

Taking Time

by Carl MacMillan

In an age of countless time-saving devices and extraordinary advances in technology, the demands on our time seem more heavy than ever before. And despite the fundamental “simplicity” of our lives in L’Arche, our reality is one of growing complexity. In truth, L’Arche communities have always been busy places. Creating home and building places of belonging take time and energy. Today, our “to-do” lists, unanswered e-mails, and Facebook requests can seem overwhelming — a plight we share with almost everyone in our culture. The question, of course, is not how to escape complexity, but how to live with it in peace — how to “ride the wave.”

Taking Time is our community theme for this year. Sharing life together for a community, or for members of a family, calls us to a certain discipline about our use of time. As individuals, we all need to take time for the rituals of daily life. Sometimes these are very personal and hidden rituals: making our morning coffee, taking a walk after lunch, saying our prayers at bedtime. Some rituals are part of the everyday life that we share with others: eating our evening meal together, sitting around the fire on Sunday afternoons in winter, attending a weekly worship service. All these activities take time. They give our lives structure, meaning, and sometimes pleasure. At Daybreak, we



This fall's orientation group includes from the left, back row: Carl MacMillan, Rachid Elghazouani, Michal Makowski, Isaiah Djianto, Andreia Morais, Lori Vaanholt, Don McMillan. Middle row: Lori-Anne Whyte, Hey Ri Kwak, Gia Taravati, Toni Urbanski, Ashley Evans. Front row: Juliania Maria, Hayley Perryman, Andrea Li Calzi, Darlene Wong Sang and Valentina LoMonaco.

often benefit by the gift of community members who call us back to the centrality of these rituals of life that we can be tempted to discount as empty routines.

Some members of our community have taken courses in “mindfulness” which has become a helpful way for many people to become grounded in the midst of lives that are very full and sometimes harried. This has become so helpful for some individuals that we may look at ways for more members of our community to learn practices of mindfulness. Learning a new practice is another exercise in “taking time.”

Celebration is one of the central ele-

ments of community life. In the words of Christian Salenson, celebration is “a time when the normal rhythm of life is interrupted.” Celebration calls us to stop and to give space for something extraordinary to happen. This Golden Jubilee Year for L’Arche has held several important occasions where we have taken time to celebrate. In some ways, celebrations may not seem very productive — they take time and energy and resources of all kinds to plan and carry out. Still, taking time to celebrate can help us to know that we belong to something bigger than ourselves. Celebration can even help us to begin to see our own lives as fruitful. ♦

Community Notes



Members of L'Arche Daybreak joined the L'Arche Hamilton community for a festive 50th anniversary dinner cruise on Lake Ontario that took place on Thursday evening, September 18th.

Wedding bells rang for Will Grassby and Andréanne Legault on September 27th in Mont Laurier, Québec. Will is a former house leader at the Green House. Andréanne was a house leader in L’Arche Ottawa. Will and Andréanne live nearby and remain close to the community.

Mary Bastedo has retired as the Cedars Coordinator, a role she carried for over ten years. Mary has been in L’Arche for over 40 years. She received a blessing from the community at the Dayspring on Friday evening, September 26th.

The Catholic Register featured a large pull-out section on the 50th Anniversary of L’Arche in their September 7th edition. Pictures from L’Arche Daybreak featured prominently in the extensive coverage.

A Meditation by Henri Nouwen

Our Desire for Communion

What do we really desire? As I try to listen to my own deepest yearning as well as to the yearning of others, the word that seems best to summarize the desire of the human heart is “communion.” Communion means “union with.” God has given us a heart that will remain restless until it has found full communion. We look for it in friendship, in marriage, in community. We look for it in sexual intimacy, in moments of ecstasy, in the recognition of our gifts. We look for it through success, admiration, and rewards. But wherever we look, it is communion that we seek.

“God has given us a heart that will remain restless until it has found full communion.”

As I looked at the faces of the gold medalists at the Olympics, with more than sixty thousand people applauding them and millions watching them on television, I caught a glimpse of that momentary experience of communion. It seemed as if they had, finally, received the love they had worked for with unwavering dedication. And still, how soon they will be forgotten. Four, eight, or twelve years later, others will take their place on the platform of success, and their brief moment of



Over 7000 people participated in the L'Arche parade through the streets of Paris on September 28th.

glory will be remembered by very few.

Still, the desire for communion remains. It is a God-given desire, a desire that causes immense pain as well as immense joy. Jesus came to proclaim that our desire for communion is not in vain, but will be fulfilled by the One who gave us that desire. The passing moments of communion are only hints of the Communion that God has promised us. The real danger facing us is to distrust our desire for communion. It is a God-given desire without which our lives lose their vitality and our hearts grow cold. A truly spiritual life is life in which we won’t rest until we have found rest in the embrace of the One who is the Father and Mother of all desires. ♦

Year End Tax Receipts

The end of the calendar year is a time when many of our supporters send a donation to L’Arche Daybreak. Our community always welcomes this generous support. As a rule, it is probably wise to put any year end gifts in the mail by mid-December. The Canada Revenue Agency rules have become very strict regarding the issuance of year-end tax receipts. Donations sent by mail must be dated and postmarked by December 31st for a tax receipt to be issued for that year. Donations that are postmarked after December 31st will be dated for the new year. L’Arche Daybreak is grateful for gifts from donors that come all year long. ♦



Mary Anne Larcina and Dr. Pamela Cushing share a casual moment together.

Community Wish List

Snow shovel	\$35
Garden spade shovel	\$50
Tablecloths	\$100
European beech tree	\$225
Art supplies	\$500
Pots and pans	\$500
Barbeque	\$650
Spinet piano	\$2,000
Tree shredder	\$2,000
Sun shade for the Day Program	\$3,000
Sofa	\$2,000
Stairlift	\$7,000
Grounds equipment	\$10,000
Mid-size car	\$25,000

For more information, please call Christine Gameson at L’Arche Daybreak’s Development Office (905) 884-3454 ext. 233.

Daybreak Exhibit at the Kelly Library Celebrates 50 Years of L'Arche

by Warren Pot



Catherine and Stephanie Mirtic view one of the seven display cases highlighting the story of L'Arche.

L'Arche Daybreak and the Kelly Library at St. Michael's College, the University of Toronto, collaborated on an exhibit to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of L'Arche. Six large panels serve as centerpieces for the exhibit. The panels depict the story of L'Arche — from its founding in France in 1964 through history of Daybreak, the first L'Arche community in Canada. L'Arche today has grown to 149 communities around the world. Materials for the seven cases on display came from individual members of L'Arche Daybreak, the day programs, and from the L'Arche Daybreak Archives which are housed at the Kelly Library. The panels will travel to various high schools after the exhibit closes in early January 2015.

Sue Mosteller was the keynote speaker at the opening for the exhibit on October 22nd. Storytelling is at the heart of L'Arche, and Sue is an extraordinary storyteller who has written three books on L'Arche themes. She is one of the early pioneers in L'Arche. Sue arrived at Daybreak in 1972, and became its second Community Leader in the mid-1970s. Her talk from the exhibit opening, "The Seeds of L'Arche", can easily be viewed on the L'Arche Daybreak website.

In conjunction with the exhibit, L'Arche Daybreak also co-sponsored a lecture by Professor Pamela Cushing, founder of the Disabilities Studies program at the University of Western Ontario in London.

In her lecture, "Jean Vanier, L'Arche, and the Unfolding of a Radical Idea in Disability and Care," Dr. Cushing noted "the extensive common ground between Vanier's early imaginings and the principles of current-day Disability Studies. Jean Vanier's ideas continue to invite us all to commit to the difficult, uncertain challenge of moving toward genuine mutuality even amidst difference." ♦



John Smeltzer and David Harmon, two of the early members of L'Arche Daybreak, stand in front of one of the exhibit banners.

L'ARCHE DAYBREAK

The first L'Arche community in North America, L'Arche Daybreak began in 1969 and now includes eight homes in Richmond Hill, as well as *The Woodery* wood-working shop, *The Craft Studio*, and the *Dayspring* spiritual centre. The L'Arche Daybreak community is a dynamic example of how people of different intellectual capacity, social origin, religion, and culture can live and learn together.

WORSHIP SERVICES

Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings at 8:30 at Dayspring.
Friday evenings at 7:30 at Dayspring.

L'ARCHE

L'Arche is an international movement of over 146 communities around the world where people with intellectual disabilities and those who care for them live, work and learn together. Canadian Jean Vanier founded L'Arche in France in 1964.

"Can we reasonably have a dream of a world where people, whatever their race, religion, culture, abilities or disabilities, whatever their education or economic situation, whatever their age or gender, can find a place and reveal their gifts?"

-Jean Vanier



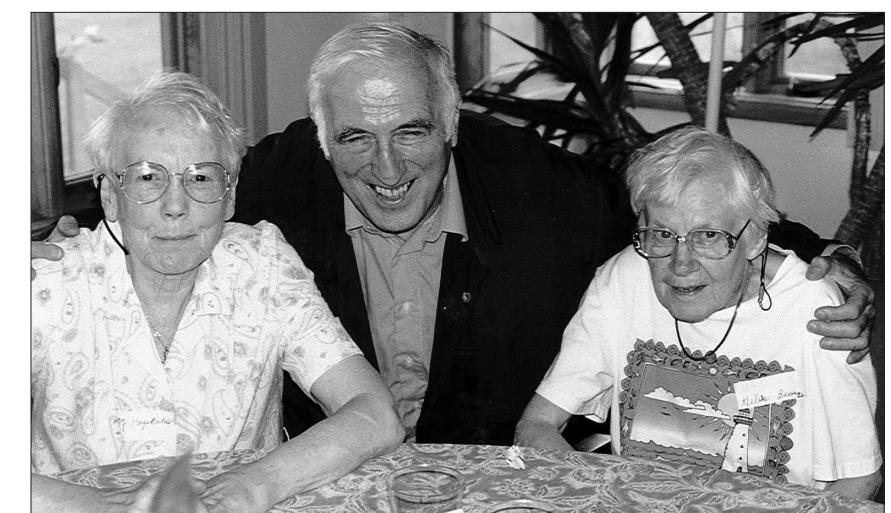
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On Thursdays, I Do My Laundry: Thelus George Dies at 90

by Anne Todd

Chris Jarvis wrote an endearing song about Thelus entitled, "On Thursdays, I Do My Laundry" that he sang at Thelus' funeral at her beloved Richmond Hill United Church on October 15th. Thelus grew up in Toronto with her parents and her older brothers, Lloyd and Len. She moved to Daybreak when she was 48. In middle age, Thelus bloomed, discovering her many gifts and sharing them generously with those around her. Daybreak was a farm when Thelus arrived in 1972. She would collect and wash the eggs from the barn and the chicken house, then go on one of the egg routes around Richmond Hill to sell them. Thelus also worked in the bakery that was once housed in the building that is now the Craft Studio, where she taught herself to make cookies, bread, muffins and butter tarts. She learned to make soup for the community lunch and pasteurize milk from the community cow. In



From the archives: Peggy Hopkins, Jean Vanier and Thelus George at the Meeting Hall.

later years, Thelus continued her work in hospitality at the cafeteria of Community Living York South.

Thelus never stopped cooking and baking for others. Her life story book is full of memories of people she welcomed to her home, giving them a cup of tea and a good meal. For many years she lived with Peggy Hopkins, David Gray and Peter Rotterman at Centre Street where she ruled supreme in the kitchen. In 1997, she became one of the founders of Brookwood House where she

remained connected for the rest of her life. When Thelus' friends Mary Anne and five-year-old Elsie Jarvis heard that Thelus had died, they both reacted with joy, exulting that she could see her friend Peggy Hopkins again. They understood that Thelus had finally made it home. ♦

Anne Todd is a Confirmed Member of L'Arche Daybreak who lived with Thelus at Brookwood House. This article was adapted from the eulogy that Anne gave at Thelus' funeral.



Daybreak Newsbreak

L'Arche International Celebrates the Golden Jubilee

by Agnieszka Mlynarczyk



Members of L'Arche Paris welcome Agnieszka and Kim to France.

Kim Lageer and I were honoured to represent the Canadian L'Arche communities at the 50th Anniversary celebrations in France this fall. The

celebrations spanned two weeks and included stays for us in both Compiegne and Paris, as well as a visit to the village of Trosly-Breuil where

L'Arche began in 1964. During the first week, we visited L'Arche workshops and we spent time in L'Arche homes. On September 28th, we participated in a huge parade through the streets of Paris to celebrate the 50th anniversary of L'Arche in the world.

Kim really enjoyed our trip.

"I loved it! I discovered how big L'Arche is. I met many people from around the world. There was sightseeing, music, skits, singing and a parade. Jean Vanier kissed my hand and thanked me for coming."

The organization of the welcome and the Anniversary events were amazing! For the parade, 7,000 people joined us in Paris — members and friends of L'Arche in France, as well as the general public. The experience rejuvenated my belief in L'Arche and my commitment to supporting core members and assistants as we carry the vision of L'Arche into the future. ♦