



Canadian Province Newsletter

November 2006

"A Day in the Life of the GC"

Canada



From a country gifted by immense resources of water, we acknowledge its sacred, life-giving properties and are challenged to respect its integrity and safeguard its availability to all as a basic human right.

Members, colleagues, friends and associates gathered on October 28th to experience a little of what the delegates felt and did at the recent General Congregation. Everyone partook of the food, prayer, schedule, content, language etc of the GC. It was a day filled with much interest and enthusiasm, a heightened awareness of what it means to be one of many countries and cultures where IBVM are present in the world, and an introduction to the "Call – Actions" that set our direction for the next eight years. Soon Evanne Hunter will travel to Saskatchewan to share this with our members there.

Province Assembly

IBVM Constitution # 434 directs that "A province assembly shall be held after every general congregation of the Institute to promulgate its directives and make decisions about their implementation as they affect the province." We ask you to make plans to enable you to participate in the Canadian Province Assembly at Loretto Abbey from February 23 through February 26, 2007.

For us in the Canadian Province this will be another new experience, part of our living into the reality of Reunion. In the preamble to our Prov-

ince Strategic Plan we recognized that "this is a time of re-founding for the IBVM in Canada" and that "these times demand of us a new way of proceeding." Together the Strategic Plan, which outlines a way forward for us, and the new calls from GC 06 represent challenges that will direct the ongoing life and mission of IBVM here in Canada and in the worldwide Institute of which we have chosen to be a part. At this Province Assembly we will work to find ways to integrate these two areas of responsibility and to devise a plan of action to implement the directives of GC 06.

MISSION and MINISTRY

Maryholme 60th Anniversary Series

The recent **sky gazing event** was well attended by an enthusiastic and questioning group of people of all ages (from children to seniors) and included some who hadn't attended an event before. John Hicks, a landscape architect, led the group in a slide show of "deep sky" images. These were no ordinary images as they were taken from the Hubble Telescope. These slides took the viewer on a journey into galaxies ... where stars are born. The Newmarket Astronomy Club set up two binoculars on tripods and in the clear night sky two shooting stars were seen.

The next event in the series takes place on November 23rd. A panel of the "Lake Simcoe Gardeners" will help participants reflect on what the Earth teaches us.

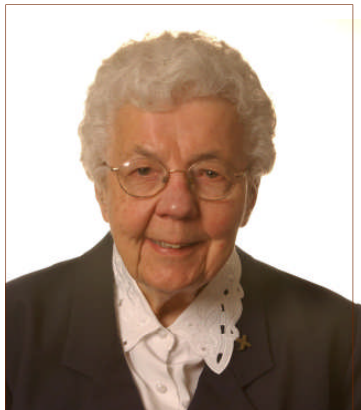
Here is John Hicks' description of what he sees and experiences at Loretto Maryholme:

"Maryholme has an element of what we describe as a landscape containing a 'system of natural harmonious relationships' The gentle curve of the roadway

coming in, sweeping around the central island, and the smooth taper of the grounds falling to the east and south establish a conscious development of the natural landforms. I can feel it when I look over the grounds."

Education:

An article in the Fall issue of the University of Saint Michael's College Alumni Magazine featured **Sr. Marion Norman**. Entitled "*Women of Great Vision: Accomplishment is the measure of Loretto's quiet feminists*" the article describes the vision and perseverance of those sisters who in 1908 began a women's college on the university campus (initially without support or acceptance of St. Michael's), and then talks about Marion's studies, teaching and commitment to education and leadership development in young women.



Now in her nineties and living at Loretto Abbey, Marion continues to learn, teach and support other learners.

Mary Ward Catholic Elementary School in Niagara Falls recently celebrated its 50th anniversary. Following is Jane Dunbar's reflection on the event.

*Mary Ward Catholic Elementary School
Niagara Falls, ON
Celebrates
50th Anniversary
1956 – 2006
Saturday, November 04, 2006*

The doors of Mary Ward were open wide, welcoming parents, former students, staff and invited guests to the 50-year celebration.

Ceremonies were conducted in the gym where Father Hugh Gibson presided over the Prayer Service and Blessing. Elizabeth Davey, principal, wel-

comed all and told the story of Mary Ward. The students sang, followed by storing telling of the growth of the school over the last 50 years.

Speakers from various area brought greetings and congratulations to the school community. John Crocco, Superintendent of Schools, gave an interesting presentation of the school: he had with him the first register, used by Sister Peter Monahan, IBVM who taught grades six, seven and eight. He pointed out an interesting fact in this register. In October, 1956, the students were given the day off to attend the opening of the QEW – this was marked as a non-grant day. How things have changed over the years!

Following the ceremonies all were invited to visit the classrooms. As an educator and a Loretto Sister, I was impressed with the preparation and hard work that went into this day.

Each classroom had prepared special work for the event: art, poetry, religion projects. These were displayed in the classrooms and the hallways.

The spirit of Mary Ward is alive in this school. There are three huge banners hanging in the gym which speak of Mary Ward's goals and values. Many of the teachers and parents have been influenced over the years by the Loretto Sisters and the SCOEP programme that ran out of Loretto Centre.

As IBVMs, we can be very proud of this school. Congratulations to ALL!

Yvonne Steffler and Judith Kidd were blessed and sent on mission for two months in India. Now they are "settled into" life in **India** and teaching English to IBVM candidates and novices.



Many of you will have received some of the emails

that briefly describe the sights, sounds, smells, contrasts and rhythm of life that grip one's whole being, as well as the many vibrant ministries of the IBVM community. We can all look forward to longer conversations and stories when they return just before Christmas. A little tidbit for your imagination: the population of Kolkata [Calcutta] is between 20 and 30 million [Judy figures they are all on the streets together], not far from the entire population of Canada!

In another source we found this comparison: Kolkatta (just one city in India): 30 million people in an area of 1,036 sq. km; while Canada has approx. 33 m people living in 10,000,000 sq. km.

Loretto Abbey Staff Retreat – November 3, 2006

Reconnecting was the theme of the day and it focused on Mary Ward's values and goals. The day was directed by the Toronto Catholic

District School Board team: Joan Martin, Steve Carey and Father Michael Lehman, CSB.



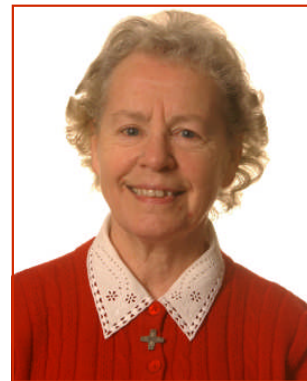
Each staff member was given a small booklet containing sayings of Mary Ward. The day was divided in three parts, by the three team members, followed by lunch and a closing liturgy.

For Jane Dunbar the day was positive and full of meaning, relaxing for all. It was held at Veneto Centre, a community facility in Woodbridge located in a beautiful wooded area.

Bishop Macdonnell High School in Guelph

Twenty-five years ago Loretto celebrated 125 years of presence "on the hill" in Guelph. At that time Bishop Mac teacher Joe Tersigni, with his history class, created and sealed a time capsule. He and a new class will be opening that capsule on December 6th. We look forward to hearing more about it.

Ministry move: Yvonne Steffler will be moving to Keswick in the New Year. She has responded to an invitation and felt a call to offer support ministry at Loretto Maryholme, and to be involved in the local parish and community. Yvonne, who is outgoing and hardworking, will share gifts of hospitality, conversation and visiting.



Residence moves:

- Marianna Gignac is moving to Loretto Abbey this week; Marina Schuett has moved to Loretto Infirmary.
- Donata Dean has moved into a new ground level apartment at Yorkhaven. Her new address and telephone number are:
#20 -780 York Road
Guelph, ON N1E 6A6
519.265.2165
- Jane Dunbar is moving to #1403 - 2200 Avenue Road. Toronto Her telephone and email remain the same.
- Carmen Diston will have a new address and email from November 26th:

Casa Loreto
Via Massaua 3
00162 Roma
ITALY

Tel: 011.39.06.863.99701
Fax: 011.39.06.863.99709
Email: cdiston@ibvmgen.org

Her previous email (ibvmcarmen@rogers.com) will remain open for province business and will be accessed by Pat and Judy. You can also use their own email addresses.