

What's Up

February 2023

LORETTO CANADA | SINCE 1847

*Mission is at the heart of who we are,
and love is the driving force that urges us on.*



Founder Teresa Dease 1820 - 1889

175 YEARS



Remembering Sr Mary Martin (Angela) Raczynski

She was born in a farming community southeast of Regina, one of 11 children. Many families moved away during the Dirty Thirties but the Raczynskis held on and Nellie (Angela) learned to survive the hardships of Saskatchewan.

Her ministry as a Sister was as a classroom teacher and Mary Martin excelled as a primary teacher. She taught across the country from Ontario to Saskatchewan to British Columbia. Her special love was music and art, her natural talent supported by many certificates in those subjects. She had a rhythm band in almost all her schools to the delight of the children and their parents. In the 50's and 60's her musical talent was also shared in the Sisters community worship as she was a talented keyboard player - both organ and piano.

Her life showed her prairie roots: strength and simplicity and maybe determination. She leaves us with few records and no memories except those we have of her. By all reports she was easy to live with, taking on any task needed. We do know she weathered the storms she encountered in a gentle quiet way, one of our adaptable pioneers of the Canadian Prairies.

All of her life experience and faithfulness to her God to Jesus, his mother Mary, and to the Loretto Sisters brought her to Presentation Manor for her last years in Assisted Living where she charmed everyone she met with her warm smile, twinkling eyes and gentle manner. Mary Martin, rest in peace in God's loving arms.

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We can do more together



L to R: Jesey Darwin & Sr Carmen in the foyer at Loretto College

Presentation Manor

We gathered on January 23 to celebrate Mary Ward Week. The day started with a delicious luncheon, followed by watching a special online Daily Mass, witnessing Ann Hanley make her formal Associate commitment and finally a January birthday party.



Mary Ward Centre

Kathy Murtha

February started off with a flurry with our Interfaith Prayer Service for Peace at The Mary Ward Centre. This was a collaborative initiative of the MWC, the Archdiocese, Development and Peace and Religions for Peace. It was a colorful and prayerful event attended by 50 people in person and over 20 online. We were the kick off for World Interfaith Harmony Week in Toronto. What a challenge it was to manage the hybrid model of in-person and online!



Clockwise from top left: Julie Kozak – Indigenous storyteller, Service participants, Joshua Lesk – Jewish musician, Anjali Kaur – Sikh artist with Kathy Murtha

online webinar on “World Religions 101: We Are Not Separate and We Are Not the Same.” In between we facilitated a Retreat on “Hope and Resilience in These Times” for the teachers of St. Martin’s Catholic School. They are a beautiful community of dedicated teachers working with students who are facing many problems and are unable to fit into the mainstream. It was a very meaningful experience. We were touched to hear that we hit on the ideal topic and created a day that was exactly what they needed. That’s what we want to hear!

A week later we collaborated with the TCDSB and the Archdiocese in an

Loretto College

Emily VanBerkum

On Sunday, January 29th, Loretto College residents and community members gathered for a festive celebration in honour of the culmination of Mary Ward Week; with the decor and menu also honouring Lunar New Year.



Every detail of the menu was carefully curated by Chef David and Loretto's House Council. It featured three courses with an abundance of delicious options such as: spring rolls, kung pao chicken, Hunan tofu, and Shanghai rice noodles with bok choy. And for dessert, there was a selection of cakes, mochi brownies, macarons (a community favourite), and Taiwanese pineapple cake.

The evening included welcoming remarks from Pranjal, the House Council President, about Mary Ward's life



and living legacy in the residence ministry to the present day. Sr. Mary Mallany, IBVM, complemented Pranjal's thoughtful remarks by offering her own reflections on discerning a vocation with the Loretto Sisters and what it means to be a Ward Woman today. Sr. Mary joyfully shared that she encountered the Loretto Sisters when she was four years old as her teachers. Though mysterious, she was drawn to them and felt a desire to be like them - to educate and inspire.

The evening concluded with floor photos by the magnificent staircase in the lobby. Loretto residents were all smiles and dressed in beautiful formal attire for the photo which will be showcased in SMC's 2022-23 Yearbook. What a special way to capture the excitement and hopefulness for the start of a new year and a new term - all in the spirit of Mary Ward as contemporary Ward women!



Loretto Maryholme

Carol Ivens and Jane McDonell

Alongside our scheduled retreats, both guided and silent, there is a steady request for private retreats, often with spiritual direction. Group bookings - writing, wellness, yoga, cancer survivors, etc. continue. Here we highlight a long standing activity which provides community, growth in faith, meaningful conversation - Women Spirituality Circles. These are monthly 2 - 3 hour gatherings where a book may be the focus but so much more happens.

The Wednesday WSC has begun to reflect on **The Diary of Jesus Christ** by Bill Cain sj. I was hooked from the very beginning by Greg Boyle's sj foreword. "These homilies, found in the diary ... soften us into a corner, then suddenly, we have new eyewear and see things in a wider frame; ... we can see Jesus as one who lived and breathed ... and it gives us hope." In January we intended to cover more homilies than we did but because each one was so rich we quickly decided to slow the pace, allowing us to take a bite, then chew and digest. Although we have only started this book I know it will be my favourite of all the books we have read over these past 16 years! *Sondra Sullivan, (former Loretto Abbey student)*



The Thursday afternoon WSC is beginning to read **Wintering: the power of rest and retreat in difficult times** by Katherine May. She takes us through winter, both literally and metaphorically, beginning with October preparations, through seeking the December light, to the slow emerging of early spring. Described as a "secular mystic", Katherine explores the cyclical nature of life, the value of fallow seasons, and the transformative power of difficult times. As we meet later this month, there is no doubt we will have deep and meaningful conversations about wintering in many forms in our own lives, and the hope of spring to follow.

Mary Baxter (former Georgina head librarian)

Happy Birthday Mary Ward



In honour of Mary Ward week, the Loretto College community was treated to a special British-

inspired lunch on January 26. Our kitchen staff outdid themselves! Afterwards, LC staff met in circle to reflect on Mary Ward, her letters to friends and how their messages are applicable to us today.

Top, L to R: Pushpa, Eva, Sr Mary Di & Solomon



L to R: Emily (Dean), Sr Mary M, Mary L, Jenny (CJI) & Manuel

Loretto Abbey and Loretto College School also honoured Mary Ward's legacy at Mass and with special treats and activities for students and teachers alike.



Students at Loretto College School

Top, Left to right: Damiano Femia, Lily Adams (Principal), Howard Cappadoccia (VP), Sr Evanne, Fr Choi (Mass Celebrant), Cosmo Damiani, Steven Silva (VP)

We can do more together than we can alone!

Evanne Hunter

The Collaboration on The Gathering Place is one example of the truth of this statement but we IBVMs are experiencing it in other ways as well. Here are three examples:

Programme Collaboration Committee: USMC/Regis College/Mary Ward Centre/IBVM/CSJ/Jesuits and Basilians

For over a year, this committee has been meeting regularly to discern ways to pool resources and bring our unique expertise to bear on offering events, workshops, celebrations and programmes in the areas of spirituality, education, social justice, ecology and indigenous issues.

Regis President, Gordon Wixon, SJ expressed it well as an example of the “four Cs:

- ◆ Co-promote – advertise an event on behalf of the others
- ◆ Coordinate – share information to avoid scheduling conflicts and duplicating
- ◆ Co-sponsor – provide financial and other support and share in recognition
- ◆ Collaborate – jointly prepare, share personnel and pool resources

Results are already evident. In the New Year, a series of sessions using the Jesuit Forum study guide, *Listening to Indigenous Voices*, has drawn about 50 participants from USMC, etc.

The exciting **Festival of Women and Girls: Making a World of Difference** will take place at MWC on March 04. It is a celebration of International Women’s Day and a tribute to the Loretto Sisters and the Sisters of St Joseph. Joining us will be Loretto and St Joseph’s High Schools, St Michael’s students and Becoming Neighbours. In fact, the women responsible for the Becoming Neighbours *Taste Our Food: Savour Our Diversity* cookbook will be offering up savoury snacks to sample from their recipe book along with the last 30 books to sell.

The Future of Spirituality Centres

Last May, we responded to an invitation from Margo Ritchie csj to be part of a group concerned about the future of Retreat and Spirituality Centres in Ontario. The aim was to begin conversation about what possibilities we see for future collaboration. As the capacity of Religious congregations to staff our facilities diminishes and realizing the “treasures” that our Centres are, we want to do what we can to assure their futures.

Since May, others Congregations have joined the conversation as have representatives of Universities and Faith and the Common Good, part of the global Laudato Si! Movement.

Our hope is to use our individual resources and experience to discover new partners and ways to protect our lands and our Centres of Spirituality and Ecology that enable us to make “wise and concrete choices that give our Centres a future beyond ourselves.” The group will gather at Jericho Centre in March to continue the exploration.

Photos page 2 - clockwise top left are: Sr Jeanne reads the Associate commitment with community watching, birthday cake, Sr Jane McD hugs new Associate Ann, all enjoy the birthday party - Srs Sarah, Jane McD, Anne & Celima with community members in background, thoughtful prayer before the festivities - front is Sr Anne, back is Srs Helen, Angela, Susan, Associate and Sr Marianna