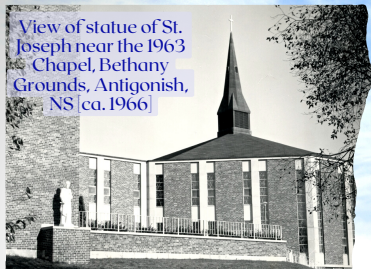


MOTHERHOUSE REMNANTS

Bethany Chapel, deconstructed in 2018, was located in a wing added to the Motherhouse in 1963. It featured a steeple with a bell, both now focal pieces in Bethany Centennial Garden. Scattered around the current park are 8 remnants of the building, namely the entry and staircase fragments of the beloved Bethany Retreat Centre, the original entrance to the building, dining room, two chapel foundation pieces, a walkway to the 1962 wing and a loading ramp to the kitchen. These pieces were left behind to bring back memories of life, visits, and work at Bethany Motherhouse.



View of statue of St. Joseph near the 1963 Chapel, Bethany Grounds, Antigonish, NS | ca. 1966



STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

Besides the eight long stained-glass windows portraying the eight great women of the Church that ornamented Bethany Chapel and are now featured in the Heritage Gallery at Parkland Antigonish, the Bethany Motherhouse had around 400 colorful stained glass windows throughout and some of them were used in the park. Park visitors will soon be able to catch the sun shining through these beautiful stained-glass pieces in the octagon feature surrounded by benches and the free-standing panels showcasing the windows on the lawn.



THE PEACE POLE

The Peace Pole with its universal message for world peace inscribed in 12 languages, was placed on Bethany grounds in 2001. It is one of over 200,000 Peace Poles around the world, a project started in 1955 in Japan by Masahisa Goi who, in response to the bombings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, dedicated his life to spreading the message of peace and harmony. Knowing peace begins in hearts and minds of each individual, we trust that this Peace Pole continues to stand as a constant reminder to keep peace ever-present in our thoughts and live in love and harmony with all of creation.



TEARDROP MOTIF

The Bethany Motherhouse Chapel was designed in the early sixties by Rambusch Ltd. They repeated a single motif throughout the entire building – that of the teardrop, a reminder of the Paschal Mystery. Just as suffering and death are part of our daily lives, so is resurrection and new life. We are reminded, “And God will wipe every tear from their eyes” (Rev. 21:4). In different shapes and sizes, this design was found in many of the stained-glass windows, the gates to the chapel, the altar and tabernacle and on the panel behind the altar. These days, look for it in the decorative pieces in Bethany Centennial Garden and, if you happen to have a chance to look at the park from above, in the design of its paths!

BETHANY CENTENNIAL GARDEN

A GUIDE

BETHANY CENTENNIAL GARDEN OPENED TO THE PUBLIC IN SEPTEMBER 2021. STANDING ON A FOOTPRINT OF THE FORMER BETHANY MOTHERHOUSE, IT FEATURES VARIOUS ELEMENTS THAT HAVE SPECIAL MEANING FOR THE CONGREGATION.



Sisters of St. Martha of Antigonish
www.themarthas.com

The Motherhouse Cross that used to hang above the main entrance.



CHALICE FOUNTAIN

In 2006, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of St. Martha's Hospital established by the Congregation in 1906 upon request from the citizens of Antigonish, the physicians of the now publicly funded institution presented the Sisters with a gift of a fountain. The administration, medical, nursing and support staff were loud in their praise for the visionary Marthas who began the hospital, and for those who carried on their legacy of excellence in care and ministry to all. The fountain symbolizes the undaunted hope and devotion of the Sisters of St. Martha in serving the community of Antigonish and its surrounding areas.



STORYBOARDS

13 storyboard panels placed throughout the garden highlight the history of the Marthas and the activities and ministries in which they have been committed for 122 years, such as homemaking, farming, teaching, social work, nursing, health care, spirituality, social justice, collaboration, and more. The storyboards also celebrate the ways Marthas are present today and hope to be in the future.

Information panels:

1. MARTHA MINISTRY MAP
2. BETHANY MOTHERHOUSE

Double-sided storyboards:

1. FOUNDING MOMENT
2. HOMEMAKING
3. FARMING
4. HEALTH CARE ANTIGONISH
5. HOSPITALS EAST AND WEST
6. TEACHING
7. SOCIAL WORK
8. SPIRITUALITY
9. SOCIAL JUSTICE
10. MARTHA ASSOCIATES / SC FEDERATION
11. CHARISM INTO THE FUTURE



GATES + ALTAR

The gates, made of wrought iron and bronze, separated the chapel from the outside world and represented the Gates of Heaven. They remained open, except for moments of celebration. Now, you can enjoy their teardrop design from a bench, as they form a shady pergola above it.



STATUES

The three statues featured in the park have been on the grounds for a long time. In 1929, the statue of Christ the King was erected on the front lawn. It was a gift from Miss Marie Ringler from New York, a long-time benefactor of the Congregation. In 1939, a statue of St. Martha and the Dragon, matching in size that of Christ the King, was erected on the front lawn at Bethany. The blessing took place on July 29, 1939, at a special ceremony. Finally, the Statue of St. Joseph (sometimes referred to as the Carpenter or the Workman) was erected and blessed in November 1966. During the deconstruction of Bethany and the construction of the Centennial Garden, all three statues waited patiently to be moved to their permanent resting spots in the garden, where they are now ready to face elements for years to come.



IN 1963, RAMBUSCH DESIGNERS, IN A LETTER TO THE MARTHAS, EXPLAINED THE RATIONALE BEHIND THEIR DESIGN CHOICES FOR THE BETHANY CHAPEL: "THE PRIMARY REASON FOR BUILDING A CHURCH IS TO HOUSE A CONGREGATION GATHERED AROUND AN ALTAR. IT IS THE COMMUNITY SPEAKING AS ONE...". WE HOPE THAT BETHANY CENTENNIAL GARDEN, SITTING ON THE FOOTPRINT OF THE FORMER MOTHERHOUSE AND CHAPEL, ADORNED WITH ITS VARIOUS DECORATIVE HERITAGE ELEMENTS, WILL GATHER THE COMMUNITY FOR YEARS TO COME.



Rambusch Ltd. also designed a beautiful altar featuring two fish, five loaves, twelve tongues of fire and a large host radiating to all parts of the design. The fish and loaves with the larger, radiating host, remind us that Christ did not come to feed a few people on a particular day but to give daily bread to all forever. Visitors can enjoy the altar from a bench placed directly in front of it.

