

What's Up

July 2022 ♦ IBVM CANADA



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Canada Day 2022 celebrations

Canada Day saw the return of visitors in the Presentation Manor dining room after 3 years. It was a wonderful afternoon of entertainment, food and fun!



Inside this issue

P. 2

People
Presentation Manor
Responding to a Crisis

P. 3

Mary Ward Centre
IBVM in the News

P. 4

Day Out

P. 5

Loretto Maryholme
Loretto College

P. 6

We can do more together
Archives

P. 7

Honouring Mary – poem

From top left, clockwise are: Srs Caroline, Sheila S, Cabrini, Mary M & Helen; Sr Maria H: various community members enjoy the festivities

People



Greetings from Sr Tressia Aricatt & Sr Maria Macha:

Tressia left Loretto College to return to India because her mother was ill. The onset of COVID prevented her from returning. Fortunately, she was able to take her Regis College courses “on-line”.

She planned to return to Loretto College and Regis this September to finish her programme. Twice, she has been denied a ‘visa’ to re-enter Canada so cannot return and will have to continue her studies from India.



Maria fortunately completed her programme at Regis and returned to Kenya where she had a bit of a break. Now she has been reassigned to the school she left in Tanzania where she has 700 students in a pastoral programme. She has also been appointed JPIC Coordinator for the Eastern Africa IBVM Province. She reports on the scarcity of water they are experiencing ... rationing means that each person can only use a 10 litre bucket of water per day.

Presentation Manor

Lynn Cira



After two cancellations due to COVID, the Spring Fling finally took place in early June. Third time lucky for Srs Cabrini (left) and Pat (below), both winning prizes at the raffle that day.



Maria Heinrich, ibvm



More visitors! Una Coogan (back) visiting from the UK with Srs Yvonne, Carmen & Juliana (l to r) at Presentation Manor

Loretto Responding to a Crisis!

In December, the FCJ Refugee Centre was searching desperately for temporary housing for a refugee family. The apartment at Loretto College was empty. We offered to make it available and the Ramirez family of four has been living there. They had to flee from Colombia because of their Human rights work, which endangered their lives. One girl went to St Joseph Wellesley and one to Our Lady of Lourdes School where they found a welcoming community to help them transition to Toronto schools. Armed with work permits, Sandra (well qualified and experienced in Public Administration) and Miguel, (an Electronics Engineer) searched for jobs. They moved on to their own apartment in North York at the end of June. With assistance from COSTI and Canada Works they will access training to enable them to secure jobs in their fields. Their gratitude to us is boundless.

Because of the surge of refugees arriving in Toronto, the Government is asking Agencies like FCJ Centre to keep refugees out of “shelters” for the homeless. FCJ Centre is again pleading for help. The need is for temporary housing until more permanent accommodation is found. Right now, many are being placed in hotels which are not suited to family living and are very expensive.

Mary Ward Centre

Sarah Rudolph

The summer months allow the Mary Ward Centre (MWC) team to engage in some productive planning and collaboration with partners for the fall and into 2023. We continue to work with the CSJ Justice Ministry and new collaborators, such as Aura Freedom, as we develop and implement our work on the prevention of human trafficking. We have met with the new representative from Development and Peace to look at shared priorities and opportunities to work together in the coming months. We continue to work with our friends and colleagues at the University of St. Michael's College and Regis College to offer Ignatian spirituality and justice-related programming in response to the needs of the Church and the world.

We are excitedly working with the Jesuit Forum on programming to further the process of truth and reconciliation with the Indigenous peoples of this land, including a fall Indigenous film series and ongoing offerings of the Listening to Indigenous Voices program to newcomers.

Kathy Murtha: This has been a time of wrapping up the past school year and booking for the next one. There has been a steady stream of inquiries about our school Retreats. But, you can sense people's reluctance to firmly book given our persistent COVID situation. At the moment we have 6 schools who have booked a series of Retreats for both school semesters. While some of these are off site, the majority will be in-person at the MWC.

This interim time has allowed us to set up meetings to explore fruitful areas of collaboration with other organizations. In the works is a proposal to establish an annual Festival of Girls and Women as a way of honoring and celebrating the legacy of the Loretto Sisters and the Sisters of St. Joseph on campus. It is hoped that we might start this initiative at the MWC at the end of January.

On Monday, August 8th I will be facilitating a Zoom workshop with Paul McKenna entitled: "The Golden Rule and Interfaith Dialogue. This is part of Interfaith Awareness Week which is a 7-day free international event. Our workshop will explore the power of the Golden Rule as a unitive tool for peace and convey some of the richness of the World's Religions. The event is at 11am EDT. Here is the Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83495629737?pwd=MkdleXJOYjViVUVudGhQc2drZ2pOQT09>.

IBVM in the News

The Tablet is a prestigious British publication read all over the world. Of it, Mary McAleese says:

*"I open **The Tablet** and find there the oxygen that lets me breathe once again the air of hope."*

Mary McAleese, is a former president of Ireland from 1997 to 2011. She holds a degree in Canon Law from the Milltown Institute of Theology (where Elizabeth Cotter IBVM taught at the time) and a Doctorate and Licentiate from the Gregorian University in Rome. Her two daughters were pupils at the Loreto School "in the Green" in Dublin (again Elizabeth Cotter was there). She is a controversial figure, often critical of the Church. In spite of this, she remains in the Church where she believes that *"we are members of a universal tribe that is inspired by the idea and the power of Christian love. ... **The Tablet** is our safe house where we meet each other and our Creator and form the courage to stay and pray and fight."*

In the last few months, members of the IBVM and the CJ have received attention in **The Tablet**: Pat Murray and Orla Treacy IBVM for awards they received in Ireland; Gemma Simmonds CJ for presentations on St Oscar Romero, Gemma and Imelda Poole IBVM as presenters in programmes sponsored by **The Tablet**.

An article featured Imelda and the Mary Ward Loreto Foundation in Albania, which works to combat human trafficking. A priority for them right now is the refugee women fleeing the Ukraine who are "particularly vulnerable".

Another article, describes the work of Ephigenia Gachiri and the Eastern Africa IBVM Project on the "Termination of Female Genital Mutilation" operating out of the Loreto Abundant Life Centre in Isinya, Kenya. Ephigenia has just published a new book, [Hope Amid Pain: Experiences of Survivors of FGM](#).

These IBVM and CJ women are surely sources of the "air of hope" for many of the world's most vulnerable people who give Mary McAleese and all of us "the courage to stay and pray and fight" to spread "the idea and power of Christian love."

Loretto College Day at Loretto Maryholme

After 2 years of COVID hiatus, the Loretto College sisters (along with a few ex-pats) and staff travelled up to Loretto Maryholme for our annual BBQ and bocce tournament. And this year, some former staff – Angela, Joe, Lauren with her daughter and Belen – joined in the fun.

The rain magically disappeared following an initial downpour upon our arrival. The food and festivities were abundant, and much laughter could be heard out on Lake Simcoe at lunchtime. Bocce brought out our competitive spirits as we rounded out the day in sunshine on the east lawns. Too soon we had to say goodbye.

We thank Sr Jane McDonell, Carol, Jane, Sandra and Maria for being such gracious hosts. And to David Kwan and our amazing team for their food coordination & prep and BBQ skills. Till next year...



Loretto Maryholme

Carol Ivens

Summer is in full swing with continual private cabin bookings and fully booked retreats with waiting lists.



Guests are enjoying the new main dock, the second dock extension, and the refreshed 'Stations of the Light' meditative walk. The gardens are absolutely lush this summer and attended by our

amazing grounds crew.

The Summer Solstice was celebrated under the forest canopy at the Peace Pole before walking the labyrinth together for peace in our world. Tai Chi practice graces our west lawn every Sunday at sunset.

Many group bookings have returned as they feel comfortable to be with others again. How wonderful to see them.



It is our pleasure to introduce our new cooks Syen & Gennadi, local to the area. They are a joy to be with and we expect to be fed with Malaysian, Thai, Cajun & Armenian ethnic dishes as well as good ol' fashioned Canadian fare.

We are blessed!

Loretto College

Emily VanBerkum

Plans to welcome 115 undergraduate students to Loretto College for the 2022-2023 school year are well underway! We have been making steady rounds of offers of residence, with high acceptance rates and a hearty waitlist (of hundreds of students that ranked Loretto as their first-choice residence!). Health and safety measures are also an important aspect of our planning as we intend to increase our overall occupancy, fully open residence amenities, and modify COVID rules of conduct in collaboration with U of T residences across the St. George campus. We look forward to August Don and House Council co-training – so that our student leaders will be well prepared and supported in welcoming residents to the community and continuing the Loretto legacy of hospitality and relationship for a new cohort.

Summer at the College

Alice Gomes

During the academic year break, Loretto College hosts summer students. A few of these are academic students who stay while taking summer courses, some individual guests and a student camp called ESC (English School of Canada).

The camp runs from June 24 to the middle of August. 85 students arrived from Argentina for the first two weeks and then there will be smaller groups from various countries for the balance of the summer. It is great to be running the camp again so we can keep all our house staff members and kitchen staff working, providing the students with terrific accommodations and our Loretto College hospitality.

LC Day Out Photos: Clockwise from top left are Alice, Joe, Solomon & Belen at the BBQ; the community mingling on the patio; Srs Mary, Cabrini and Jeanne enjoying the conversation; bocce in the afternoon; Jesey and Melinda on the patio; Sr Jane McD and Celima on the porch

Doing More Together Than We Can Alone

Evanne Hunter, Jane McDonnell & Mary Mallany

St Michael's College Alumnae Initiative for Women:

Since late 2021, Jane, Mary and Evanne along with three members of the General Council of the CSJ have been meeting with a group of amazing SMC Alumnae Women. This initiative has the enthusiastic support of Dr David Sylvester, President and the Collegium of the University of St Michael's College (USMC). Their aim is twofold:

1. to enshrine legacy recognition of the historical role of IBVM and CSJ in the USMC by establishing an existential and physical presence on the campus honouring the two Congregations. Initial meetings have been to discern "OUR" (IBVM and CSJ) priorities, wishes and dreams.
2. to make the USMC a leader in empowering women to assume leadership roles in the Church and in society by offering programming in Leadership Skill Development, Catholic Social Teaching and social responsibility. They also want to help women facing barriers to higher education through financial support, counselling, mentorship and provision of child-care.

Ideas so far include: revisioning the Loretto Women's Residence and Mary Ward Centre, creating a "recognition wall" in a building on campus, renaming buildings or rooms on campus, posting banners, developing programmes and creating banks of mentors from among CSJ and Loretto Alumnae.

USMC led Programme Collaboration Committee:

This group is meeting to explore ways of collaboration and networking and includes representatives from USMC (Sonal Castellano, Chaplain), Regis College, (Fr John Meehan S.J.) the Mary Ward Centre (Kathy Murtha) the Women Alumnae Initiative and CSJ (Julie Cacchia) and IBVM (Evanne).

The Committee is looking at both the short term and to expansion for the long term to include the Scarborough Missions' funded Institute for Spirituality, the Jesuit Forum for Social Faith and Justice and a reinstated USMC Continuing Education Programme. The collaboration will provide spiritual and human development, faith

formation of faculty, students and alumni (USMC, Regis, Loretto and CSJ), as well as programming for students and teachers in Catholic Schools.

Plans under consideration for the coming year include: a series of 12 "conversations" using the Jesuit Forum's [Listening to Indigenous Voices Study Guide](#) including the KAIROS Blanket Exercise; a "Colloquium" on a current topic; re-instatement of a half semester Social Justice course with a "learning experience component"; a Thanksgiving Day meal and celebration for International students and a Festival of Women and Girls.

Archives

Michelle Pariag



Left to right: Kevin Korst (Loretto Archivist, US) and Michelle Pariag & Robert Little (Loretto Archives, Canada)

From June 26 to 29th, Michelle and Robert attended the 12th Triennial Conference on the History of Women Religious in South Bend, Indiana at the University of Notre Dame. The conference brought together historians and archivists to discuss current and future work addressing "Diversity and Dignity Across Time and Place." The jam-packed schedule included a number of interesting and informative sessions. Some of the sessions of particular interest to us were; Diverse Needs in Education: Irish Women Religious, Presentation Sisters and the Fee-Paying Schools of a Religious Congregation Dedicated to the Education of the Poor, 'Sisters with Sleeves of Different Material': Embracing Dignity and Diversity in Loreto Convents in Mauritius, 1894-1908 and A Step in a Different Direction? Mother Teresa Ball and the Loreto Free Schools, 1823-1861. A unique presentation was done entitled Creation and Cosmos: The Universe according to Hildegard. The art of Hildegard was projected in a planetarium and presented along with her music and writings. You can hear the presenter, Professor of Music History Margot Fassler speak about the project at this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/3jryd9hx>

Honouring Mary

The Blessed Virgin Mary Compared to the Air We Breathe excerpts (Gerard Manley Hopkins)

Wild air, world-mothering air,
Nestling me everywhere.
Minds me in many ways
Of her who not only
Gave God's infinity
Dwindled in infancy
Welcome in womb and breast
But mothers each new grace
That does now reach our race.
This work has to do
Let all God's glory through.

I say that we are wound
With mercy round and round
As if with air, the same Is Mary
And we are meant to share
Her life as life does air.

Through her
We may see Him
Made sweeter, not made dim,
And her hand leaves His light
Sifted to suit our sight.

In July, we celebrated the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Most of us probably received, in elementary school, the brown “scapular” which the Church considers “an external sign of our relationship and devotion to Our Lady, worn by the faithful to remind us of the primacy of the spiritual life and the need to pray”. For IBVMs, we may remember that this was a day of special celebration when the Sisters in Formation provided entertainment for the Professed Sisters. I recall a production of “Oliver” by the novices at the Abbey and of “The Dream of Gerontius” by the Juniors at the College. As Novices on holiday in Niagara Falls, we joined the Carmelites in a solemn procession on the grounds of Mt Carmel and Loretto Niagara.

In August, the feast of the Assumption marks the end of Mary’s earthly life and her return to heaven to be reunited with her son, Jesus. This was also a day of special celebration for us.

Some people have difficulty with “Marian Devotion” because they see it as tending towards sentimentalism and romanticism. For others, it is because preaching about Mary often emphasized her obedience and was “used it as stick to beat smart girls with” (Mary Gordon).

The theologian Elizabeth Johnson refutes these notions. For her, *in scripture we see Mary as a woman responding to the Spirit in her own time and her own place. She became the Theotokos, the God Bearer. She signaled that God was doing a new thing.* For Johnson, in evoking the memory of Mary, we are recalling that, in responding to the initiative of God, Mary was birthing wisdom and inspiring hope not only for women but for all human beings and the earth, as beloved and favoured of God. She was accepting the task of carrying the message of the crucified and risen Christ forward into history.

In the Magnificat, a song of joy and a sermon placed on the lips of Mary, she is one of the first preachers. Mary sang it not for herself alone but rather with the full voice of the choir of the cloud of witnesses summoned by God to teach the Gospel ... a song for the Church to sing! She takes no credit for anything ... “the Mighty One has done great things for me”. In God’s design, the lowly will be lifted up just as Mary.

Johnson finds solid grounds in Scripture for honouring Mary whose memory can empower the whole Church. She says *we should pray to her.* Mary Ward did at the Holy Shrine of Loreto.

Mother of love, intercede for the
human family,
support the efforts of those who work
for justice and peace.
Grant us the grace to be faithful to
the Gospel
and to bear fruit that endures.
Amen.

(Arturo Sosa S.J. General Superior of the
Jesuits)