



“March for Our Lives”



It was February 14, 2018 when seventeen people, both students and teachers, were shot dead at Stoneman-Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. Seventeen others were wounded, some severely. The 19-year old shooter used an AR-15, a semi-automatic rifle that can deliver forty-five rounds per minute. Far from being cowed, or jettisoned into despair, by the senseless murder of their friends, classmates, and teachers, the survivors of this massacre chose courage over fear and resolve over revenge. From their grief and anger emerged a passion that gave voice to conviction. These young people courageously have spoken truth to power, have rallied those who have grown complacent and hopeless in the face of senseless violence, and have united millions in the call for sensible gun control.

On March 24, 2018, young people and not-so-young people gathered throughout the United States and around the world and rose in response to the call of student survivors at Stoneman-Douglas High School to demand stricter gun laws and an end to gun violence. More specifically, they seek to severely restrict the sale of automatic and semi-automatic weapons and ammunition. If the *Washington Post* is accurate, more than two million Americans participated in the event including those held on the days just before and after. (An interesting footnote is that, according to the *National Review*, more than 70% of the protestors were women.) Of those two million, 800,000 marched in Washington, DC alone. Thousands of protestors gathered in major cities around the world. Many more thousands gathered in cities throughout the United States.

There were about fifty marches throughout Florida but Tampa Bay, alone, drew about 15,000 people. Among them...and right up in front of the rally...you would have found Sisters Catherine Poirier and Aline Antil. *March for Our Lives* marches/rallies were held in five New Hampshire cities. It is reported that there were about 4,000 people of all ages who participated in the Concord rally. There, at the heart of the rally, you would find four

Sisters of Holy Cross and one Dominican of Hope who was a Sister of Holy Cross for the day for the day. Sister Jacqueline Verville arrived on her own and found a seat in the front row. She and Sisters Claire Coll, Sally Ann Howe, Pauline Maurier, Elaine Poitras, and Mary Schneiders, OP, in the center of the crowd with signs in hand, cheered on the very articulate young people from a number of high schools who spoke with incredible passion and conviction, easily moving people to tears and eliciting supportive chants and cheers. In Concord a small contingent from the *National Rifle Association (NRA)*, led by a flag-bearer carrying the association's flag, threaded its way peacefully through the crowd.



Catherine and Aline experienced that same passion at the Tampa rally. It was impossible not to feel that passion stirring in your soul as these *young prophets of their day* called us to conscious action against violence.

Did our participation make a difference? Aline and Catherine found themselves in conversation with a teacher who was taken with the fact that they are Sisters of Holy Cross. We in Concord, sporting our official tee-shirts, also brought positive attention to our mission. We were engaged by a couple with whom we spoke for quite a while; a complete stranger stopped to take our picture; and we got “thumbs-up” as we walked down Main Street after the event. It does make a difference that the Sisters of Holy Cross be recognized for their “solidarity with our children and youth” in the “stand against all forms of violence”.



If you would like to get a virtual experience of the Concord rally click on or copy the first link into your browser. If you'd like to experience the Tampa rally click on or copy the second link into your browser. It will be worth your time.

<https://youtu.be/aOt6UUnKJNw>

<https://youtu.be/SmO4ZHX9hqo>

Elaine Poitras, CSC

Mission Day in Ontario

The Holy Spirit was present at the Ontario Sector's Mission Day held on Saturday, March 10. Sisters and Associates of Holy Cross gathered at the KS Restaurant in Ottawa's South Keys to enjoy fellowship and reflect on the day's theme. Participants listened attentively to how members of this congregation can fulfill their mission to meet today's needs while remaining rooted in faith, nourished by hope and unfolding as charity.

In February, the Sector Team worked diligently to gather members' input regarding mission groups. The compiled survey results revealed that Justice and Environment, Pastoral, and Accompaniment were the three key mission groups that the Ontario Sector would focus its energy on. A lively discussion followed where everyone gained greater insight into each of the key missions. Participants followed their hearts to select which mission group to which they would commit. A true blessing emerged as all three mission groups attracted equal representation.

After lunch, the next task was to select possible delegates for each group. Delegates will represent the local mission group at the regional level. Again, after a period of discernment, each group found individuals who were willing to be prospective delegates.

Both Sisters and Associates were grateful to gather together for Mission Day. Comments included such things as it was a good process, it was fruitful, individuals felt heard and accepted, and it was a celebration of unity in diversity. May the enthusiasm generated from this productive meeting provide renewed zeal and dedication to the mission group to which each member belongs.

Cecile Paquette, CSC

Annette Blankmann, ASC



Jubilee Celebration in Ontario

The Ontario Sector held its Jubilee celebration on May 6th, 2018, at KS on the Keys. Sisters, associates, family and friends joined in honouring Sister Denise Desrochers, CSC, celebrating 50 years and Sister Betty Dilio, CSC, celebrating 60 years of religious life in the Sisters of Holy Cross.

A beautiful prayer service began the day with special readings and hymns chosen by the jubilarians. The celebration began with the song “Come to the Feast”, where bread was shared followed by a homily given by Sister Cecile Paquette, CSC. Sister Denise and Sister Betty then renewed their vows before God and the assembled guests.

Denise and Betty have been a light for all of us and others, and we celebrated with gratitude the gifts that each of them has shared with us throughout their journey in Holy Cross.

May Blessed Basil Moreau watch over these two women who have dedicated their lives to God and the Congregation of Holy Cross!

“Gratitude is the Key to Life’s Abundance.”

Cecile Paquette, CSC
Annette Blankmann, ASC
Rosanne Nadon, ASC
Eda Caldeira, ASC (Photos)



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