

What's Up

September 2023

LORETTO CANADA | SINCE 1847

*Mission is at the heart of who we are,
and love is the driving force that urges us on.*



Founder Teresa Dease 1820 - 1889

175 YEARS

Reflection on September

In his epic work "The Waste Land" (1922), T.S. Eliot wrote convincingly that "April is the cruellest month," but a case can be made for September. Bridget Delaney asserts "No, T.S. Eliot, April is not always the cruellest month. For some of us, it is September, when the leaves whisper the rumor of their upcoming change and a chill creeps into the early morning air".

As the lazy days of August dwindle away, the fall months are drawing closer. While it's sad to say goodbye to summertime living, the month of September offers an intermediary between the dog days of summer and the thick of autumn that comes in October and November. It's a transition time.

Suruchi Salhotra says "Hello September, thanks for the reminder: Changes are beautiful. Changes are wonderful."

Here is what Edgar Allen Guest says about September:

It's September, and the orchards are afire with red and gold,
And the nights with dew are heavy, and the morning's sharp
with cold;
Now the garden's at its gayest with the salvia blazing red.

It's September, and the cornstalks are as high as they will go,
And the red cheeks of the apples everywhere begin to show;
Now the supper's scarcely over ere the darkness settles down
And the moon looms big and yellow at the edges of the town.

It's September, and a calmness and a sweetness seem to fall
Over everything that's living, just as though it hears the call
Of Old Winter, trudging slowly, with his pack of ice and snow,
In the distance over yonder, and it somehow seems as though

Inside this issue

P. 2

Presentation Manor

We remember Mary Julia LaTour

Mass taping at Loretto Abbey

Loretto Maryholme

P. 3

Welcome Audrey Ferrer

Mary Ward Centre

P. 4

Archives

About 40 years ago ...

Every tiny little blossom wants to look its
very best

When the frost shall bite its petals and it
droops away to rest.

It's September! It's the fullness and the
ripeness of the year.

All the work of earth is finished, or the final
tasks are near.

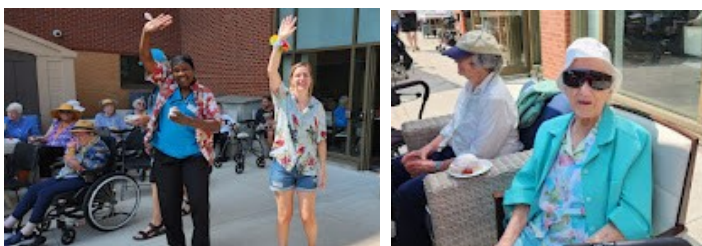
But there is no doleful wailing; every living
thing that grows,

For the end that is approaching wears the
finest garb it knows.

Presentation Manor

Ursula Witkowska

On August 19, Presentation Manor celebrated summer in style. Hajer and Jodie showed us a few new dance steps to the music of the Caribbean.



Left: Hajer & Jodie dancing; Right: Sr Marianna enjoys the lively music.



In case you missed this news ... [USMC and Loretto](#)

Special Mass taping at Loretto Abbey Tuesday, September 19th at 10:00 a.m.

Sr Carmel Swords, ibvm (who is visiting Canada) will be "lector" for the Mary Ward Day Mass (being pre-taped and broadcast on January 23, 2024).

We invite you to be present in the Abbey Chapel when Cardinal Collins will preside and Sr Carmel will read.



Loretto Maryholme

Carol Ivens



We are enjoying the flowers' vibrant colours and balmy lake breezes as summer of 2023 whisks by and hints at autumn's approach. This summer gifted us with a new hard-working young neighbourhood lad who assisted on the grounds, a new vegetarian cook for our retreats who is wowing our guests with yummy meals, and the promise of a new booking assistant in-training.

Sunday evening sunset Tai Chi was led again by Tony Lin, well attended by local residents and guests onsite. Retreats were full back to back, and September is off to a buzzing start with the full 6-Day Silent. Private bookings are filling up with those eager to experience the coming fall colours...



From repairing a handrail offering better support for arriving guests, to coordinating sleeping accommodations best suiting unique mobility issues, to thoughtful consideration of flower arrangements welcoming retreatants, we are blessed to work side by side with a wonderful, cheerful team as busy and ever-present as the bees gracing our open blooms here at Maryholme...

Do what you do, that is, apply yourself diligently to the work you have in hand, and perform it carefully and perfectly."

Mary Ward

Welcome Audrey Ferrer

Evanne Hunter

Once again we have “seconded” an educator from the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) to take on the role of Director of Mary Ward Centre.



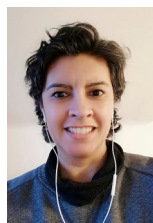
Audrey Ferrer was born in San Juan, Manila, and moved to Canada in 1975. She describes herself as “an educator, social justice activist, mental health advocate, and dancer, passionate about sharing her faith and empowering students”. Audrey holds a B.Sc. degree from the University of Toronto and a B.Ed. from OISE. She studied and /or worked in Scotland, Sri Lanka, Chile, Canary Islands, Nicaragua, Cuba, Israel and South Korea and has won several exemplary awards as an educator. Living and working in different cultures and fields has helped shape her own faith and her interest in multiculturalism and interfaith dialogue. As the mother of three young girls she is passionate about the education and leadership training of the girl child.

Audrey comes to MWC after several years with TCDSB teaching religion, French and chaplaincy before assuming her recent position as Religion and Family Life Resource Teacher. There she organized teachers’ continuing education programs and facilitated youth and adult conferences. She has also been involved in curriculum development for the Ministry of Education of Ontario in various areas. She is Coordinator of the Interfaith Youth Alliance and an International Fellow of the KAICHD Dialogue Centre.

Audrey joins Kathy Murtha, Retreat Coordinator, and Eva Rodriguez-Diaz, Program Coordinator, Human Trafficking Prevention. Sarah Rudolph will be working closely with them in her new role as JPIC and UN NGO representative for the Canadian IBVM Region. In fact, Audrey, Kathy and Sarah recently shared the experience of the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago.

Mary Ward Centre

Eva Rodriguez-Diaz



During the summer we broadcast two radio programs that are part of the “End Human Trafficking - A commitment for all” campaign. In July the program focused on “Are refugees more vulnerable to being victims of human trafficking?” We had two special guests (Mexico and Canada). In August the program’s theme was “Crossing borders and the risks of being a victim of human trafficking”. Our guests were from Guatemala and Mexico. The radio programs are in Spanish only. [Listen to them here.](#)

On September 20 we are organizing an Anti Human Trafficking Display Fair at which 25 organizations that work with newcomers to the GTA will participate. There will also be experts speaking about how human trafficking affects new arrivals to Canada and how it affects international students. The preparation of this event has demanded great coordination. Mary Ward Centre is responsible for logistical preparation (succeeded in attaining University of St. Michael's College as a partner), liaising with participating organizations, as well as promoting the event to the population that we hope to impact, including international students from U of T and other universities.

Mary Ward Centre continues to work with organizations who connect directly with migrant and refugee populations, by providing them with print information related to the prevention of human trafficking in English and Spanish.



Sarah Rudolph is excited to announce the successful launch of a newly designed Mary Ward Centre [website](#). The site has a fresh look and feel to reach audiences the Centre envisions would benefit from the many experiences, celebrations and workshops provided to nourish individuals and groups and inspire them to move out into action and make change.

Archives

Robert Little

While visiting with my younger sister in London, England, I had the opportunity to travel to York to visit the historic Bar Convent and to meet with CJ sisters and their archivist. Upon my arrival I was warmly greeted by Sr. Ann Stafford and Sr Patricia Harris, who told me fondly of their past meetings with the Canadian Lorettoes. I was given a guided tour of their exhibition by Sr. Patricia. After lunch in their wonderful restaurant Sr. Patricia took both myself and another CJ, Sr. Britta (visiting from Germany), to visit St Thomas Church in nearby Osbaldwick, to see the gravestone of Mary Ward. It was much larger than I had imagined from the pictures I had previously seen. In the afternoon, I was able to walk the walls of York and take in some tourist attractions around town.

The next morning, after a traditional "Full English" breakfast at the Bar Convent, I traveled to the Historic York Minster Cathedral. I was pleased to visit with the Bar Convent's own archivist, Dr. Hannah Thomas, who was gracious enough to give me some of her time and allow me to see their archives. She took me into their archive space and showed me some original hand-written letters of Mary Ward, as well as other archival items of interest. The wonderful visit with Hannah capped off an exceptional trip to see the Bar Convent and York.

This opportunity deepened my understanding of the Institute's history, and I must thank the CJs and Hannah for their wonderful hospitality.



Left to right: Robert with Dr. Hannah Thomas, Archivist for the Congregation of Jesus; Bar Convent Chapel; Robert with Sr Patricia Harris in front of Mary Ward's gravestone.

About 40 years ago

Evanne Hunter

*This is what we are about.
We plant seeds that one day will grow.
We water seeds already planted ...
We lay foundations ...
We provide yeast that produces effects
far beyond our own capabilities.
(Attributed to St Oscar Romero)*

About 40 years ago, Sr Christine Leyser planted a seed as she started the Welcome In Drop in Centre on Wyndham St in Guelph as a gathering place for homeless and other vulnerable people. Later, the Centre moved to its current location on Gordon St where a dedicated group of volunteers continued to offer a place for socializing, community meals and the opportunity to connect with support services to improve their quality of life. Over the years, additional services were added including some physical and mental health services, substance use support, court support and some financial assistance.

Cont'd.

In the late 1980s homelessness was identified as an ever increasing concern in the Guelph Region. In response, the Drop In Centre started Stepping Stone to provide beds for those without shelter. Sr Christine and Sr Donata Dean lived on site and provided support for the residents helping them make long term changes to improve their quality of life.

In her wisdom, Sr Christine prepared a succession plan which went into action when she and Sr Donata left Guelph. The ministry of both Welcome In and Stepping Stone were left in good hands.

The current Board of Directors includes an outstanding group of individuals. The Chair is John Kieffer who, after Sr Christine purchased the Gordon St building, moved his law practice there. Laura Hanley is a career non-profit leader with expertise in growing organizations and improving client services. Fred Wagner is a social worker by training and has worked in the mental health area for his entire career. Lori Haslow is a physician with the Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence program at Guelph General Hospital. Carla Jordan is a psychotherapist working in the field of substance abuse and mental health. Pat Sorbara has been a trailblazer for women in government as Deputy Chief of Staff to the Premier of Ontario and held key positions in Ministries of Education, Women's Issues and Intergovernmental Affairs. Perrin Valli, a criminal defence lawyer, met Sr Christine as a child when his mother took him to the Drop In Centre.

Under the direction of this amazing group of people, Sr Christine's legacy lives on embodying her vision of improving the lives of individuals experiencing homelessness, mental and physical health issues and severe addiction. Their goal is to "help individuals and families experiencing homelessness step forward on a path to secure permanent housing through housing focused programmes and individualized support".

Services have been expanded in the last 10 years. Since 2019, through strategic partnerships, the Diversion and Rapid Housing Team has secured housing placements for 427 people; the Outreach Team works with individuals staying in encampments or "sleeping rough" by connecting them with emergency shelters, transitional housing and rental assistance programmes. Since 1921, the Housing Stability Team has helped to provide on-going support to over 500 individuals including mental health and harm reduction, employment, education and connections to vital community resources.

The Emergency Overnight Shelter offers a shower, coffee, snacks, and a safe place to sleep for 27 individuals from 8:00 pm to 8:00 am 365 nights a year. The Transitional Shelters offer space for up to 10 individuals who are new to homelessness in a shared living space for up to 3 months at a time. The Housing Focussed Shelter, supported by an on-site Social Worker and Mental Health Nurse, offers 24/7 support for 40 individuals and families in order to deal with the underlying causes of housing instability.

In this 40th anniversary year since Sr Christine opened the Drop In Centre, the Board launched Grace Gardens, permanent supportive housing "where 32 individuals can heal, thrive and grow as they work towards a more sustainable future".



Christine Leyser, ibvm