



# GRATITUDE

L'Arche Winnipeg Newsletter #78



## Passage of L'Arche Founder Jean Vanier



*Hazel, from L'Arche Winnipeg, had the pleasure of going to visit her good friend Jean at his home in Trosly, France, in 2012*

*Jean Vanier, founder of L'Arche and co-founder of Faith and Light, passed away on May 7th at age 90. He will be missed by a countless number of people across the world who have been influenced by him, his words, his spirituality.*

*The following comments are excerpts from a memorial letter by Stephan Posner and Stacy Cates-Carney, International Leader and Vice-International Leader of L'Arche.*

**J**ean was tall! First of all, he was almost 2 meters tall: many of us have in mind his long silhouette so often bent towards the person he was speaking with, as if to say he was aware of the need to establish an immediate closeness with the one who had come to meet him.

In his way of leaning in, looking, listening and speaking to those who met him, Jean's greatness lay in how he could bring into the open, part of the light buried deep in so many people. He bore witness to something quite unexpected and unforeseen: from the heart of a wounded man or woman, (and which of us is not wounded?), from where we least expect it, within our poverty, he would see a glimmer of light, a ray of joy, which reveals the sheer humanity of a human being. What was great about Jean was that he turned upside down our normal way of seeing, and he saw greatness in the very fragility of our human condition.

"You are more beautiful than you dare to believe:" Jean really loved repeating this phrase. And yet he cannot be separated either from "the right to be ugly" which he also enjoyed pointing out. He would speak to us about the "human dough" which we are made of, this indivisible mix of light and shade; we sometimes feel stuck in this dough, but it is also our most fertile soil.

*(Continued on page 3)*

## 15th Annual Walk with L'Arche Another Success

**by Diane Truderung**  
*Director of Fund Development  
and Communications*

The 15<sup>th</sup> annual **Vickar Automotive Group's Walk with L'Arche** on May 5<sup>th</sup> was a great success. There were over 300 people in attendance and 70 volunteers who came in support of L'Arche. The participants helped to raise a total of \$ 60,229.25 for L'Arche. Pledges raised from this event will be used to help maintain and improve the quality of life of L'Arche members with a developmental disability and their assistants.

The **L'Arche Tova Café** team *Another One Bites the Crust* raised a total of \$7,580.00 and won the plaque and the

prize for the Top Fundraising Team. **Hazel** from L'Arche won the Top Individual Fundraiser prize, having raised \$4,900.00 with the help of her friends Kathy and Roger.

Thank you for your support of L'Arche Winnipeg. We hope that you can join us for the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Vickar Automotive Group's Walk with L'Arche, which will take place at Oxford Heights Community Club on Sunday, May 3, 2020.

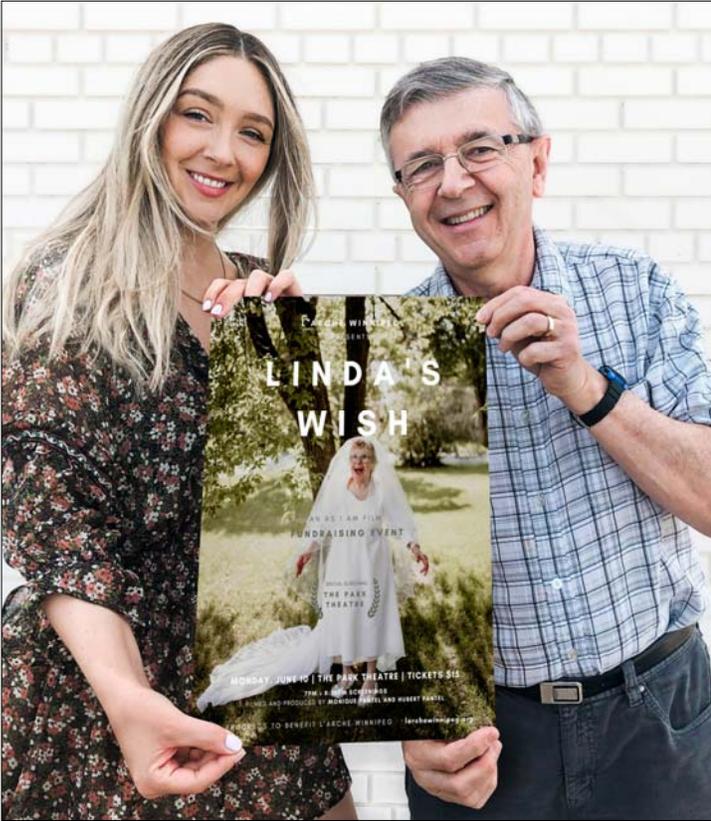
*See more pictures of our walk  
on page 4*

*For more information on L'Arche:*

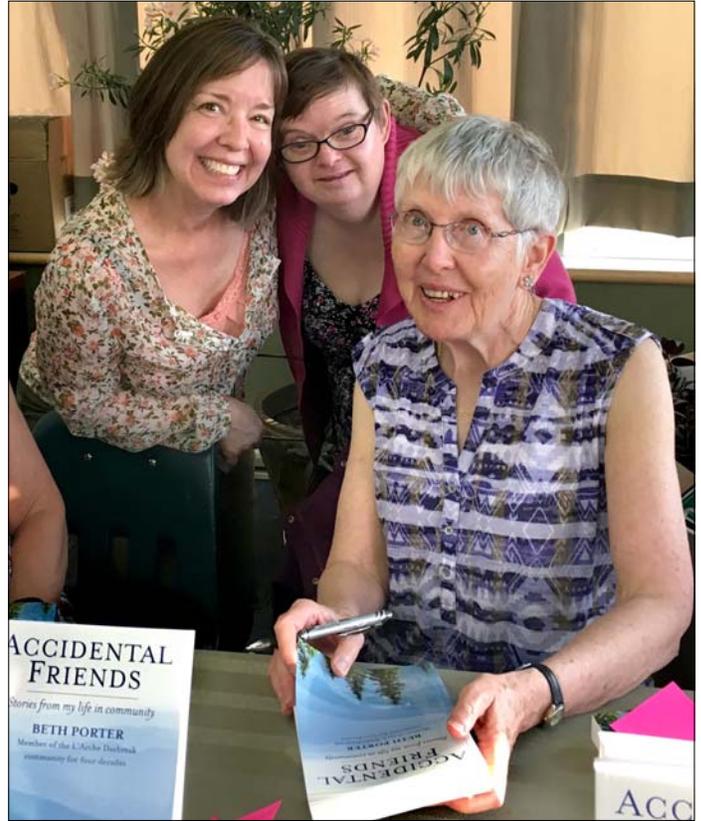
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## Celebrating L'Arche Stories Through Film, Books



*Father/daughter & fellow photographers Hubert & Monique Pantel collaborated to create the film "Linda's Wish"*



*Author Beth Porter signs copies of her book "Accidental Friends", as L'Arche Winnipeg members Liz and Lee Ann look on*

### Linda's Wish

Linda, a member of L'Arche Winnipeg since 1974, was able to realise her life-long dream of being a bride last year (see our November, 2018 newsletter for the full story).

Linda's special day was documented by photographer Monique Pantel, who created a short film depicting Linda's immense joy in finally living out her dream amidst all her friends. Included in the film was old video and pictures taken by her father Hubert, who has documented Linda's life in L'Arche over the past 45 years.

The film premiered on the big screen of The Park Theatre in Winnipeg on June 10<sup>th</sup>, with 300 people in attendance. As a fundraiser for L'Arche Winnipeg, the event raised the amount of \$3,815.00 for L'Arche, in ticket sales and donations.

### Accidental Friends

Approximately 90 people gathered at McNally Robinson book store at Grant Park Shopping Centre on June 4<sup>th</sup> for the Winnipeg launch of Beth Porter's book of stories from her life in a L'Arche community. Beth has been a part of the L'Arche Daybreak community in Toronto for nearly 40 years. Over 70 copies of **Accidental Friends** were sold that evening, with royalties from the sales going to L'Arche Winnipeg. The book launch was part of L'Arche Canada's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in 2019.

Originally from Winnipeg, Beth Porter was a teacher in Ontario when she discovered L'Arche in 1980. For many years, she has also written reflections for the Catholic missal, published by Novalis.



### 7<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of L'Arche Tova Café

L'Arche Tova Café celebrated its' 7<sup>th</sup> anniversary on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Café is currently selling freshly baked bread and a variety of baked goods at the Transcona Biz Market Garden, every Thursday in

*Photo: Stacey prepares to hand out free carrot cake for the 7<sup>th</sup> anniversary*

July and August at Centennial Square from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Hope to see you there!

The Café will be closed for one week in August for staff holidays, from Sunday, August 18<sup>th</sup> until Monday August 26<sup>th</sup>, and will re-open on Tuesday, August 27<sup>th</sup>.

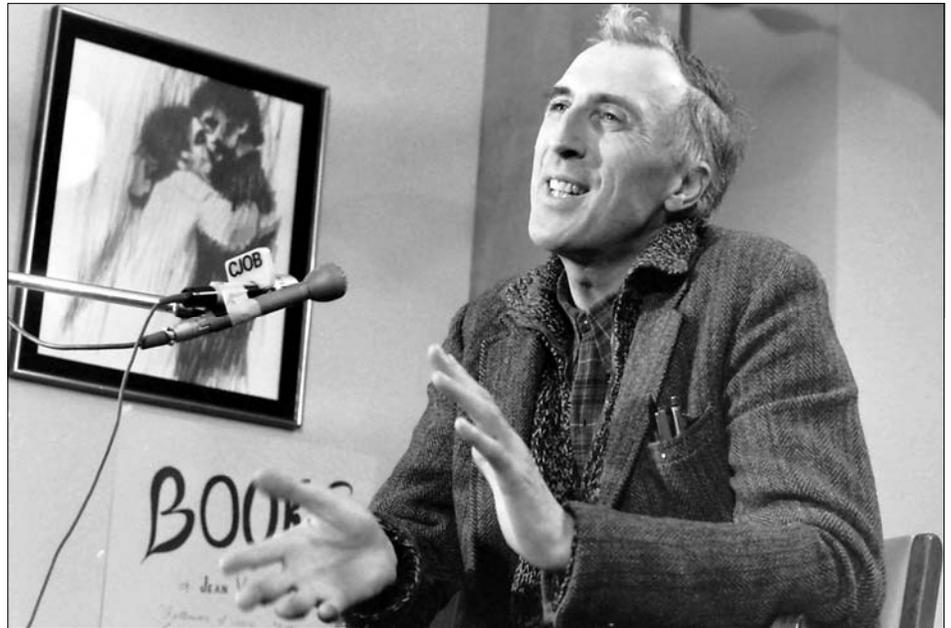
## Remembering Jean Vanier

by Jim Lapp  
Community Leader

After Jean Vanier passed away in early May, I was in a discussion with two members of L'Arche. We asked each other, "Where would we be if he had not come into our lives?" We all agreed that our lives would be poorer without his influence. We also asked ourselves, "What did he teach us?"

First, he taught us to recognize the gifts of people with developmental disabilities. They are people of welcome, forgiveness and celebration. Above all else, in their vulnerability they can lead us to God, to the Spirit of God within each one of us. They know what is most important in life: our relationships with other people. They are not afraid to express their love and need for others. Jean also realized that we need to live in relationships with other people if we are to grow and become more ourselves, more human. We all need community. That is why Jean Vanier called L'Arche a school of the heart.

Another thing I learned from Jean Vanier is to not be afraid to ask for help. He may have learned it from L'Arche members with a developmental disability who, in their vulnerability, know that they need help every day. Jean Vanier was always asking people for help. At his Gimli retreat in 1973, he said to Sister Marie Paradis "I think you should start a L'Arche community in Winnipeg." So she did. He also asked the retreatants for a home to start the community. Sister Cecile Fortier of the Oblates Sisters, led by the Holy Spirit, offered their small convent in Transcona to Jean Vanier to start a L'Arche community - and 46



*Jean Vanier in 1974, speaking at a press conference in the L'Arche L'Ainé house, for the official opening of L'Arche in Winnipeg.*

years later we are still using that home. In my experience at L'Arche, most people like to help others. It gives their lives meaning and the human connection we all need. So let us not be afraid to ask each other for help.

After Jean passed away I heard Sue Mosteller, a good friend of Sister Marie Paradis and Jean, speak of his legacy on CBC Radio. His legacy for her was that he had taught her, and many of us, to trust ourselves - to listen to the Spirit of God within us and follow that voice, that conscience. That trust allowed her to take on the roles of Community Leader of L'Arche Daybreak, and as International Coordinator of L'Arche. That trust in our inner voice

is part of the culture of L'Arche. I believe that over the 44 years I have been connected to L'Arche, I have learned to trust myself, and my gifts of discernment. That doesn't mean I don't make mistakes, usually because I haven't trusted that inner voice. And while discernment or trusting the inner voice is part of our culture, at L'Arche Winnipeg we certainly need to encourage each other to discover and trust the Spirit of God within us, trust that inner voice.

Thank you Jean Vanier for all the gifts you have given us. May we all carry on your legacy.

*(Continued from page 1)*

Often, through his presence and his gaze, we have discovered hospitality without limit: the feeling of being seen, seen for the dough that we are, known, and amazed to be deeply loved: "you are more beautiful than you dare to believe."

He was able to look at us in this way, because he knew that he too was made of the same dough, capable of light and shade; it is beyond doubt, that, in spite of our own 'heaviness', we have been continually welcomed as we are, through Jean's gift of making each person feel uniquely special.

In relation to his role at L'Arche, Jean wrote the following: "Finally," he said, "it is often said that I am the founder, but I am simply the first to arrive."



*Jean with members of L'Arche Winnipeg, at our 25th anniversary in 1998*

## Walk with L'Arche in photos...



## Diane Truderung Receives the Paul Harris Fellow Recognition

On June 20, 2019, Diane Truderung received the Paul Harris Fellow Recognition. This award was created in memory of Paul Harris, the founder of Rotary to show appreciation for contributions exemplifying the highest ideal in Rotary in placing “service above self”. Diane has been a proud member of Transcona Rotary since 2012.

Diane is the Director of Fund Development and Communications for L'Arche Winnipeg. She was a member of the L'Arche Strategy Committee that first explored the possibility of starting a social enterprise, and in 2012 the L'Arche Tova Café became a reality. Diane previously worked for the Canadian Diabetes Association (now Diabetes Canada) and as Executive Director of the Transcona Biz Zone.

Her volunteer work includes serving as Past President of the Transcona Museum, as a member of the City of Winnipeg Library Advisory Committee (NE Area) and as a volunteer with the Transcona Hi Neighbour Festival. As well, Diane was co-chair of the TMAC



*(l. to r.) David Marsh, past District Governor, Diane Truderung, and Jay Pauley, past president of Rotary*

Group (Teens Making A Connection) which received the Mayor's Award under the Education category in 2009. In 2012, she was commissioned to write **Transcona's Story, 100 Year of Progress**. She received the Association of Manitoba Archives Manitoba Day Award in 2014. This award recognizes users of archives who have completed an original work of excellence which contributes to the understanding and celebration of Manitoba History.

## GRATITUDE FROM WINNIPEG

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Published 3 times a year  
(February, June, November)

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*L'Arche Winnipeg Inc. is a non-profit organization.  
Donations are tax-deductible.*

*Charitable Reg. No.  
107597692 RR001*