

Our Journey Together

by Carl MacMillan

Our community theme for the 2013-2014 year is "Our Journey Together." Like people from all L'Arche communities in the world, we are aware that 2014 will mark the 50th Anniversary of the founding of L'Arche. The coming year will in some way serve as a prelude to this milestone anniversary. It will be a year to reflect, but also a year to look ahead, and to continue to imagine the community we are called to become.

L'Arche Canada is leading the way to celebration with an evocative and colourful public relations venture called the "With Campaign." The October issue of *Toronto Life* features a full-page image of Amanda Winnington-Ingram and Jane Tam, a core member and an assistant from Daybreak's Red House, raising their wine glasses in a sleek restaurant. The large print caption reads simply, "Dine with". In smaller print is a quote from Jean Vanier, "Can we reasonably have a dream of a world where people, whatever their abilities, can find a place and reveal their gifts?" The L'Arche logo is there with the dates 1964-2014. Around the edge of the page, in very small print are the words: discover with • find with • imagine with • jump with • change with • know with • laugh with—and the list goes on. It is the "with" that stays constant. The campaign



This year's Orientation group from the left, back row: Rita Wang, Deborah Ferber, Alexandria Chiefari, Chinatsu Sasazaki, Jamie Holmes, Lori Vaanholt, Liz Wilson, Toni Urbanski, Beatriz Moreno, Anna Kan. Front row, from the left: Sabrina Ehrlich, Sophie Lowinger, Thimo Gunnewig, Carl MacMillan. Not pictured: Tyler Scrimshaw.

is all about people of different abilities being together and doing things together. In a way, it's a lovely invitation for people to join in our celebration. The image of Amanda and Jane is one of several pairs who will be featured as part of the "With Campaign" that will be presented in other Canadian magazines, so be on the lookout!

September 17th marked an historic day for people with intellectual disabilities in Ontario. The Government of Ontario offered a settlement to members of a class action lawsuit brought on behalf of former residents of Huronia Regional Centre. In addition to a financial settlement, there will be a public apology. A number of other conditions will also

be addressed as part of the settlement. Among these, the graves of people buried at Huronia, many marked only by a number, will be restored to honour the lives of people who lived and died at Huronia. The legal victory, covered broadly by the media, recognizes the pain of thousands of people across Ontario who lived at Huronia. It is an important step towards justice and healing.

L'Arche has come of age in the shadow of the institution. The spectre of the institution is an important part of our history, and our journey together. While large institutions have closed in Ontario, the needs of many people with intellectual disabilities remain unmet. The mission of L'Arche is as relevant as ever. ♣

A Meditation by Henri Nouwen The Choice to Die Well

I am convinced that it is this joy—the joy of being the same as other, of belonging to one human family—that allows us to die well. I do not know how I or anyone else could be prepared to die if we were mainly concerned about the trophies we had collected during our best years. The great gift hidden in our dying is the gift of unity with all people. However different we are, we were all born powerless, and we all die powerless, and the little differences we live in between dwindle in the light of this enormous truth. Often this human truth is presented as a reason to be sad. It is not seldom called a "sobering truth." Our great challenge is to discover this truth as a source of immense joy that will set us free to embrace our mortality with the awareness that we will make our passage to new life in solidarity with all the people of the earth.

A good death is a death in solidarity with others. To prepare ourselves for a good death, we must develop or deepen this sense of solidarity. If we live toward death as toward an event that separates us from people, death cannot be other than a sad and sorrowful event. But if we grow in awareness that our mortality, more than anything else, will lead us into solidarity with others, then death can become a celebration of our unity with the human race. Instead of separating us from others, death can unite us with others; instead of being sorrowful, it can give rise to new joy; instead of simply ending life, it can begin something new.



The Daybreak community gave L'Arche Vice-International Leader Eileen Glass a blessing at Dayspring.

At first this might sound absurd. How can death create unity instead of separation? Isn't death the ultimate separation? It is, if we live the norms of a competitive society always concerned with the question, Who is the strongest? But when we claim our divine childhood and learn to trust that we belonged to God before we were born and will belong to God after we have died, then we experience that all people on this planet are our brothers and sisters, and we are all making the journey together through birth and death to new life. We are not alone; beyond the differences that separate us, we share one common humanity and thus belong to each other. The mystery of life is that we discover this human togetherness not when we are powerful and strong, but when we are vulnerable and weak. ♣

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. Of course, tax receipts for all donations will always be issued. Donations that are postmarked after December 31st will be dated for the new year. L'Arche Daybreak is very grateful for gifts from donors that come all year long. ♣

Community Notes



Team spirit abounded at the L'Arche Canada General Assembly. Seated: Debbie Steckley, Helen Cleary Stynes, Carl MacMillan and John McLean. Standing: Beth Porter and Bernard Lebleu.

Becoming Human is the banner flying over a new retreat series at the Dayspring that will begin on Saturday morning, November 16th. The theme for this retreat will be *Celebrating Life at the Time of Death*. Most people will at some point be in the position of helping to plan for the arrangements after someone's death. The morning-long retreat will both inspire and give practical guidance about this sensitive subject. The retreat may be of special interest to families of people with intellectual disabilities, managers in human services, funeral directors, and anyone on a spiritual journey. Two seasoned members of L'Arche, Joe Egan and Liska Stefko, will facilitate the morning. Clara Frascetti will lead music during the retreat. Registration information is outlined in the retreat brochure.

The General Assembly for L'Arche Canada gathered in Vancouver at UBC from May 23rd-26th with delegates from all 29 Canadian communities. Several people from L'Arche Daybreak were able to attend: Jacquie Boughner, Helen Cleary Stynes, Clara Frascetti, John McLean, Carl MacMillan, Beth Porter, Warren Pot, and Debbie Steckley.

Eileen Glass, Vice-International Leader for L'Arche, visited Daybreak in June. Eileen, who is from Australia, first lived L'Arche in Winnipeg, so she is very at home in Canada.

Warren Pot was invited to submit two of his photographic portraits of core members from Daybreak for a juried show of photography at Ryerson University. He is one of four photographers in the show to be honoured with a prize. A sample portrait is featured to the right.



Community Wish List

Towels.....	\$50
Tablecloths.....	\$100
Dawyck Purple Beech tree.....	\$150
Art supplies.....	\$500
Pots and Pans.....	\$500
Gardening supplies.....	\$500
Barbeque.....	\$650
Tree shredder.....	\$2,000
Sun shade for the Day Program.....	\$3,000
Sofa.....	\$3,000
Stairlift.....	\$7,000
Grounds equipment.....	\$10,000
Mini-van.....	\$35,000

For more information, please call Colette Halferty at L'Arche Daybreak's Development Office (905) 884-3454 ext. 230.

In God There Is Diversity, But No Division: The 4th Summer Institute on Theology and Disability

by Jason Greig



L'Arche Daybreak welcomed about 40 Summer Institute participants to the Dayspring on July 17th.

"Hospitality is the cadence of shalom, the intonation of the coming kingdom," theologian John Swinton remarked on the final day of the 4th annual Summer Institute on Theology and Disability held in Toronto from July 15th-19th. This aptly summarized the content of the week's reflections on the theme "In God there is Diversity, but No Division: Building Interfaith Dialogue and Collaboration through Theology and Disability."

Participants of the Institute represent academics, self-advocates, and care providers located in the realm of physical, sensory and cognitive disability. The dialogue between these groups emboldens the witness of all to further the inclusion for people with disabilities in faith communities and society. Originally begun as a Christian institute, the inclusion of Jewish and Muslim participants enriched the conversation immensely. Everyone was called to begin their reflections from their human and particular experience of disability, letting this diversity act as the source for unity and dialogue. An example of the fruits of this interchange emerged in how different images of God evoked challenges to common perceptions of the divine.

L'Arche came up in relation to faith communities being places of hospitality and welcome. According to theologian John Swinton, L'Arche is a model exemplar not only for its hospitable and welcoming communities for people with intellectual disabilities, but more importantly, for the

challenge it offers contemporary culture to the all-too-common assumptions by which it perceives people with intellectual disabilities as less than fully human.

The presence of L'Arche at the Institute was more than welcome. Many remarked appreciatively on the afternoon meditation that L'Arche led. The performance by the Spirit Movers at the prayer was cited by many as a highlight, as well as the evening some participants spent at L'Arche Daybreak. Many people are hungry for what L'Arche can offer the discussion, whether it is the spirituality of Jean Vanier or the practical pedagogy of sharing life together. One workshop at the conference focused on the struggle which many faith-based care providers find in advocating for the spiritual life of people with intellectual disabilities within secular bureaucracies and societies. L'Arche has a great deal to contribute here in its practice of not only making the spiritual lives of individuals primary, but also maintaining a community culture of faith that welcomes those with no religious tradition.

There is clearly a place for L'Arche at future gatherings of the Summer Institute, both as participants and as presenters. Participation in the Institute is a dynamic way for L'Arche to announce and live out its mission to create a more human society, and at the same time to learn from others about how God is active in their lives and transforming the world. ♣

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 130 communities 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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Peggy Hopkins Lived with a Mission

by Anne Todd

Determined, independent, lover of nature—these are words that Peggy once chose to describe herself. Very appropriate indeed, as are Henri Nouwen's words in a letter he wrote for Peggy's life story book. "You are the 'Grande Dame' of Daybreak. You are an elegant, charming, caring and very entertaining lady." She was all of these things and more.

Margaret Elizabeth Hopkins was born in Toronto in 1924. She grew up there with her parents, her younger sister Barbara, neighbours and friends, some of whom she kept in touch with all of her life. Many of Peggy's core values were established early in life. She was a fierce and proud Canadian and a staunch Anglican. Peggy loved watching sports and spent many hours cheering on her beloved Toronto Maple Leafs, as well as the Blue Jays and the Argonauts.

Peggy moved to Daybreak in 1974. She was a L'Arche pioneer,



L'Arche Daybreak's founder, Steve Newroth, has a good laugh with Peggy at one of the original Silver Anniversary Teas in the living room of the Church Street house.

moving into the Green House soon after it was opened and later helping to found Centre Street House, the former Genesis Place apartments, Brookwood House and the Club. She aged gracefully, never losing interest in other people and what was going on at Daybreak and in the rest of the world. Peggy's deep faith and her loyalty to family and friends were defining qualities. While she had a reserved nature, her deep love and sense of

humour endeared her to many friends, core members and assistants over the years. Peggy lived with gratitude for the people in her life and left many people grateful for having known her. ♣

Anne Todd, a former house leader at Brookwood House, gave the eulogy at Peggy's funeral on September 12th at St. Mary's Anglican Church. This article is based on excerpts from the eulogy.

John DeLazzari Danced with Compassion

by Carl MacMillan



John danced with Michael Barrett at the Five Senses Festival on August 17th.

John DeLazzari, a long-time and treasured member of L'Arche Daybreak, died suddenly after having a heart attack on September 23rd. He was 45 years old. John began his journey in L'Arche as an assistant at the Day

Program in 1997, just before his marriage to his beloved Hoosnah. He had no idea that he would be recruited for the Spirit Movers, L'Arche Daybreak's dance and movement troupe. An accomplished athlete, John was a

natural dancer and he became a regular with the Spirit Movers, usually partnering with Michael Barrett. John was one of the Spirit Movers who danced at the globally televised welcome ceremony for Pope John Paul II at World Youth Day in 2002.

After five years at the Day Program, John began a full-time graduate program in psychology at the University of Waterloo. After completing his studies, he began his professional work in cognitive assessment at the Holland Bloorview Centre in Toronto where he was employed at the time of his death.

John continued his commitment to the Spirit Movers, dancing regularly in performances at schools, churches, and community galas. He had a quiet, gentle presence and a great passion for people with disabilities. The Spirit Movers danced at John's funeral, a fitting tribute to a life lived with a tremendous sense of grace and compassion. ♣