



What's Up | November 2024

LORETTO CANADA ~ SINCE 1847

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

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Extended Leadership Meeting

In September Carmen Diston and Jane McDonell (from the leadership team) and Sarah Rudolph (for communications support) were thrilled to participate in the Extended Leadership Meeting (ELM) held in Loyola, Spain. It brought together leadership from both IBVM and CJ as all continued to deepen the process of Becoming One. You might have followed the days here:

(<https://www.ibvm.org/recap-of-elm/>) and seen this photo of the full group. It was a time of honest conversations, personal and communal transformation, and creativity.



Region Gathering – Oct. 24th

Sisters, Associates and Staff came together on October 24th.

Through word, video and a bit of creativity, Sarah, Jane and Carmen shared some of the highlights of the ELM experience and passed on information. There was time for some sharing, and questions.



From left: Carmen Diston, Sarah Rudolph, Jeanne Cover

Jeanne Cover and the Associate team led the ritual welcoming some of our new Associates (Ela Arvela, Lisa Bowers, Eva Rodriguez-Diaz, and Effie Slapnicar).



From Left: Jeanne Cover; Associates - Ela Arvela, Eva Rodriguez-Diaz, Lisa Bowers, and Effie Slapnicar

Ursula Witkowska prepared and led the blessing of jubilarians (Mary Laverty (85), Marianna Gignac (80), Mary Ellen Scanlon (75), Celima Lindsay (70), Rosemary Albon (65), and Jane McDonnell (60) with 435 years of loving, generous commitment between them! Missioning prayer cards were given out at the end. This year we are all praying for the same intentions.



Ursula Witkowska



Mary Laverty

'present in spirit'



Mary Ellen Scanlon

'present in spirit'

Throughout the year I will pray for:

The beatification of Mary Ward

The ongoing process of coming together as one Mary Ward Family

The IBVM Sisters' official vote on July 31st, the Feast of St. Ignatius Loyola

The intentions of all CJ and IBVM Sisters, Associates, Colleagues



From left: Jane McDonnell, Marianna Gignac, Rosemary Albon, Celima Lindsay



Becoming One

Evanne Hunter IBVM wrote a post on our Becoming One process for the University of St. Michael's College blog "[InsightOut](#)".

Sisters on the move

Mary DiGirolamo recently moved to Presentation Manor – suite 492. She goes with her special gifts of caring and friendship. There have been two internal moves – Norma Kirvan to suite 249, and Theresa Frey to suite 229.



Mary DiGirolamo



Norma Kirvan



Theresa Frey

Events & Reports

The annual archdiocesan Cardinal's Dinner was held on Nov. 5th. Sisters, Staff and Associates filled out our table. This annual event, now in its 45th year, supports over 35 charities.

Several of us attended an event "Unpacking the Synod on Synodality" where Gill Goulding CJ was one of the panelists.

The Angel Foundation annual Snow Ball Gala will take place in early December. This organization supports the many and varied needs of students in the Toronto Catholic District School Board.

A few of us attended An Evening in Paris formal dinner at Loretto College, organised by House Council and dons. The dining room was beautifully decorated, and the delicious feast was prepared and served by Compass Food Services.



Colleagues in the news

Duncan Buttenshaw, resigned from his position at USMC to take up a new position with the University of Toronto Schools. Loretto leadership is among those who will miss him; we are grateful for all he has contributed to the USMC-Loretto work of the Management Agreement for Loretto College and ongoing efforts toward the sale and eventual redevelopment of 70 St. Mary Street.

Loretto Ministries Update

Our new Executive Director, Dolores Kwapien, has spent her first few months interviewing the previous IBVM Leadership Team and the Directors of our Ministries, learning the history, vision, charism and focus behind what we do today. Updating Policies & Procedures and streamlining communications & reporting are on her agenda for the coming months as she works with all the staff of our IBVM ministries to create a unified Team.

Our [Archives](#) Team, in addition to their ongoing tasks of sorting & preserving historical documents and preparing displays when requested, has been conducting interviews with Sisters to capture an oral history of these women who have inspired us all to embrace the charism of Mary Ward. The Team is also continuing work with the Loretto Abbey Archives club on their 2024-5 projects. They are hoping to create a programming kit related to the history of the Loretto Sisters in Canada that could be used in various classrooms.



Michelle and Robert with a display of Archival material at the Loretto Abbey Open House for prospective new students.



Loretto Maryholme held a widely popular Celtic Retreat to close their summer season of silent retreats. The season provided retreats to many lay people of various traditions and Sisters of several congregations.

Many people unfamiliar with prayerful silence continue to relish it through Maryholme's 3-Day Directed Silent Retreats. On the land they are expanding and strengthening the savannah area, an important part of the eco-system that supports a host of native plants and pollinators. A highlight of this past season was teaming up with HiveShare to place bee hives in the savannah. The honey harvest is eagerly anticipated.



The Mary Ward Centre ([MWC](#)) Team started off at full speed in September. In addition to the regular retreat offerings to students, [new programming](#) has been developed to offer more opportunities for schools/students to participate (additional SHSM certifications, creating a version of the high school level ‘Free from Harm’ program for Grades 6-8 – to name a few). The screening in October of the film “[The Canadian Dream](#)” about the story of a migrant worker was powerful, and addressing 400 participants at a regional anti-sex trafficking symposium empowered youth.

[Elementary](#) students have been enjoying a new webinar series, “Storytime with Sr Sarah”. Adult retreats continue as well as collaboration with many community groups who also focus on Social Justice issues.

We encourage you to meditate on the thoughtful and inspiring land acknowledgement that has been added to the Mary Ward website. Please keep an eye

on the ministry websites (linked above) to see what is being offered and to help promote the Centres to anyone you feel might be interested in the programs being offered. Your prayers for those involved in the IBVM ministries and the outreach provided are appreciated and a great source of support for the work undertaken by our staff.





STIR (formerly known as Ignatian Spirituality Project) recently held their AGM. IBVM is a founding member of this initiative and supports it financially as well as through volunteer positions. Carmen Diston is a member on the Board of Directors and Sarah Rudolph is a retreat and formation team member. Originally Toronto-based, it's gratifying to hear how the retreat outreach and volunteer teams are growing, and retreats are now being offered in Montreal and most recently Nova Scotia, with local teams in each of those places.