

"SISTERS IN SPIRIT"

If you come to visit our Sisters in Marlboro, you will meet two new members of the community there. No, they are not Sisters of St. Chretienne, but Sisters of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. In August, Sisters Jeanne D'Arc Poirier and Bernadette Lemoine left their convent in Peter-sham, MA to form community with our Sisters.



Srs. Bernadette Lemoine & Jeanne d'Arc Poirier

For many years now, Sisters of different congregations have participated in intercommunity living. In Marlboro since 1997, our Sisters needing skilled care have been welcomed at Marie Esther Healthcare Center by the Sisters of St. Anne. In fact, presently there are Sisters from five congregations there. At our own residence, as some rooms have become available due to changing demographics, we began a conversation with the Sisters of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin who needed to find housing for some of their Sisters.

With their presence, there is a sense of new life and joy in the community as a whole. Bernadette and Jeanne d'Arc have joined in all aspects of life in their new home, sharing prayer, meals, activities, outings, etc. They volunteer in the thrift shop and usually find avid card players to join them in the evenings. They have found their new companions to be 'sisters' to them, offering their compassion and help with this adjustment that is certainly not easy at their age.

It is amazing how God has led this process. Jesus promised the 'hundredfold' for those who left all to follow Him. He promised we would have many 'homes', and through His Spirit, we are finding ways to overcome these uncertain times, making a home for each other and being enriched in the process.



NEW BEGINNINGS

"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland."

(Isaiah 43:19)

As we publish the latest edition of St. Chretienne Annals, we, the Sisters of St. Chretienne, are entering into a period of transition in our Congregation. After almost three years of prayer and discernment, we have decided to establish a new model of government to replace the one which had been in place over the last forty years. Since the Second Vatican Council, we had been divided into Provinces to facilitate the governing process across international boundaries. Our current reality of diminishment of personnel and resources has prompted us to evaluate this mode of functioning and opt instead for a Unified Form of Government voted in at the General Chapter of 2010. The new structure calls for a Superior General, an Assistant General, four General Councilors, each of whom will assume the leadership of one of the four regions in the Congregation, namely, Africa, Canada, Europe, and the United States. We hope that the new structure will strengthen our bonds of unity, respect the diversity of cultures, increase our solidarity, and renew the vitality of our ministry.

For the last four years, Sister Lisette Michaud has led our Province assisted by Sister Jeanne Allard, Sister Jeanne Fortin, Sister Julie Tremblay, and Provincial Treasurer, Sister Ida Devoe.



Symbolic "bridge" used at General Chapter

We wish to thank them for all they have done to keep the spirit of our foundress, Mme de Me-janes, alive during these difficult times in religious life. At a special gathering of all the Sisters on November 13th, we celebrated the transfer of leadership "Crossing the Bridge: Leadership in Transition", thanking God for all that was accomplished through the service of the outgoing team

and asking for blessings upon the new team of Sister Agnes Therrien, Sister Jacqueline Dickey, and Sister Julie Tremblay. Sister Ida Devoe will continue in her role as Treasurer.



Sr. Julie Tremblay, Advisor, Sr. Agnes Therrien, Regional Leader
Sr. Jacqueline Dickey, Advisor

The central image of the General Chapter was that of a bridge as a reminder that Jesus is the bridge between His Father and all of humanity, a theme of our Chapter Orientation. We have committed ourselves to being bridges of hope for all the hopeless, of light for those in darkness, of trust and forgiveness among us and around us. Won't you join us in this effort? We count on your prayers and support.

Sr. Agnes Therrien, SSCh.
Regional Leader



To our families, friends,
benefactors
The Sisters thank you for your
interest and support and
wish you a holy, fervent
Advent Season.

Editors: Sr. Agnes Therrien
Sr. Lisette Michaud
Layout & Printing: Sr. Ida M. Devoe
Sr. Jeanne Fortin
Mailing: Sr. Jeanne Fortin
and Sisters
PHONE: 508-384-8066
FAX: 508-507-3634
E-MAIL: ssch@tiac.net
www.sistersofstchretienne.org

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SAINT CHRETIENNE ANNALS
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EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR 2009



Sr. Paulette Roy is a phlebotomist at St. Joseph's Women and Infants Hospital in Tampa, FL. She has worked there for 14 years, drawing blood from mothers and newborns. Sr. Paulette has been gifted with the ability to make the draw almost painless, even for difficult cases. Imagine newborns with such tiny veins who hardly cry!

In March of 2009, Sr. Paulette was awarded the Employee of the Month award, having been recommended by her manager as an exceptional team member who demonstrates exemplary role model behavior. In the application, we read: "Sister always demonstrates kindness and compassion with our patients, visitors and team members. She provides not only a wonderful skill and service to the hospital, but also tends to our patients' spiritual needs."

One day, while on her rounds, Paulette was asked if she would perform an emergency Baptism for a dying baby. The chaplain was absent, and the family was in great distress, as we can imagine. Paulette reached out in compassion, administering the sacrament and giving comfort to the family. She also reached out to us, her Sisters, asking us to keep this family in our prayer.

At the hospital, one of the twelve Employees of the Month is chosen for Employee of the Year. Sr. Paulette was surprised and touched to be chosen for this honor also. Her co-workers were very happy for her, as were the patients and family members. We, her Sisters, rejoice with Sr. Paulette as she witnesses to the spirit of St. Chretienne in which the Sisters recognize, welcome and serve Christ in everyone.

IN MEMORIAM

Sr. Aurore Laplante



1921-2009

Sister Aurore was gracious and kind, a devoted elementary teacher for many years. In 1976, in her home parish in Rumford, ME, she visited the elderly and sick parishioners. Later, she was a companion to the elderly in Salem, finding her joy in bringing them Communion. In 1999, she moved to our retirement residence in Marlboro. She devoted herself to prayer and always had delicate attentions for her Sisters. May you rejoice with God forever, Aurore!

To many of our St. Chretienne Academy Alumnae, Sr. Gertrude was one of their outstanding teachers. For more than 30 years since the closing of the Academy, she kept in touch with our 800 former students. She organized the annual Alumnae Day gatherings and, twice a year, wrote a letter containing news of the 'girls' and the special events in their lives. She would comb the *Salem Evening News* to highlight birth and death announcements, and would attend wakes or funerals to comfort the families. How many class reunions Sr. Arline attended! It is our joy in this issue of the *Annals* to honor Sr. Arline.

She taught at Sacred Heart School in Amesbury, then at St. Chretienne Academy in Salem. In 1971, the school was closed and the property sold. Sr. Arline helped supervise the move to our new residence in Marlboro, MA. In her later years, she became the Religious Education Coordinator at St. Alphonsus Parish in Danvers (1976-79).

From 1981-97, Sr. Arline moved many times; Wrentham to Salem to Pawtucket to Marlboro. She was active until a few years ago when her poor health and hearing loss caused her to need skilled care. At Marie Esther Health Center with the Sisters of St. Anne, she received excellent care. She showed constant gratitude for the kindnesses she received from the dedicated staff.

Sr. Arline died on June 12, 2010. We are sure that her Lord welcomed her with: "Come, Arline, blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!" Even as we miss her, we ask her guidance as we try to follow her example of faithfulness to the Lord of our lives.

Sr. Arline Blais (Sr. Gertrude)



1915-2010

OUR LADY THRIFT SHOP

In the last issue of our Annals, we announced that we were beginning a new ministry in Marlboro, Our Lady Thrift Shop. Since the opening of our store on December 1st last year, more and more people have come either to bring donations or to shop. The Catholic churches in the area printed our information in their bulletins, and the thrift shop was featured with editorials in the local newspapers. Fliers in Spanish and Portuguese were made up by a friend and were posted in the neighborhood stores and businesses as well as schools and churches in the city.



Srs. Cecile Berthiaume, Bernadette Lemoine

The initial goals for the thrift shop were to provide a ministry for our senior Sisters; to serve the needy families in the area; to get to know our neighbors and the people of Marlboro; to cover our initial and ongoing expenses. The Sisters at the retirement house have generously volunteered their time and talents as they receive and sort through donations, welcome and assist customers. Sister Jeannette Desorcy, the store manager, speaks for all the Sisters: "People come in and ask for our prayers. We want to be there for them and listen to them."

The shop is clean and orderly, bright and cheerful. The Sisters have managed to place a lot of clothes and interesting items in a rather small space. As one customer noted, "I love to come to this store because it's peaceful, clean and organized." And another shopper was so happy with her purchase that she exclaimed: "I love this coat so much that I'll tell everyone where I got it!" The store runs special sales too, like the bag sale, when shoppers can put as many things as they can in a bag for just \$5.00.



Sr. Jeanne Marie Fregeau

The Sisters are sensitive to the needs of other charitable organizations such as the men's shelter down the road. Personnel come to make purchases of coats and other needed items for the men. A donation of hand-knitted scarves will be given to them. The residents from the nearby group home are also regular visitors who feel right at home in the store.

We hope that you, our readers, will check out our shop. It is next to the convent at 197 Pleasant Street. It is open on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 10:00 - 12:00 and 1:00 - 3:00. You may see a former teacher, a Sister who used to be at the preschool or someone you knew from your parish. You will be amazed at the energy and dedication of the Sisters who are enthused about their work despite their age. We are very grateful to the many people who bring their gently used clothing and items so that we can recycle them and share them with others.

Sr. Lisette Michaud, SSCh.



Sr. Jeannette Desorcy with shoppers

Mona Boule 1929-2010

Mona was the dear friend who welcomed the Sisters to the residence in Marlboro when they arrived in 1973. She took art lessons from Sr.



Raymond and became her assistant, working with her through the years and helping to care for her in her final days. Mona oversaw the maintenance of the house at one time. Her generosity was boundless, as was her participation in anything that needed doing. She was passionate about our latest project, "Our Lady Thrift Shop". Stricken with cancer, Mona accepted God's will and was very courageous. Rest in God's joy, Mona!

I am interested in contributing toward the needs and ministries of the Srs. of St. Chretienne

\$100 _____ \$75 _____ \$50 _____ \$25 _____ Other _____

Your concern and interest are vital to us and any contribution will be greatly appreciated.

NAME _____ DATE _____

ADDRESS _____

Please make checks to THE SISTERS OF ST. CHRETIENNE
and mail to: 297 Arnold Street, Wrentham, MA 02093-1798