

Our Life as Mission

NEWS FROM MARTHA
LEADERSHIP TEAM



*Sisters
of
St. Martha*

“Standing together in undaunted hope”

MILESTONE

Each year, Sisters of St. Martha celebrate Anniversaries and, occasionally Jubilees. This year, on June 4, Sisters gathered at Martha Place to recognize nine women who faithfully responded to the call they received many decades earlier to live and serve wherever they were called and missioned. Their fidelity for 60, 70, 75, and 85 years is a prophetic witness in today’s culture where permanency appears to be less visible.



Jubilarians and Anniversarians on June 4, 2022



This year, there was a special recognition of Sr. Madeleine Connolly, 104, who has reached a milestone anniversary, marking 85 years as a professed Sister, only the second in the Congregation to have done so. Sr. Madeleine’s life spans over 100 years and she continues to be interested in the state of the world and the future of religious life. Her commitment to learning is inspirational.



Sr. Madeleine
Connolly

We admire these nine amazing Martha women who continue to be a blessing to all, embracing the future with undaunted hope.

As some of you may know, we are members of the Sisters of Charity Federation. One aspect of the Federation is having status as an NGO (non-governmental organization) at the United Nations. Each member Congregation of the SC Federation appoints someone to be the liaison person with the UN NGO Representative. Since 2009, Sr. Marion Sheridan has been that person for the Sisters of St. Martha, Antigonish. She completes her time in the role at the end of June.

Sr. Marion has kept before us, Sisters and Associates, our commitment to social and ecological justice through the lens of being Global Citizens. With a tenacious commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Commission on Social Development she has helped the SC Federation to *hazard yet forward* in our commitment to social and ecological justice. These are just a few of the areas in which Sr. Marion is well versed, turning this knowledge into advocacy at the federal, provincial and local levels.

Sr. Brendalee Boisvert, Congregation Leader expressed gratitude to Sr. Marion, “We are so very grateful for the way in which you have been the voice of the Congregation at the Global Level. You have educated us, challenged us, and invited us into a deeper understanding of how Gospel Hospitality can *bring a contemplative and compassionate heart to our fractured world*. Thank you, Sr. Marion for bringing the United Nations to us, and to the larger community. Thank you also for your dedication to keeping those in positions of authority informed and aware of these global issues that affect us deeply at the local level.”

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Her approach is always with a focus on those who live on the margins, who live in poverty, and for whom care of Earth is a matter of life or death. She is held in great regard and respect by her peer group of Federation NGO Liaisons as well as Sr. Teresa Kotturan, the current NGO Representative, and her predecessors.





Darlene O'Leary & Sr. Marion Sheridan

Darlene O'Leary, PhD, our Martha Justice Coordinator, will be assuming the role of SC Federation NGO Liaison for the Congregation at the end of June. Darlene and Sr. Marion have been journeying together this past year leading up to this transition. We are grateful to Darlene for taking this on, in addition to her current role. We know

that her expertise, skill, and passion for Social and Ecological Justice will intertwine with the SC Federation NGO Liaison role and add to the solid foundation that Sr. Marion has built upon. Thank you, Darlene, and we look forward to continuing this important work within the SC Federation and the global community.

25 YEARS AT THE UNITED NATIONS

This year marks a milestone for the Sisters of Charity Federation: it is the 25th year of the SC Federation United Nations NGO. At the Federation Leadership Annual Meeting, held virtually June 14-16, we celebrated this significant anniversary through a prayerful, inspiring retrospective overview of these 25 years.

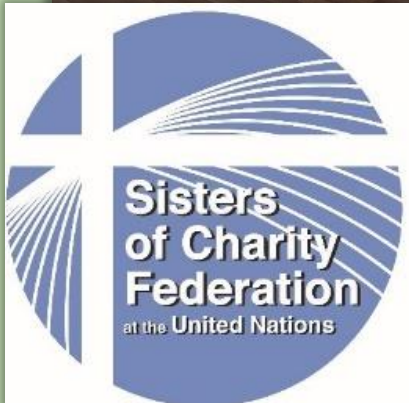
There have been 4 NGO Representatives over these 25 years, each bringing their own expertise and skill to this important work. A Liaison person from each member Congregation connects and works with the NGO Representative. We have been blessed to have had 3

dedicated and skilled Sisters as our Liaisons since we became members of the SC Federation in 2004. Sr. Genevieve McArthur, Sr. Stephanie MacNeil, and our current Liaison who is completing a remarkable 13 years, Sr. Marion Sheridan.

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To be part of this Global Network of members of Civil Society, NGOs, and remarkable individuals, is both a privilege and a responsibility for us as a Congregation, and as members of the Federation. We continue to be committed to bringing the Global view to the Local, and vice versa. We express our gratitude to Sr. Teresa Kotturan, SCN, who has been the Federation NGO Representative since 2015. She is completing her time in this role, and we bless her in the next chapter of her journey.

You can watch the 25th Anniversary video here:
<https://vimeo.com/718846461>



Sr. Marion discusses global issues in Mary's Court, our Enhanced Care community at Parkland Antigonish

UISG PLENARY 2022

At the beginning of May, Sr. Brendalee Boisvert, Congregation Leader, participated virtually in the UISG (Union International of Superiors General) Plenary 2022. The theme was "Embracing Vulnerability on the Synodal Journey".



- ◆ "Gathering every three years, the Plenary Assembly is one of the most important events in the Union's life and is reserved exclusively for its members, the Superiors General of Religious Congregations."
- ◆ "The PLENARY ASSEMBLY is the body which engages in consultation, animation and reflection at an international level."

Source:

<https://www.uisg.org/en/about/>



Sr. Brendalee online at the UISG Plenary

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Each morning during the Plenary, over 600 Women Religious gathered in Rome in person, and close to 200 gathered virtually from homes across Canada, USA and other Countries. Sister Brendalee joined from Antigonish, NS.

An inspiring presentation by Dr. Ted Dunn, the keynote speaker, entitled “Embracing Our Vulnerability and its Transformative Potential” set the tone for the conference. Much of his presentation was about seeing the value in being vulnerable and yet choosing the hard work of moving towards transformation:

“Life as we have known it, including Religious Life, is over and there is no going back to the way things were. We stand at a crossroads now, and we have a choice. We can choose to steel our defenses, fend for ourselves, remain as comfortable as we can for as long as we can, or we can choose to embrace our vulnerability, look for the ancient path, and, together, give birth to a new way of being. Outwardly there is chaos; inwardly there is a new world stirring. Listen to the heartbeat of the New” (Dunn, p. 1)

Dr. Dunn invited the participants to ponder the following question and believe in the seeds of possibility waiting for the right conditions to come about:

“What is it you are truly seeking? What is your deepest desire or most urgent longing as you plan for the future of your community and your own personal future? (Dunn, p. 2)

There were many more excellent talks during the gathering, all related to the topic of vulnerability; the importance of owning and embracing it in ourselves and others and then, choosing the best way to move forward in a transformative way as individuals and in religious communities.

Sr. Nurya Martínez Gayol, ACI, offered an outline on the meaning of Spirituality and synodality and how these are connected in learning to embrace our vulnerability. She spoke of the disposition of authentic listening from near and below, with humility. Of being able to risk letting oneself be touched by the other person’s reality by listening from within...with the ears of the heart. She led the participants to appreciate that the only way forward is through enduring patience. Synodal spirituality is done through listening, dialogue, and discernment.



Although not able to attend in person the audience with Pope Francis, Sr. Brendalee felt included in the experience through being present online. The Pope came to the gathering in a wheelchair and said “*Sisters, I too know this theme of vulnerability... I come to you vulnerable and ready to listen*”; it was quite moving. He asked Women Religious to keep their eyes open to those who are searching for reconciliation and peace, to have the courage to confer with one another, live their charism well, and trust that God is with them. (Source: Sr. Brendalee Boisvert’s *Report to Council*)

In this column, we bring individual experiences of current and past ministries of the Marthas as they live by the mission of the congregation “to embrace and respond to the cry for Gospel Hospitality.”

Sister Anne Coady, 91, joined the Marthas at the age of 18. She devoted her Religious Life to teaching, and doing social work at different institutional settings. A welcoming presence to everyone, she has always loved people.

When asked why she chose Religious Life, Sister Anne recalls a life changing experience during high school years:

“I think the seed was sown by my parents [devote Catholics] and then by a talk given by a priest at my high school – on the need of prayer especially at night, when many people are tempted to crime of all kinds – burglary, prostitution, drug and alcohol addictions. In response to this I got up and prayed – [my sister] Marge joined me often, usually for an hour. Then I began reading up on the various orders in Canada and USA. One day, as I was doing just that, Bas [my brother] came for a visit and asked, “What’s up?” So, I told him, “Well, I’m thinking of entering a religious order and writing to get some information [...] Bas suggested I take a look at the Sisters of St. Martha who staff and operate the hospital where he had spent the last couple of years”. Bas described the Marthas as “real people, very hospitable, who went out of their way to do whatever they could for others”.

She visited the Antigonish convent and felt very welcome by the Marthas whose friendliness and simplicity impressed her. By the end of that weekend visit, she knew that’s where she wanted to be. She knew she had found a perfect community, one that *“allowed people to*



Sister Anne Coady

follow their hearts”. Her life in the Postulate and Novitiate consisted in working in various departments of the Motherhouse, of learning ways to meditate, pray and to see life as dedicated to God in service to each other and those people they would serve on their missions when professed.

Sr. Anne started as a choir/music teacher, then taught elementary school grades mostly around Nova Scotia. She obtained a teaching diploma from the Normal College in Truro and a BA from St. Francis Xavier University. Wonderful memories from her teaching years abound and she emphasizes the universal lesson learned

as a teacher: *“keep calm, talk softly, especially to children”*. Later in life, she also taught a year’s social work course at the university level in Lethbridge, AB.

While teaching, Sr. Anne saw a lot of poverty and social issues, so she asked to go into social work. The Marthas were very supportive. She was missioned to work at Family Services of Eastern Nova Scotia in Whitney Pier where she learned all about the practice of social work from Sr. Eugenie Delaney, an experienced social worker. *“Sr. Eugenie’s love and respect for people were inspirational”*. She knew how to see a need and meet it, offering people *“encouragement, support and somehow always managing to help lighten their spirits”*. Having worked with such a great role model, Sr. Anne went on to study and graduated from Carleton University with a master’s degree in social work.



Sister Anne Coady, 1960s

Her first placement was at Montreal General Hospital. Over 25 years of her social work career happened in various hospitals run by the Marthas in Canada and in Lowell, Mass. in the USA. She also worked for many years in Family Services in Nova Scotia, but it’s the hospital work that Sr. Anne cherished the most - helping people who often were at their lowest, getting them ready to carry on with their lives outside the hospital, making sure that they could access all the services they needed to succeed.

Both work settings came with their own risks and Sr. Anne talks about them openly. During her career, Sr. Anne had to learn she couldn’t help everybody, even though her heart longed for fixing what was wrong. She recalls a colleague saying after a work visit with one family: *“Anne, you have to remember, they’re not your family”* and she just responded *“but they are...”* That’s how deeply she felt for that family and for anybody and everybody...

A big source of strength for Sr. Anne has always been her community. She couldn’t have done the work without it, and she has been enjoying the communal life at different stages of her life very much. Having lived together with so many Sisters, she assures there wasn’t any Martha she truly disliked. Although they all have different backgrounds, Sr. Anne believes they melded together, glued by their focus on people and hospitality, and, of course, by their prayer. She highlights that, personally, she couldn’t have gone through her life without a deep faith in God and the power of prayer. She prays, above all, like her mother used to do when Sr. Anne was young, for everyone who struggles.

“I think friendliness and caring about people is godliness. You don’t have to be talking about God all the time, you just know that he is with you all the time.”

Marthas are all about Gospel Hospitality. It is what attracted Sr. Anne to the Congregation during her first visit. She admired how the Sisters were putting people first, always welcoming anyone in any circumstance. It has always been about people, and she has tried to be kind and open to all throughout her career.

After she retired from social work, she did parish ministry in a small community, and later she was a welcoming presence at the Bethany Retreat Centre and, finally, Bethany Library. Sr. Anne lives now at Mary’s Court, the Enhanced Care area in Parkland Antigonish where she cares deeply about the staff who care for her and other Marthas. While her outside working ministry years are over, Sr. Anne continues to live Gospel Hospitality everyday in Mary’s Court, cherishing those around her.

One gets enthralled with the countless anecdotes, memories of people, stories, a lifetime of relationships and connections with people she knew through work and within the community. This short article cannot even begin to encompass the wealth of her life experience as a Martha.





Julia Townsend, Director of Martha Associates, gives an update on Martha Associates activities in the past few months. Associates are meeting again, and more gatherings are planned for the future!

Well, as I look out my window, I can clearly see the trees are in bloom and the flowers are beginning to burst to life in vibrant colors!! All hopeful signs that Spring is well under way! The days are becoming longer, the early mornings brighter, while the birds sing joyfully (and very loud!) at the first light of day!! The seasons have changed, and time continues to march forward.

The past two years have presented an enormous challenge for everyone all over the world! We kept waiting for things to be “normal” again, to live again and enjoy life. I suppose, in many ways, we are at this point. At least, we are engaging in life once again, continuing to be cautious as we step out in the awareness that we may never be COVID-free.

Such is the case with the Martha Associates. We are slowly returning to a time where we can gather, embrace each other, and share our faith and our stories. Over the last several months, most of our Associate groups have begun to gather in person. I am delighted to report that I have been able to meet with our Associates and Sisters in Sydney Mines on April 6, 2022. Also, with the Trenton Associate group on April 24, 2022. The Sydney/Glace Bay group have been fortunate to continue a monthly gathering since January 2022. I am blessed to share with this group often, being that it is also my home Associate group!



Our Western Associate Group has endured many struggles during the pandemic. Alberta was subject to frequent and strict lockdowns at times. Although our Associates kept in touch with emails, phone calls and ZOOM, this became tiring for everyone. The isolation was exhausting! Finally, on May 19, 2022, the Lethbridge Associates were able to gather in a large group at the Martha Retreat Centre! It was a special time for them to see each other, to embrace and to share a cup of tea in person. I was also delighted that I could be a part of this gathering. After two years, it was exciting to travel to the West to be with our Associates. The Charism of Gospel Hospitality was certainly alive and well in the West!!!

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During my visits to our groups, I spent time sharing news from the east and the west; also allowing some time for us all to “catch up”. Rather than prepare a formal presentation for my visits, I decided to have a discussion with each group, exploring their thoughts on the future of the Associate movement. As well, I invited them to share their ideas on how we, as Associates, have a role to play in recognizing the charism of Gospel Hospitality in others, speaking what we see and offering those whom we recognize as living their life with Gospel Hospitality the chance to “Come and See” what Associate life offers. This is one way that Associates may assist in the evolution of the Martha Charism.

Since 2019, the Martha Associates have not been able to gather in a large group for the annual Fall retreat. Thankfully, our current plan is to gather in person this year, first in Antigonish on September 10, 2022, and then in Lethbridge from September 23-25, 2022. We have a special guest speaker, Dr. Moira MacQueen, author of the book *“Walking Together, A Primer on the New Synodality”*. Our excitement is palpable!!! Most important however, we are eager to see some of our beautiful Marthas once again, and maybe even be permitted a hug or two!! We are waiting patiently for the day!! Blessings to you all!



~Julia Townsend
Director Martha Associates
June 6, 2022



Julia Townsend (left) with Martha Associates in the Lethbridge, May 2022

Bethany Centennial Garden opened to the public in September 2021, additional work has taken place over the fall and spring. It is our hope that soon all the elements of the garden are in place and the only work that remains is the ongoing care of the plants by our gardening team. In this issue, we look at various elements that have found their resting place in the garden and have special meaning for the Congregation.



Motherhouse remnants. Bethany Chapel, deconstructed in 2019, 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. The pieces were left behind to bring back memories of life, visits, and work at Bethany Motherhouse.

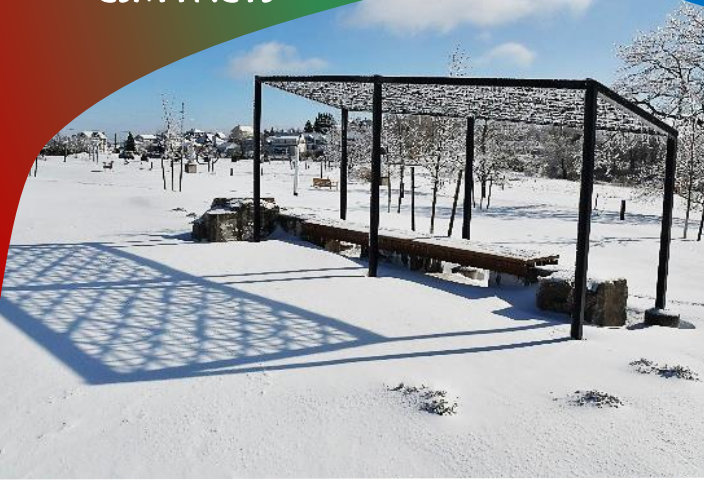


The teardrop motif. The chapel was designed in the early sixties by Rambusch Ltd. They repeated a single motif throughout the entire building – that of the teardrop, a reminder of the Paschal Mystery. Just as suffering and death are part of our daily lives, so is resurrection and new life. We are reminded, “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 Bethany Centennial Garden decorative pieces and, if you happen to have a chance to look at the park from above, in the design of its paths!

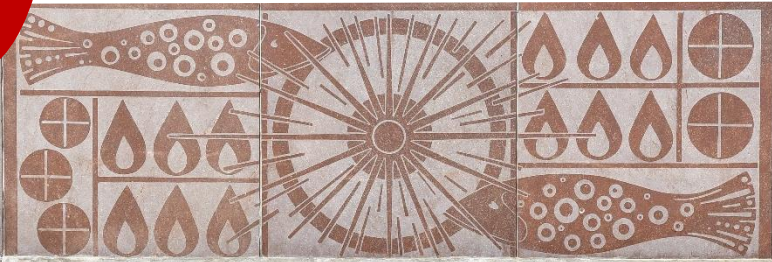


Archival photo above: view of statue of St. Joseph near the 1963 Chapel, Bethany Grounds, Antigonish, NS [ca. 1966]

The remnants of the original entrance to the Bethany Motherhouse and the steeple built into the reflective pool.



Gates and 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. Rambusch 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.



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 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.



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.



Postulants posing in front of St. Martha and the Dragon statue, Bethany Grounds, Antigonish, NS [ca. 1947]

DID YOU KNOW?

CSM FACTS



The fountain sculpted by a local artist as a chalice retrieved from the ocean.



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.

The Peace Pole. The Peace Pole was placed on Bethany grounds in 2001. Sisters gathered on July 1st, 2001, for a short dedication ceremony and had weekly prayers for peace afterwards. The Pole carries the universal message for world peace "*May Peace Prevail On Earth*" inscribed in 12 languages on its sides. 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.

[Click to learn more about Peace Pole Project:
https://www.worldpeace.org/peacepoleproject/](https://www.worldpeace.org/peacepoleproject/)

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.

In 1963, Rambusch designers explained in a letter to the Marthas the rationale behind their design choices: "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.

Standing4Justice

MARTHA JUSTICE MINISTRY
NEWS



*Embracing Our Neighbour
and Our Common Home*

A MESSAGE FROM MARTHA JUSTICE MINISTRY



Greetings to you all! What a beautiful time of year it is! The trees are full of leaves, flowers are blooming, and pollinators are busy at work. Nature is singing songs of joy. It reminds us of the beauty and fragility of our world

and our need to deeply appreciate and protect our common home.

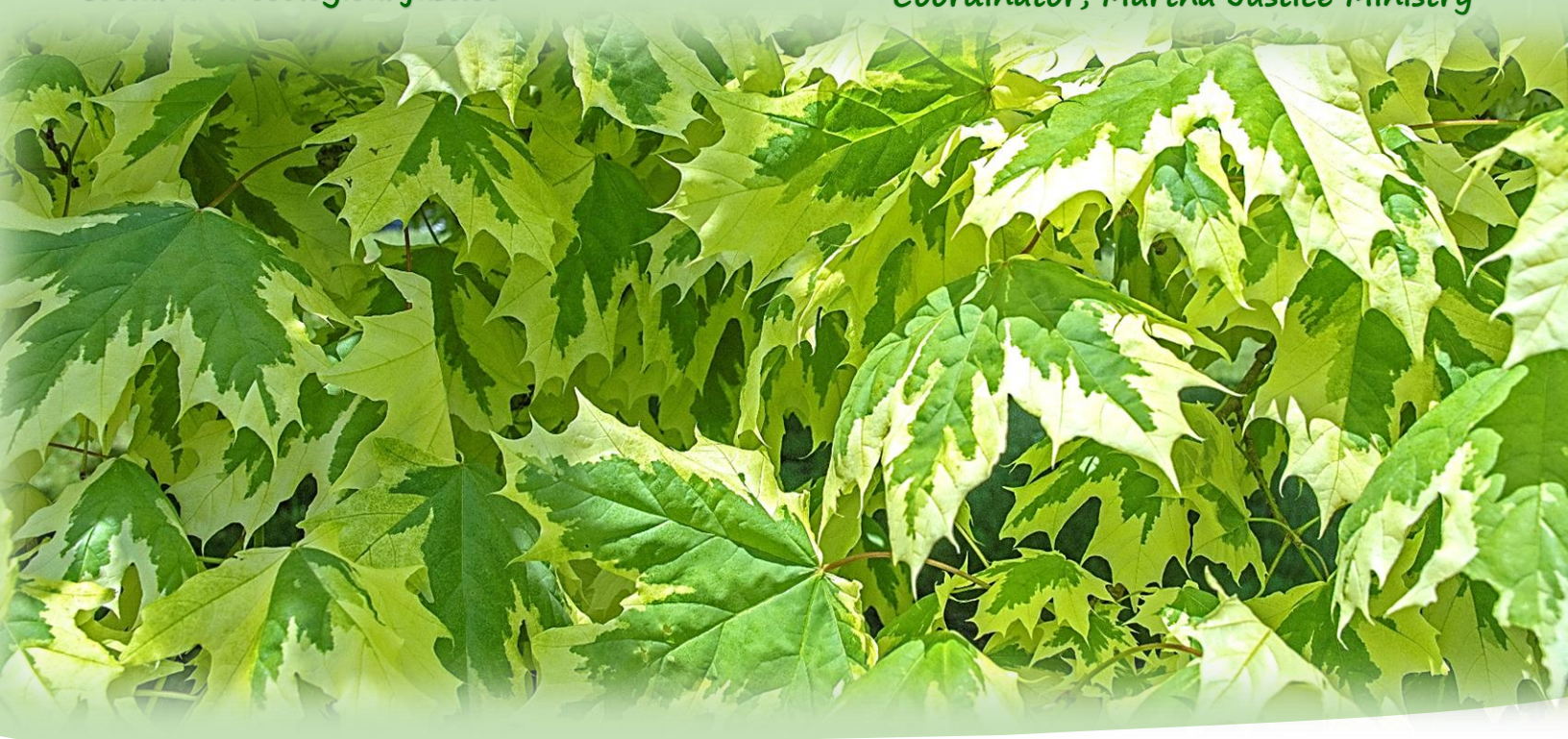
Martha Justice Ministry continues to be involved in so many wonderful networks and efforts to educate and advocate for social and ecological justice.

We have had opportunities this spring to continue our work on poverty eradication, income security, and support for the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in collaboration with local and national organizations. We've been deepening our learning on issues of importance. And we are enjoying another wonderful season with our New Growers!

Thank you for your continued prayers and support for this work. We hope you find our updates encouraging and helpful!

Peace and Blessings,

*Darlene O'Leary
Coordinator, Martha Justice Ministry*

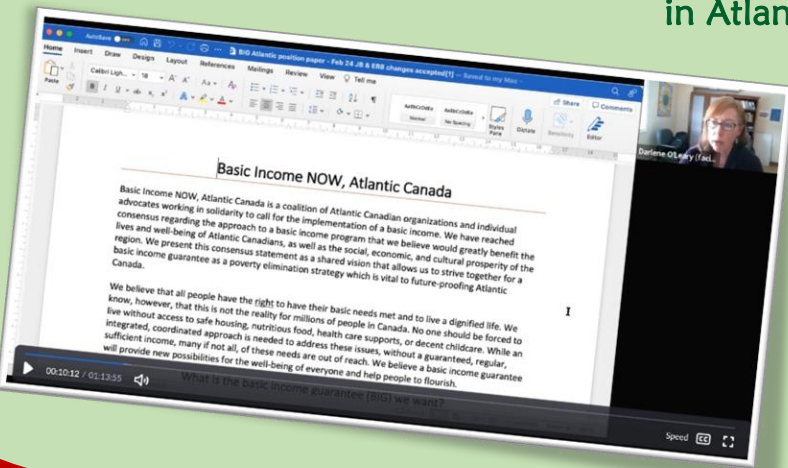




*Embracing Our Neighbour
and Our Common Home*

BASIC INCOME IN ATLANTIC CANADA MEETING WITH SEAN FRASER

On April 19, Sister Marion Sheridan and I, along with Basic Income Nova Scotia's Elisabeth Kay Raining-Bird and former MP Wayne Easter, met with MP and Immigration Minister Sean Fraser to discuss the work we are doing to build support for a basic income program in Atlantic Canada.



We discussed our **Basic Income Atlantic Canada** consensus statement and hopes for an Atlantic Basic Income Summit. Wayne Easter was able to speak to the progress PEI has made in support of launching a program there. It was a good opportunity to share with Minister Fraser the progress of our Atlantic group and to hear his recommendations on building federal support.

NATIONAL CANADIAN RELIGIOUS CONFERENCE (CRC) *JUSTICE, PEACE, AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION (JPIC) EVENT*

On March 23, the Canadian Religious Conference (CRC) held a national, virtual event to celebrate and share the work being done by Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) offices and committees across the country.

The event started off with Sister Marion Sheridan providing a wonderful overview of the history of **JPIC Atlantic**. Several other speakers from different regions spoke about their JPIC work, which is very rich and diverse, including work in creation care, Indigenous reconciliation, anti-trafficking, refugee support, and more. I had a chance to highlight Martha Justice Ministry's work, particularly on poverty eradication and basic income.

It was a great opportunity to learn of the creative and important JPIC work being done by religious congregations in Canada!





*Embracing Our Neighbour
and Our Common Home*

WEBINAR: AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN NOVA SCOTIA AND UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

On May 19, the Coady International Institute's Extension Department hosted a webinar on Affordable Housing in Nova Scotia and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The webinar was moderated by Pauline MacIntosh and featured Sister Marion Sheridan, who presented a very interesting overview of the history of the SDGs. It also featured Nikki Jamison with the Atlantic Council for International Cooperation talking about translating the SDGs into the local context. As well, Blair Crawford, the SDG program director with Engage Nova Scotia spoke about mapping and compiling data on SDG-related projects, with a focus on affordable housing, in NS.

It was a wonderful conversation that showed the continued relevance of the UN SDGs and important work being done in Nova Scotia to advance the SDGs.

Click [here](#) to watch the webinar on YouTube

AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN NOVA SCOTIA and the UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Join us for the first in a series of three webinars on the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)** and **Affordable Housing in Nova Scotia** as we discuss the origin of the SDGs, why they are important, what is happening related to the SDGs in Nova Scotia, and how the SDGs intersect with affordable housing.

Pauline MacIntosh
Moderator
Coady Institute

Blair Crawford
Sustainable Development Goals
Program Director
Engage Nova Scotia

Nikki Jamison
Provincial Coordinator
Atlantic Council for
International Cooperation

Sr. Marion Sheridan
Sister of Saint Martha
Antigonish

May 19, 2022 | 7:00 PM | Register: tinyurl.com/SDGNS1

STFX UNIVERSITY | COADY | 10:02 / 1:00:26 | Employment and Social Development Canada | Emploi et Développement social Canada

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Affordable Housing in Nova Scotia



GARDENING WORKSHOP

On April 23, we held our “Home Gardening and Food Resilience” workshop with New Growers mentor David Greenberg. It was a fun event, even though it was very, very cold!



David Greenberg

We had about 20 people in attendance, with many others who were interested but not able to attend. A couple of StFX students joined us, as well. There were very good discussions and learning, and a great deal of interest in having a follow-up workshop in the summer.

Thank you, David Greenberg, for sharing your extensive knowledge of gardening with us!



NEW GROWERS MOU SIGNING

Our New Growers Orientation and lunch was held on April 5 with this year’s New Growers, David Matheson and Meghan Johnny, who are starting their second season, and Danielle Speck and Clayton MacLeod, who arrived from Ontario in April.

Sister Florence Kennedy and David Greenberg shared some history of the program and Sister Brendalee Boisvert shared about the Marthas’ Direction Statement. We had some time for questions and then had the MOU signing with Sister Brendalee, Sister Joanne O’Regan, Sr. Florence Kennedy, David Greenberg and the New Growers, with a nice lunch to follow.



New Growers signing



DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE ORIENTATION ASSEMBLY



Development and Peace/Caritas Canada, the international development organization of the Catholic Church in Canada, has been active over the spring preparing for it's June Orientation Assembly.

To watch videos from some of the activities and learn more about Development and Peace check out:
#orientationassembly
Twitter @DevPeace
<https://www.facebook.com/devpeace>



The Development & Peace Orientation Assembly (OA) took place on June 16-19 in Halifax and was a wonderful opportunity to come together as delegates from diocesan councils across the country, National Council members, youth representatives, bishops, staff and executive, and most importantly international partners. We shared our hopes for the movement, along with the challenges we need to face with open hearts, minds, and spirits. And we learned more about the issues of importance that we want to prioritize over the next five years as an organization.

Participants had a good opportunity to hear from the new Executive Director, Carl Hétu, as well as the new National Council President, Brenda Arakaza, who is also the francophone youth representative. The event included keynote speakers, panel discussions, and

a mass that was livestreamed. We were fortunate to have with us Cardinal Michael Czerny who attended in person as a keynote speaker and stayed for the entire conference.

To learn about Orientation Assembly and Cardinal Czerny click [here](#).

Participants at the OA were also grateful to hear from the Hon. Graydon Nicholas of the Tobique First Nation, a retired judge and former Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick, who is also a member of Our Lady of Guadalupe Circle and shared on being an Indigenous Elder and a Catholic. We were inspired, as well as, by our partners, including Dr. Isaac Asume Osuoka, director of Social Development Integrated Centre (Social Action), Nigeria, who spoke on climate justice. There was rich sharing and space for open and honest dialogue as participants joined to create the path forward together.



PARKLAND TALKS

Martha Justice Ministry had begun a series of monthly discussions for the Sisters living at Parkland Antigonish. We meet at the Multipurpose Room on topics relating to social and ecological justice.



At our first discussion, we watched the documentary “*Laudato Si’* +7: *The Greening of Faith Communities in Canada*”, by [Kevin Moynihan](#). This film

highlights the work that different faith communities are doing to respond to the call to care for creation.

Our second event was focussed on Indigenous Reconciliation. We watched parts of the series “*They Came for the Children*”, a five-part documentary series, also by [Kevin Moynihan](#), concentrating on the history of residential schools and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action. A very rich conversation followed.

At our latest discussion, we watched part of the Voices for Peace online conference “*Blessed are the Peacemakers*,” from the [Henri Nouwen Society](#). It was a very profound reflection on how to be peacemakers and nonviolent in our fractured world. It has been so wonderful to spend time learning together and sharing our reflections on these issues of importance.

Kevin Moynihan's website
<http://www.kmproductions.ca/>



Voices for Peace conference is on YouTube. Click [here](#) to watch it.



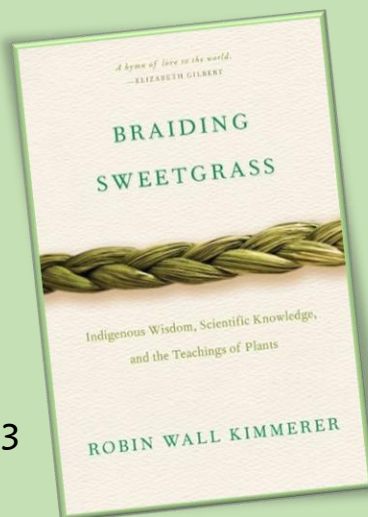
*Embracing Our Neighbour
and Our Common Home*



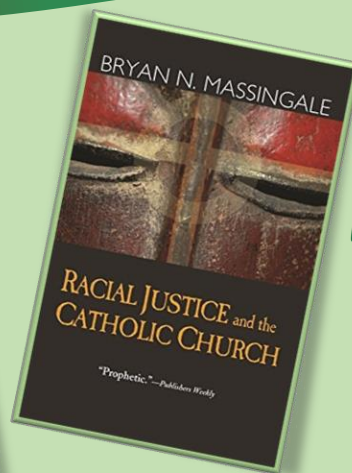
MJM RECOMMENDED BOOKS

*Braiding Sweetgrass:
Indigenous Wisdom,
Scientific Knowledge,
and the Teachings
of Plants*

Robin Wall Kimmerer
Milkweed Editions, 2013



This book is a deeply personal and poetic account by Robin Wall Kimmerer of her experiences and observations as an Indigenous woman bringing the richness of Indigenous traditional knowledge together with her scientific background as a botanist, allowing her to encounter the natural world in profound ways. She reframes our thinking of nature in terms of relationships - of nature as generous and gift-giving - and how Indigenous traditions and culture have grown with this understanding. It is a truly beautiful exploration of the sacred gifts of creation.



*Racial Justice and the
Catholic Church*
Bryan N. Massingale
Orbis Books, 2020

In this book, Bryan Massingale explores the contributions and limitations of Catholic social reflection and ethics on racial justice, specifically in the American context. He leads with the central question, “how can we struggle together against an evil that harms us all, though in different ways?” and the central Christian message, “the wounds of racism are real and deep, but healing is possible.” The book draws on Massingale’s significant theological knowledge and his deeply personal and well documented understanding of racial injustice to seek the path forward for the “beloved community” and the vocation of Black Catholic theologians.

If you would like to read any of the books we recommend or have suggestions you'd like to share, please feel free to be in touch with Darlene – justice@themarthas.com



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CSM MISSION

We, Sisters of St. Martha, inspired by God's graciousness, hear, embrace and respond to the cry for Gospel hospitality.