In the context of finding ways to set free our Charism and Mission for the life of the world, the 2009 Chapter mandated ...

continuing the process and planning for BETHANY COMPLEX through the Bethany Complex Planning Committee with the direction of the Congregation Leader and Council.

We affirm the current Direction Statement and the Principles for Future Decisions; emphasize sensitivity in communication with staff and the public; and promote a pastoral approach to grieving with the Sisters.

Since our Newsletter in January, the Committee met for three regular meetings, and for one meeting with Sister Carmelita Murphy, op and Leadership to update and revise our strategic plan. Several sub-committee meetings were held as well as meetings with key contacts and advisers.

1. Extended Care

On January 13, 2010, Sr. Mary MacFarlane wrote the Deputy Minister of Health, Kevin McNamara, acknowledging the letter from Keith Menzies, Director of Continuing Care, expressing gratitude for the confirmation that they will recommend an interim license for our Extended Care Unit, and requesting a meeting to discuss funding for the health care costs of the Unit. Health Care costs include nursing, staff, salaries, supplies, physio, etc.
A response was received from the Deputy Minister on February 12, expressing his availability for a meeting which was then scheduled for March 10, 2010.

On March 10, 2010, Sisters Mary MacFarlane, Elizabeth Riopelle and Joan Fultz met with the Deputy Minister and presented:

> A brief introduction to the Sisters of St. Martha

> Our two critical realities:

1. The urgent need to explore options for extended care
2. The need to move in the direction of letting go of ownership and management of Bethany

> A review of the communication with the Department of Health since January 2008

> Our current situation, namely:

\[\begin{align*}
\text{our need to receive health care costs by April 2011;} \\
\text{our need TO HAVE PLANS IN PLACE by 2014,}
\end{align*}\]
- to move our Extended Care Unit to another facility,
- to relinquish ownership and management of Bethany building,
- to move to new accommodations for our sisters who are active, retired or in need of supportive care.

Mr. McNamara said that he had no answers for us that day since much depends on the Government’s Speech from the Throne and the Budget to be tabled on April 6, 2010. However, he was encouraging and expressed willingness to work with us to address our needs. He suggested we continue to update our local MLA and begin conversations with The Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority (GASHA) and the RK MacDonald Nursing Home to explore options for the future. Incidentally, Sr. Mary gave him a copy of our history, “And Martha Served,” and we queried whether he might be related to Mother Innocentia McNamara of Lower River Inhabitants, as is Mr. McNamara. He wasn’t aware of a connection!

On March 15, as part of CSM regular meeting with our representatives on the Board of Directors of the R.K., Sister Joan presented a brief overview of our communication with the Department of Health and our planning to date. The representatives were positive about our plans. They informed us that they are in the midst of a move by NS Government to integrate nursing homes more closely with the District Health Authorities.

On March 16, Sister Mary and Joan met a second time with Maurice Smith, NDP MLA for Antigonish, to bring him up to date on our meeting with the Deputy
Minister. We also requested that he inform the Minister of Health, Maureen MacDonald, of our needs.

As we mentioned previously, an interim license requires us to carry out some renovations to comply with the Fire Marshall’s recommendations and Department of Health regulations. Sr. Marie Kelly has been following this up and reports that they have now been completed and she will be advising the Fire Marshall and the Department of Health.

2. Communication Plan

We are happy to inform you that we have engaged a Communication Consultant for this project, beginning April, 2010. Her name is Debbie Lawrence of Truro, NS. She has her own company and was highly recommended to us. The committee who interviewed her was also very impressed. She will work with us to develop a Communication Plan and will relate mainly to the Chair of the Committee, Sr. Joan Fultz. We look forward to working with Debbie in the days ahead.

3. Bethany

On February 26, 2010, Sisters Mary MacFarlane, Liz Riopelle and Joan Fultz met with Ramsay Duff, VP for Finance and Operations at St. F.X., to explore whether St. F.X. would be interested in the Bethany Building. He advised us that St. F.X. had discussed the possibility of using Bethany Building and some land for University purposes and have decided that they are not interested. The lack of funds available from the Government as well as little expansion in enrolment were cited as the contributing factors. However, he did offer any expertise which the University can provide to assist us in our planning.

Sister Mary MacFarlane also received information from Sister Rosemary MacDonald, Congregation Leader of the Sisters of St. Martha of PEI, who have recently placed their Motherhouse up for sale. It is information that may be helpful to us in the future.

4. Future Housing

We continue to gather information regarding future housing given our finances and demographics. The Committee and Leadership met with Sister Donna Geernaert, Congregation Leader of the Sisters of Charity on March 29, to learn from their
experience and to explore the process they used to determine their needs.

5. **Key Contacts/Advisers:**

In addition to the people mentioned above, we met with Tom Langley, retired VP of Finance and Operations of St.F.X., in January. He stressed the need for a competent Communication Consultant and also offered us any assistance he could give. We continue to seek information and advice from knowledgeable people in the various areas involved in our long term planning.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidentiality continues to be of great importance around anything relating to planning for the future of Bethany Complex. We ask you not to post the Newsletter in a public place, or any subsequent information regarding this matter.

**PRAYER**

As always, we rely on your prayer as we move together into the future.

We invite you to contact the **Committee Chair**, Sister Joan Fultz, at any time regarding questions and/or comments.

**Your Committee Members:**

Sister Joan Fultz, Chair  
Sister Stella Chafe  
Sister Marie Kelly  
Sister Therese LeBlanc  
Sister Genevieve McArthur Sister  
Elizabeth Riopelle  
Secretary:  
Sister Florence Kennedy