



GRATITUDE

L'Arche Winnipeg Newsletter #80



Walk with L'Arche returns for a 16th edition on May 3rd

The 16th annual **Vickar Automotive Group's Walk with L'Arche** will take place on Sunday May 3rd, 2020 at Oxford Heights Community Club, 359 Dowling Ave. East in Transcona.

We hope many of you will join us for this year's Walk. The walk not only raises funds for L'Arche, it is also about bringing together people with and without disabilities who can share an enjoyable afternoon together. Check-in tables open at 12:30 PM on May 3rd and the Walk starts at 2:00 PM sharp. You can walk either 1 km or 5 km on the walking trail, and then return to the Club to enjoy complimentary food, music, and many prize draws.

Event Registration & Pledges

The Walk brochure is where you will find the registration form, the T-Shirt request form, and the pledge form where you can record money raised. Donor's complete mailing address should be recorded on the pledge form for income tax receipt purposes. Pick up a brochure at the L'Arche Winnipeg office, or at L'Arche Tova Café. Phone or email the L'Arche office if you would like additional brochures mailed out to you. You can also print a registration form or a pledge form directly from the L'Arche Winnipeg website.

Registration forms and pledges collected can be dropped off anytime before the Walk at the L'Arche Winnipeg office. You can also collect pledges up until the day of the Walk, and hand them in on May 3rd at the check-in at Oxford Heights Community Club.

Walk T-Shirts

You can obtain a free Walk T-shirt if you submit your registration form & fees to the L'Arche office by **Friday, April 3rd**, along with a **minimum of \$50.00** in raised pledges. *(No additional T-shirts will be ordered after the April 3rd deadline).* You can then continue to raise more pledges until the Walk on May 3rd, thus increasing your gift card level. Gift cards are



earned starting at the \$200.00 level of pledges, and the value of the gift card increases with subsequent levels of pledges brought in.

The colour of the T-Shirt this year will be red, Manitoba's provincial flag colour. May is also the month when we celebrate the 150th anniversary of the province of Manitoba, so our commemorative Walk T-Shirts will all have "**MANITOBA 150**" on the back (there will be no team names on the back of the T-Shirt).

Walk as a Team

Create a team by inviting family members, friends and co-workers to walk with you (minimum of 5 people required to be considered a team). You could make the Walk your own special celebration of the 150th anniversary of the province of Manitoba.

Volunteers

Many volunteers are needed to make the walk a success. Please contact our volunteer coordinator Maureen Manning by phone at 204-237-0300 ext. 20, or at volunteer@larchewinnipeg.org if you would like to volunteer at the Walk. Volunteers help to ensure that 100% of your raised pledges will be used to improve the quality of life of



our L'Arche members with developmental disabilities and their assistants.

Prizes

The prizes at the walk are donated by the business community, organizations and individuals. If you have a prize that you would like to donate for the walk please contact Diane Truderung at 204-237-0300 ext.1, or dianetruderung@larchewinnipeg.org. All registered walkers are eligible for the many prize draws.

Come and join us for this family fun event on May 3rd.

Remembering Michelle, a “Giver of Love”

by Hubert Pantel

The year 2020 began with the loss of another long-term member of L’Arche Winnipeg, **Michelle Roy**, who passed away on January 8th.

Michelle came to live at L’Arche in the spring of 1984 as a young 23 year-old full of life and energy. Later that year, Michelle met the Queen who presented Michelle with the “Special Olympic Commonwealth Award” during her visit to Winnipeg, a moment Michelle cherished. Michelle was an avid sports fan, and very competitive: bowling, swimming, soccer... Her Special Olympics achievements included trips to Vancouver and, in 1991, to Minneapolis for the International Summer Special Olympics (as goalie for Canada’s soccer team). Michelle’s room was full of trophies and medals won over the years. Evelyn, then House Leader at The Ark where Michelle lived, at one time wanted to help her “clean out” her closet - Evelyn had counted 115 T-



Michelle (left) lived at The Ark with her good friend Yvonne (who also passed away, in 2015)

Shirts, but Michelle couldn’t part with any of them because each had a special meaning, a memory, attached to it.

Michelle loved spending time with her sisters, or visiting her brothers in Edmonton. In fact, Michelle loved **every-one**, with a welcoming smile and bubbling joy. That was the one thing that kept being mentioned by different speakers at her memorial service which was an upbeat, happy remembrance of Michelle with many people wearing Winnipeg Jets or Blue Bomb-



If there’s a party, Michelle is sure to be at the heart of it (photo: New Year’s Eve, 1993)

ers attire - a reflection of who Michelle was, and the kind of “party” she would have liked. Her brother called her “A giver of love”, saying Michelle loved welcoming everyone on her path, even if that love was not returned.

Michelle’s mantra was “*Don’t worry, be happy*”. She wouldn’t hesitate to share that wisdom with anyone (it could be received as a consolation, or as a challenge...) and she certainly lived what she preached! Evelyn tells the following story, which is indicative of how much Michelle was a joyful, transformative light in our world:

It was late Friday afternoon of the long weekend in May, and I was taking Michelle to the bank to cash her cheque. When we got to the bank, the line-up was very long, extending outside the front door. No one was talking, you could feel the tension in the air - with everyone impatient to get their banking done and head off for the long weekend.

Michelle knows the tellers and when she was inside the door, from the back of the lineup she shouted to a teller “It’s my birthday today!” - “Happy birthday Michelle” came the reply, “How are you celebrating?” - “We’re going bowling!” Michelle exclaimed enthusiastically. Another teller wished her a happy birthday, then another, and the conversation went on. Then the person in front of Michelle in the lineup turned around and wished her a happy birthday, then another person, and another ...

The silence and the palpable tension that existed before Michelle’s entry was completely transformed in a matter of minutes: people were now more relaxed, there were smiles and conversations going on. A transformation brought about by Michelle, who had the freedom to simply be herself...



A moment at a Café Music Night in 2017

February Music Night at L’Arche Tova Café

The first Café Music Night of 2020 will be held on Thursday, February 20th, from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM (at 119 Regent Ave. West). The first set will feature Craig & Kitty Buckboro and Mick Grace. The second set performers are Jamie Buckboro and Sarah Maureen.

Tickets are \$20.00 (includes dessert & coffee or tea) and must be purchased in advance at the L’Arche Winnipeg office, 118 Regent Ave. East (open Monday to Friday, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM). Only 50 tickets available!

A Hidden Wholeness

by **Jim Lapp**
Community Leader

*Thus says God, the Lord,
who created the heavens and stretched them out,
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people upon it,
and spirit to those who walk in it.
I am the Lord,
I have called you in righteousness,
I have taken you by the hand and kept you;
- Isaiah 42 v. 5, 6*

The title “**A Hidden Wholeness**” comes from my favourite author Thomas Merton. He is telling us that, in everything, everybody is in relationship with each other. That each of us is part of the whole. We belong to that whole universe. We were created as part of that whole. As Isaiah suggests, we were created by grace and are given every breath. We are also joined by the spirit to all of creation. It is often hidden from us because we get caught up in our own egos, or other worldly things. We forget that we belong to the whole of creation. I will confess that at times in my life, especially in my younger days, I thought I was the centre of the universe: kind of like a three year old walking through the mall, thinking that he owns this world. Fortunately, as I have aged I realize that I am more like a grain of sand on the beach: not seemingly all that important as one grain, but something beautiful with all the other grains of sand that form the beach.

Many of our members with a disability, like Thomas Merton, are mystics. They intuitively understand what I am trying to say. They get that life is all about relationships. We were created by love and when in touch with that wholeness, we too are loving beings. I have learned from our members with a disability that this love of God is inclusive. They are open to welcoming everyone who comes to visit, no matter who they are. When I first came to join L’Arche Winnipeg in September 1974, I was a bearded long-haired hippie. They didn’t seem to even notice. I can’t imagine feeling more warmly welcomed anywhere than I was that day. Right away I felt I belonged to this community, to



Celebrating our belonging to each other, and the world, at a L’Arche Night

this universe. Never have I so strongly felt the love and compassion of the Spirit of God as I did those first few months at L’Arche Winnipeg. That is why I am still here.

In another article in this newsletter we celebrate Michelle Roy’s life. She was one of the most enthusiastic and welcoming people that I have ever met. About 25 years ago, David Northcott from Winnipeg Harvest came to Aberdeen Mennonite Church, which I attend, to talk about his agency. He didn’t know I was on the Board of Directors of L’Arche Winnipeg, but he spent most of his time talking about Michelle and Yvonne from L’Arche, and their impact on Winnipeg Harvest. Their enthusiasm and

welcome completely changed the atmosphere at Winnipeg Harvest and filled both volunteers and staff with the desire to show up to work. Michelle and Yvonne made everyone feel that they were important and that they belonged.

On the L’Arche International website I first saw the phrase “Creating a World Where Everyone Belongs”. That is what our members with a disability do. They intuitively get that we are all part of the whole and that we all belong together in the Spirit, in relationship. They help us discover that we are all the beloved daughters and sons of God.

“Order of Canada” Recognition



Photo by Warren Pot

Sr. Sue Mosteller

L’Arche received special recognition in January with the announcement that **Sister Sue Mosteller, C.S.J.**, was named an Officer of the **Order of Canada**. The award’s citation states that it is “*For her dedication to improving the lives of people with intellectual disabilities, and for her decades of work as a leader of L’Arche*”.

A Sister of St. Joseph in Toronto, Sr. Sue Mosteller has been involved with L’Arche for 47 years. She served as the second International Co-ordinator of L’Arche for nine years, and has held various leadership roles in her own L’Arche community of *Daybreak* near Toronto. She is a Speaker, a Retreat Leader, and author of several books on L’Arche. Today she is the literary executrix of the works of renown spiritual writer Fr. Henri Nouwen, who also lived at L’Arche Daybreak for the last nine years of his life.

For more information on L’Arche:
www.larchewinnipeg.org
www.larchetovacafe.com
www.larche.ca
www.larche.org

L'Arche Tova Café Upgrades

by Hubert Pantel

The last six months have been a busy time at L'Arche Tova Café, with a number of upgrades happening. New flooring was installed in August, and in September the walls received a new coat of paint, courtesy of a grant from **Richardson Foundation** in partnership with the **United Way Essential Needs Fund**.

Then in November, about 30 L'Arche members attended a Paint Night, creating works of art which are currently on display on a wall of the Café.

Another **Essential Needs Fund** grant allows the Café to purchase two new fridges in the new year. After seven years, the P.O.S. (Point of Sale) system needed to be upgraded, which is also made possible courtesy of a grant.

Monthly menu specials are back, and you still have time to come and taste these February additions

- ◆ **Mexican Chicken skillet** - Sautéed seasoned chicken, tomatoes, onions and cheese on top of 2 eggs any style, and your choice of hash browns. Served with your choice of toast. - \$13.00
- ◆ **Potato Pancakes** - Three golden brown potato pancakes served with sour cream and apple sauce. - \$10.00
- ◆ **Beef Quesadilla** - Seasoned ground beef, cheese, tomatoes, onions and black olives served in a grilled tortilla. - \$11.00

The Café also offers a catering service. For catering details, and to see the full Café menu, go to the site www.larchetovacafe.com



L'Arche members enjoying an evening together at Paint Night for the Café



Performers raise funds for Solidarity

The **"Songs of Christmas"** evening on December 19th, featuring The Grace Sisters, raised \$2,330.00 in ticket sales and donations. Profits from the evening go to **Solidarity**, L'Arche International's program of support for L'Arche communities in countries where there is little, or no government funding provided.

A special thank-you goes out to all the performers who generously donated their time and talent: Susan Adams, Maureen Daeninck, Kitty Buckboro, Elizabeth Arychuk, Derrick Gottfried, Craig Buckboro, and Pat Grace. The evening of joyful, up-lifting music & songs really brought home the "true meaning of Christmas" for all who enjoyed the evening at Transcona Christian Reformed Church.

GRATITUDE FROM WINNIPEG

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