



Dear Sisters,

For your kind words of encouragement, your offers to help and, especially, for your perseverance in prayer... an immense *THANK YOU!*

As you know, Pierrefonds is among the recent flooded areas of the Province of Quebec but *l'Ermitage* remains intact and dry. The basement of the *Villa des Arts* was flooded despite the use of six pumps. The white cabins that separate our land and the *Parc l'Anse à l'Orme* were destroyed and the debris was scattered by the wind and waves. The flood waters were unpredictable and rose fast. On Saturday, May 6th, when we went to visit our flooded neighbors, the water rose a bit above our ankles. The next day the water level rose higher than our waist. At the Solitude, the water rose to the foot of the cement cross and covered the entire path by the lake.



After one week, the waters receded



The condition of the white cabins after the flood

Because there were no groups scheduled for a period of two weeks, the Team at *l'Ermitage*, in solidarity with our neighbors, opened its doors to welcome the flooded victims. At approximately 9:00 PM on Sunday, May 7th, when the three dikes gave way, a young couple was sent to us by the firefighters – he, the Algerian husband who has been in Canada for five years and his Turkish wife who has been in the country for almost a year. The wife, pregnant with her first child, was anxious and tired and feared the risk of giving birth before her time. In spite of it all, this couple remained positive and resilient and

stayed for a while at Belvedere.

Our property became a parking lot for about twenty cars belonging to flooded neighbors.

Through the municipality, the Canadian Army visited us on Monday, May 8th and returned the following day to settle in. The grounds were "invaded" by three large buses, six Army trucks to transport the soldiers to work, a couple of trucks to transport equipment, a central communications truck - workplace of the leaders, six jeeps and other types of equipment such as a large tent, antennas, etc... Four battalions of twenty-eight soldiers per battalion from Kingston and even from the West were relayed into two shifts -- day and night. The soldiers slept in the rooms in the basement, on approximately sixty cots lining the hallways and even on the floor. The Captain, the chauffeurs, a number of officials, and infirmiry personnel settled in the rooms. On a daily basis, a team brought in their three meals which were served in the cafeteria -- hot meals for breakfast and supper and bags of cold lunch at noon, all served in our cafeteria.



The three  
busses that transported  
the soldiers  
and their baggage



Arrival and...



...gathering of the soldiers

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cafeteria.



Room 2  
in the basement:  
one of their  
bedrooms!

Initially, hearing the noise of the helicopters flying overhead, the “beep-beeps” of the army trucks very late at night and very early in the morning, meeting with soldiers in the house, being greeted each day by the two armed soldiers who guarded the entrance of *l’Ermitage* – based on my life story, I felt like I was in a war zone. However, these young soldiers who exhibited such kindness, politeness, and who were so helpful brought the freshness of youth to our residence. That evening the young Captain sat down on the floor in the corridor and chatted with another colleague while another soldier played soft music on the piano in the conference room. Outside, soldiers amused themselves with a frisbee.

One morning, Sister Françoise was awakened by unusual scratching sounds. Through her window she saw a group of soldiers raking up the debris that had been deposited by the wind and the waves onto the property. What kindness! What service!



Debris on the property  
and the  
gradual retreating of the water

From the onset, it was our hope to be able to help the victims in whatever way we could – especially by welcoming them. In response to that hope, for a week God sent us more than a hundred soldiers to assist them in ways that were more effective and more adjusted to the victims’ needs than we could have offered them--except for the young couple still in residence.

In a spirit of complete openness, God will know what to do with the rest! This is a lesson among many others that we have learned through this experience.

In communion!



May 8, 2017  
Water that accumulated  
near the swimming pool  
and *Villa des Arts*



May 8, 2017  
Water and debris that  
accumulated near the  
white cabins  
that were destroyed



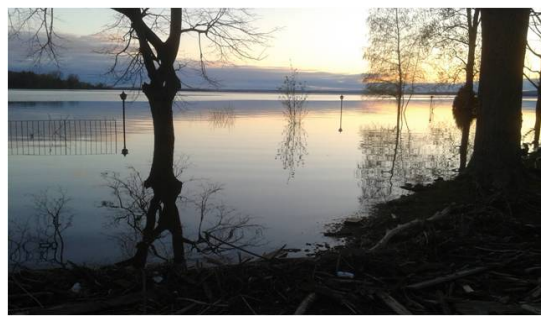
May 8, 2017  
View from a distance:  
the encroachment of water that  
stopped at the foot of the cross  
near the Solitude



May 9, 2017  
The expanse of water  
in front of the Solitude  
up to the cross



May 9, 2017  
The expanse of water  
in front of the Solitude



May 9, 2017  
Extent of the flood waters  
in front of the cafeteria  
at *l'Ermitage*

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