's House, as are our Oblates. I look forward to meeting our Associates in Alberta and Kelowna this coming year.



Sr. Elizabeth Ann, Jeannie MacDonald, Dorothy Dahli and Sr. Sarah Jean at the admission of Jeannie and Dorothy.

We have had tea at the House with Associates, Oblates and friends on significant occasions: St. John's Day in December and May, Epiphany, and Foundation Day being the most important. Our Associates and Oblates were at our Requiem service for Sr. Thelma-Anne on St. John's Day this year.

Sr. Sarah Jean, SSJD
Director of Western Associates

Central Associates

As I wrap up my three years as Associate Director, Central Province, I'm acutely aware of the strength of the bonds between the Sisterhood and many Associates. Sometimes these bonds are very tight, and at other times quite loose. Some bonds have existed for more than 50 years, others for less than five. What matters is not the length of the bonds, but rather the commitment to intentional Christian living day by day and to continuing to "seek to grow in prayer, for renewal of life in Christ" (Item 4 of the Associate Rule of Life).

In September, Sr. Jessica and I hosted another meeting of the Muskoka-Orillia Associates at our cottage in Port Sydney at which Linda Brodie and Kathy Earl, both of Utterson, were received as Associates. I've visited Kitchener-Waterloo, Brockville, Ottawa and Kingston in recent months. It's always good to get the opportunity to meet with Associates, to be able to put a face to someone whom I have only met through mail or by telephone.

The Ward of the Ascension in Toronto had its usual calendar of events. The Advent Quiet Day led by Abp Fred Hiltz had more than 60 in attendance, and the Lenten Quiet Day led by Bp Linda Nicholls was equally successful. Both are SSJD Associates. In March we shipped 12 cartons of books to Jamaica for an annual clergy conference.

On August 20 we had a BBQ picnic for Associates in the GTA, to show off and enjoy the guest courtyard. Some 25 Associates, several spouses and all Sisters attended and had a good time. We're always happy to have our Associates share their many and diverse gifts with us. Usually this is through arranging events, leading Quiet Days, talking about the Sisterhood, or volunteering. Early this year, Lesley White, one of the Spirit Movers at L'Arche, did a liturgical dance for us at a Eucharist in place of a homily.

The St. Michael and All Angels Ward (Ottawa area) continues to thrive with a full slate of activities. I was privileged to be present and to help vest Linda Wheeler when she was ordained a deacon in Ottawa on May 26.

The Rev. Val Kenyon is getting the ball rolling for Associates in London. They have scheduled four Associate events for 2011-12, including a Quiet Day in association with the ACW on October 29. In Orillia, Associates get together monthly for a Bible Study at St. James, Orillia. And Associates in the Lindsay-Peterborough area are trying to meet together occasionally.

I have been challenged and stretched by the public role of Associate Director. At the same time I have enjoyed and been humbled by contact with individual Associates and those in discernment, both in person and by correspondence. I look forward to saying hello to you all when you visit the Convent.

Sr. Helen Claire, SSJD
Director of Central Associates

Picnic, 2011



*Top to bottom;
left to right:*

*Jean Robinson
& Sr. Doreen;*

*Dave and Pat
Dunnill;*



*Sr. Patricia, the Rev.
Susan Sheen & Sr. Jean
with "Prancer";*

Carol Brunton



*Harvey & Janet Kaminsky, Sr. Sue, Sr. Jean, D. Ford &
Anne Day.*

Associate Milestones, 2010 - 2011

Admissions:

Nova Scotia: Rev. Lynda Downing (D) of Bedford, Marilyn Hamlin of Timberlea. Quebec: Yolande Ferron of Montreal, Maggie Smith of Lachine.

Ontario: George Sanders of Orillia, Linda Brodie and Kathy Earl of Utterson, Pat Cook and Lesley White of Toronto, Karen Barney of Port Perry.

Manitoba: Joanne Johnson, Sheila Gunderson, Shirley Godfrey, Ross Steer, and Rev. Helen Hunter (D), all of Winnipeg.

British Columbia: Dorothy Dahli, Rt. Rev. Barry Jenks, Jeannie MacDonald and Rev. Scott McLeod of Victoria; Julie Foster of Port McNeill; Paula Jackson of Surrey; Rev. Paula Porter Leggett and Linda Sklazeski of Vancouver.

Special Anniversaries:

25 years: Margaret Attwell, Lois Brennan, Rev. Neil Carver, Beth-Anne Exham, Rev. Malcolm French, Rev. Pat Hill, Emily Robichaud, Marlyn Salo, Sally Saunders, Rev. Sharron Tate, Morag Telfer, Rev. Peg Wheeler, Dorothy Yanick.

30 years: Mary Abley, Nancy Lynn Atack, Burga Black, Rev. Matthew Borden, June Emes, Christine Goodman, Rev. Thomas Greene, Valerie Hiscocks, Margaret Hodgins, Enid Hutchinson, Rev. Alan Kirk, Constance Middleton-Hope, Rev. Ronald Scott, Rev. Peter Speight, Holly Warden Swift, Rosemary Watkins, Florence Weale, Christine Whatmore.

35 years: Marilyn Box, Rev. Davena Davis, Janet Ferris, Gwen Hoare, Rev. Margaret Johnston, Joyce McKeen, Hope MacMullen, Peggy Ormrod, Rev. Harold Roberts, Rt. Rev. Bruce Stavert, Gwendolyn Utton.

40 years: Jane Bell, Cicely Blackstock, Doreen Coleman, Gwendolyn Hetler, Rev. Mitchell Lawrence, Rev. Maylanne Maybee (D), Rev. Logan Varey.

45 years: Patricia Bays, Jackie Crighton, Vicki deKleer, Mary Heather, Joan Johnson, Rev. Jean Mitchell, Rev. James Moore, June Myrry, Rev. Phyllis Taylor, Jackie Trow

50 years: Rt. Rev. Kent Clarke, Rev. William J. Hutton, Rev. Donald Landon.

55 years: Rev. Brian Freeland, Mary Kellman, Rev. Roy Nixon, Doris Saunders, Rev. Oswald Slattery

60 years: Constance Corkum, Mary Ann Graham

62 years: Dorothy Johns

63 years: Muriel Newton-White, Margaret Wackett

64 years: Ada Potter

65 years: Dorothea Howell, Joan Trowles

66 years: Muriel Browne, Rev. C. Russell Elliott

67 years: Ven. William Wright

Deaths (Admission dates in brackets):

2010

Sep 1 Anne McKenzie, Edmonton, AB (Jun 6/83)
Oct 2 Allan Challacombe, Edmonton, AB (Jun 24/54)
Oct 29 Norma Wiebe, Oakville, ON (Nov 9/02)
Nov 10 Reg Hollis, Victoria, BC (Dec 21/68)
Nov 30 Bessie Shillingford, Eastpointe, MI (Oct 15/02)
Dec 30 Betty Marshall, Clarkes Beach, NL (Oct 29/95)

2011

Jan 20 Patricia MacLean, Oakville, ON (May 8/74)
Jan 29 John Hopper, Toronto, ON (May 13/89)
Feb 2 Doreen Bellinger, Vancouver, BC (Mar 1/97)
Feb 17 Ann Elsdon, Oshawa, ON (Jan 6/98)
Feb 27 Pamela Christie, Ottawa, ON (Feb 1/41)
Mar 25 Betty Parry, Georgetown, ON (Apr 13/66)
Apr 4 Marlene Amer, New Liskeard, ON (May 30/98)
May 12 Rev. Douglas Candy, Mississauga, ON (Jun 10/48)
May 28 Ursula Campbell-Moore, Toronto, ON (Apr 22/06)
Jul 3 Doreen Church, Regina, SK (Dec 17/83)
Jul 11 Muriel Longstaff, Regina, SK (May 12/45)
Jul 25 Rt. Rev. David Somerville, N. Vancouver, BC
(Sep 8/43)



*Two of our longest-serving Associates died this past year. Archbishop David Somerville had been an Associate for almost 68 years and Pam Christie for 70 years.**

Transfers:

Mar, 2011 Kathleen Gow from Ontario to Wolfville, NS;
July, 2011 Cora Krommenhoek from Ontario to Fredericton, NB; Aug, 2011 Sarah Clarke from Ontario to Ladysmith, BC; Rev. Maylanne Maybee (D) from Ontario to Winnipeg, MB.

Withdrawals:

Rev. Terry Whitlam, Brantford, ON (Jul 22/92); Margaret Ritchie, Kingston, ON (Oct 29/59); Jodi Joyce (formerly Brenda Crawford), Toronto, ON (Mar 11/05); Carmen Chung, Toronto, ON, (May 8/04); Rev. Bruce Gifford, Vancouver, BC (Sep 12/59)

*The left hand photo of Archbishop Somerville is from the Archives of the Diocese of New Westminster.

Our Oblates

The Oblate Family

In May we welcomed Lynne Samways-Hiltz as an Oblate Discerner, and in August, Mervat Iskander. Lynne has generously been assisting us in the Guest House office twice a week for most of the past year, and she is a bright and welcoming presence for our guests. Mervat comes from the Coptic Orthodox Church and is our first ecumenical Oblate. Both women bring a strong commitment to share in the Sisters' lives of prayer, community and service and we welcome them joyously.

On September 8 two of our Oblate Discerners made their First Promises as Oblates: Lynne Van der Hiel of Parry Sound, Ontario, and Chris Hooker of Detroit, Michigan. Also on September 8, 2011, two Oblates made their Life Promises: Virginia Finlay of Toronto and Jean Gandon of Goderich, Ontario. We are blessed to have these faithful and creative women as part of the Sisterhood's extended family.

In Memoriam



Caroline Hamilton, our first Oblate, died on April 28, 2011. Sr. Thelma-Anne admitted her to her first promises May 15, 2000. It is ironic that these two amazing women, both courageously fighting debilitating chronic diseases, died only two days apart. Sr. Thelma-Anne was a big support to Caroline, who made her life promises on November 7, 2005. In

her prayerfulness, her acceptance with joy of all the circumstances of life, her total givenness to God, her hospitality to others, her creativity, her sharing of the faith, and in so many other ways Caroline was an icon, a model for all of us of what it means to be an Oblate.

Caroline Hamilton, self-portrait (above)

Sr. Elizabeth Ann with Caroline



Brochure

At our last triennial gathering of Oblates from across the country (September, 2010) it was recommended that we design a brochure about Oblates. We had not had one before because our Oblate program is only about 10 years old and we needed time to discover what exactly God was calling us to before we put it in writing. We now have a helpful brochure (which can be downloaded from our website) that will enable us to cast our net widely in encouraging Oblate vocations, although we are able to admit only a very small number each year. The new application deadline is March 31st of each year. After applications are received, a small number of women will be invited to enter a formal discernment process.

Residential Time

One of the requirements of Oblates is to spend a minimum of two weeks each year in one of the Sisters' houses—either at the Convent in Toronto or in BC. We have benefitted tremendously by having our Oblates living and praying among us. They become a part of the community of Sisters while they are in residence, participate in our prayer, have opportunities to get to know the Sisters better, and assist us in many practical ways with our work in the house.

Retreat Times

The Oblates in Toronto and those visiting the Convent just before the Kathleen Norris retreat had the opportunity to meet with her as a group and reflect together on their respective lives as Oblates. Eleven Oblates also attended the Kathleen Norris retreat.

Eleven of our Oblates joined the Sisters for our annual retreat, led by the Rev. Dr. Han Van den Blink, on the topic "Christian Identity and Community". It was a memorable retreat, and an engaging opportunity for all of us to deepen our relationships in community.

Thanks be to God that women long to live a monastic life "in the world" and to help us extend our life of prayer and community mission into the world that God created and loves and died for.

Sr. Constance Joanna, SSJD Oblate Director



Jean Gandon



and Virginia Finlay

Sr. Madeleine Mary Salter, SSJD

October 20, 1920 - June 10, 2011

(Homily by the Most Rev. Terence Finlay, June 17, 2011)



We are gathered here today to honour the life and ministry of Sister Madeleine Mary, a devoted member of this Community for 42 years and a committed servant of her Lord and Saviour. I would like to begin by quoting one of Sr. Madeleine Mary's favorite prayers which she felt captured her understanding of Christian expression. It is a prayer by Cardinal Henry Newman.

"Dear Jesus, help me to spread Thy fragrance everywhere I go. Flood my soul with Thy Spirit and Life. Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly that all my life may only be a radiance of Thine. Shine through me and be so in me, that every soul I come in contact with may feel Thy Presence in my soul; let them look up, and see no longer me but only Jesus!"

"Dear Jesus, help me to spread Thy fragrance everywhere I go." It is interesting that in 1994, when Sr. Madeleine Mary was asked what the greatest longing of her heart was, she wrote the following simple, straightforward statement of purpose that went like this: "That I might share my faith and love of Jesus more freely and fully and that others might catch the Spirit and be uplifted."

Sister always had a sense of service in her life and worked as a nurse in the Anglican Mission Hospital at Pangnirtung on Baffin Island in the 1950's and 60's. In 1969 her life took on a new adventure, when she decided to take on the religious life and entered SSJD and made her Life Profession on December 17th, 1975.

Living in Community, she served in a variety of ways. She worked in the altar bread department, assisted at the Church Home and at Cana Place as well as in the Priory in Edmonton. She also served as a pastoral visitor at St. John's Rehabilitation Hospital.



Sister Madeleine Mary had an artistic side; she loved to paint wild flowers and did a series of hasti-notes. Eventually, as her dementia progressed, she spent more and more time in the infirmary where she enjoyed the singing of the staff and collected stuffed animals that gave her comfort and much joy.

When asked once about her role as a Sister, she said, "It is to support, encourage, console, cheer, respond to and share, as appropriate, religious concerns and spiritual values. Especially I must be 'present to' and listen sensitively to those with whom I come in contact." Good advice for all of us.

We mourn Sister's death. We mourn the loss of one who caught a vision of the religious life. And we think of her Sisters gathered here today. Sisters, this has not been an easy year for you with the losses in the Community that you have experienced. As it says on the gravestone of the famous author Mazo de la Roche in the Anglican cemetery at Sibbalds Point: "Death interrupts all that is mortal."

SSJD is a Community that loves life and lives out that life in care and concern for others. In the midst of death you carry on and continue your ministry to others. But occasionally you need to be looked after too. Many people care about this Community. You are surrounded by much love. Relax in that love—let go and rest in the gracious presence of God's Spirit—for "nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord".

Hear once again Jesus' invitation: "Come to me, all you that are weary and are heavy-laden and I will give you rest." I believe that these are words that Sr. Madeleine Mary, even with her dementia, knew deep within her soul and gave her gracious comfort in these last several months. I shall never forget trying to give her communion with her lips firmly closed. After a bit of perseverance, she would accept the elements and with a sweet smile she would look up at me and say, "Thank you."

I think that she is now enjoying that feast of rich food and well-aged wines of which Isaiah speaks, where God has wiped away all tears. And she rests in peace. Let us close using Sister's greatest hope, as a prayer, "May we share our faith and love of Jesus more freely and fully so that others might catch the Spirit and be uplifted." Alleluia, Sister Alleluia and Amen.



Archbishop Terence Finlay

The Sisters of St. John the Divine

St. John's Convent

Sr. Elizabeth Ann
(Reverend Mother)
Sr. Elizabeth
(Prioress and Novice Director)
Sr. Doreen (Sub-Prioress)
Sr. Constance
Sr. Joyce
Sr. Wilma
Sr. Jean
Sr. Beryl
Sr. Merle

Sr. Patricia
Sr. Jocelyn
Sr. Margaret Ruth
Sr. Anitra
Sr. Margaret Mary
Sr. Jessica
Sr. Constance Joanna
Sr. Anne
Sr. Helen Claire
Sr. Sue
Sr. Amy

Sr. Rhonda (Novice)
Sr. Debra (Novice)
Susan Murphy (Alongsider)

St. John's House, B.C.

Sr. Brenda (Head-of-House)
Sr. Sarah Jean
Sr. Louise
Sr. Dorothy
Doreen Davidson (Oblate)



Back Row: Sisters Margaret Ruth, Doreen, Debra, Sarah Jean, Beryl, Amy, Elizabeth Ann, Jocelyn, Jessica, Constance Joanna, Brenda, Dorothy, Elizabeth.

Middle Row: Sisters Merle, Joyce, Margaret Mary, Wilma, Patricia, Constance.

Front Row: Sisters Helen Claire, Sue, Anne, Louise, Jean, Rhonda.

Right: Lesley White doing a liturgical dance for the Sisters last December. She was admitted as an Associate in the spring.



Below: Women at a Crossroads in 2011



Above: Sr. Sue, what on earth are you doing?

Are You at a Crossroads in Your Life?

Are you considering a career change?
 Are you looking for “something more” in your life?
 Do you have a thirst for God? A hunger for prayer?
 Do you desire to serve God in a new way?
 Would you like to experience life in Community?

Then you may be interested in attending
a free four-week program
(June 29 - July 22, 2012)

to discern where God is calling you.
 At the same time you will have the opportunity to experience the life of love, prayer and service in an Anglican religious community of women.

Women who are interested should contact
 Kelly Clark, The Sisterhood of Saint John the Divine,
 St. John’s Convent, 233 Cummer Ave,
 Toronto, ON M2M 2E8
 Phone: 416-226-2201, Ext. 301. Fax: 416-222-4442
 Email: convent@ssjd.ca. Website: www.ssjd.ca

**Applications for Women at a Crossroads, 2012
 must be in by March 31, 2012.**

Altar Linens



Altar linens may be purchased from Sr. Jocelyn, SSJD, at St. John’s Convent. All linens are hand-sewn and made from Irish Linen. Items which may be purchased include Fair Linens, Credence Cloths, Purificators, Lavabo Towels, Baptismal Towels, Fair Veils, Palls on Plexi Glass, Corporals and Sick Communion Sets.

For details, please contact Sr. Jocelyn: jocelyn@ssjd.ca
 St. John’s Convent
 Telephone: 416-226-2201 Fax: 416-226-2131

The Houses of the Sisterhood www.ssjd.ca

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