



# TEL-A-CROSS

Sisters of Holy Cross Newsletter

SPRING 2021

## RELAXING SPACE

By Françoise, DeMers, CSC

Three years ago, we made plans turn out our dirt parking lot into a green space for our sisters to enjoy. Well, here we are, 3 years later, with a small park hosting a myriad of colorful perennials, annuals and flowering bushes, a walkway adorned by red maple trees, benches, gliders and a large gazebo where the sisters can sit and enjoy the beauty of Nature, listen to the buzz of honey bees, admire the Monarch butterflies, the hummingbirds, cardinals, and smile at the antics of the wild rabbits that come to visit.

In back of the staff parking lot there was quite a large field; we didn't have to listen too carefully to hear it beckoning to us to do something there, too. And that is our newest project., in the spring of 2020, we were able to get a professional bee keeper to put a hive in the SW corner. (He will soon be adding a second one as the first one was so productive. To keep our bees busy and well fed, and supplying us with their golden nectar, (in our case...Holy Honey), we planted a band of wild meadow flowers along the South and West sides of the field and the plan is to keep adding more bands of flowers until most of the field is a joyous symphony of color singing praise to our Creator.

The sisters suggested that fruit trees would also be nice to have, so we now have 2 each of pear, peach and apple. Our goal is to plant 6 more in the next two years so as to have a little orchard.

While clearing out the brush along the field, there opened up a clearing among the trees and shrubs forming a little grotto...what a wonderful place for a bench and a statue! We were able to bring the statue of St. Anthony which was on the front lawn in



Pittsfield. A perfect fit for our new "Secret Garden" among irises, lilies daisies, goldenrods and a host of other plants

The small area between the hall and the Manor building is also undergoing a makeover. The large gas tank will be surrounded by a host of flowers. This year, thanks to the Early Childhood Center, we also planted a large red rose bush in front of the Virgin.

As you see, we have been busy taking care of all our pollinator friends, while making our surroundings productive as well as beautiful. If we are able to be good stewards of the land God has entrusted to us, it is due in large part to your continued generosity. To you, our dear friends, a heart felt **thank you** from the Sisters, as well as from the bees, butterflies, birds, woodland creatures that have taken up residence among us, and bring so much joy and peace to everyone.



## HAITI- MY HOME FOR 42 YEARS

By Diane Villeneuve, CSC



first arrived in Haiti in October 1978 and I left the country for the last time on February 13, 2020. For more than 40 years, Haiti very simply had been "home"; I would return to the U.S. at first every three years, then every other year and finally as I grew increasingly "Senior", I would travel each year. I was grateful for the restful pauses, but just as eager to return home at the end of the designated visit. Recently, all this has changed; medical issues brought me to the U.S. permanently, and for the past twelve months or so, I have been re-organizing my life in my new/old "home", here at the Manor in Manchester where I first entered Holy Cross in 1959.

Many have asked me, as I even ask myself, just what is it about Haiti, this beautiful struggling little country that has held me, and so many of our sisters here for so long? For many who have never experienced it, Haiti remains a poor struggling and suffering little country, subject to so many human, political and natural disasters, and this is true. But there is more, so much more. Haiti remains an unbelievably

beautiful country. Shortly before leaving, I was traveling by bus, crossing the country on a road I had never experienced. I stared out in delight at the valley below the clouds, that were them-



Pierre Payen... The regions "get away".

selves below me! And the road continued, a little river here, the bus hugging a mountain there, following the coast of rocky and sandy beaches, hibiscus growing wild along the road, and the ever present people walking alone or with companions or animals. Haiti has its bare hills, its crowded city slums, but that does not define it.

The greatest treasure of the country are its courageous

people who get knocked down from without and from within but always find the courage to try one more time.

The country and its people are beautiful, strong, resilient and faithfilled. And we, as Sisters of Holy Cross, are called to remember this and to work with this reality. We have been here for more than sixty-five years. At first we were strangers, now we are not. We are sisters with so many of the young women who soon joined us and built up a community of which all of Holy Cross is pleased and proud.

While in residence at the Postulate, we happily remarked that here were young postulants in their 20's sharing life with mid-



dle-aged members of the team, up to several of us in the 70's and at the same time, a lovely blend of Haitiens, Africans, Canadians and Americans. We were a jolly mixture of what the Congregation is all about and, most of all, we were truly sisters who cared for each other and worked together in a community of faith in God, doing God's work in this world. Do I really miss this family? Yes, I do. I enjoyed giving courses of subjects I loved and sessions of arts and crafts which always delighted me.

In Haiti, our most important ministry remains education, something we continue to encourage and in which we take pride. Our schools are good schools that aim to guarantee a fine education even to the very poor. We are mostly in the northern "department" of the country in the Diocese of Cap Haitien. The reason being that at the time, the bishop of the diocese was a Holy Cross priest and he naturally sought out Holy Cross priests, brothers and sisters for his diocese. Early on, we also established a residence in the capital, Port-au-Prince, quite necessary to accommodate religious arriving in the country at its only airport.

Our largest institution is in Cap Haitien, "College Regina Assumpta", which educates young women from kindergarten all the way up to college degrees. There is also in Cap Haitien, a college for young men directed by the Fathers of Holy Cross and not surprising, there is a happy cooperation between the two schools.

Closely connected with the educational ministry is our little orphanage just outside of Cap Haitien, founded by our own Sr. Claire Daneau that so many of you know or have heard about. It continues to be a wonderful ministry for approximately fifty children.

Not far from Cap Haitien, in Milot and Thibieu, are two more of our schools and, in Thibieu, there is also a dispensary. This is another mission I loved so much, where I worked with a very dear friend, Sr. Monique Meloche, where we installed the first solar electrical system of our congregation with help from Benedictine monks from Port au Prince. And, yes, I did climb on the roof myself to connect the solar panels. Those were very happy years.



Among all our schools, there is one very dear to me which is in Pilate where we also direct a small but very efficient rural



Regina Assumpta College

hospital here in the northern hills of the country. The hospital was founded early after the sisters' arrival by two wonderful women who are now in our infirmary in St. Laurent. I am especially fond of this little town as I spent a total of 27 years working at the hospital for five of those years and at

the school for twenty-two years. Temperatures here are the coolest and so, for many of us, the most climate comfortable of our missions as it's nestled in the mountains of a lush, green coffee country. Yes, we do grow wonderful Arabica coffee on our piece of land, harvesting and roasting it ourselves.

Whether our official ministry is in education or in health, many of the sisters are also implicated in pastoral work, ei-

ther full or part time. We work closely with the parishes where we minister and our young sisters are very involved in vocational ministry, even in parishes where we are not officially involved.

We are proud of our young sisters and of those of the past who were among the first to enter Holy Cross. I know I do not have to mention several of those early Haitian young sisters and how proud we are of them today. I look at the young ones coming along and already I see the future of the Congregation in their hands as well as in those of our other new members from elsewhere and everywhere: Haiti, Africa, Asia...

We are not dying we are diversifying and growing!



**Mass is celebrated on the 26th of each month for you, our benefactors.**

# 2020 JUBILEES

Yes, 2020. Because of Covid all celebrations and activities were brought to a complete halt. So this year we celebrate the 2020 and 2021 jubilarians. Join us in CONGRATULATING our Sisters who have spent many years in ministry and who continue to this day by praying for all.



Sr. Claire Thornton, CSC  
50 years



Sr. Lorraine Choiniere, CSC  
60 years



Sr. Claire Coll, CSC  
60 years



Sr. Sally Howe, CSC  
60 years



Sr. Rachel Jette, CSC  
60 years



Sr. Claire LeBoeuf, CSC  
60 years



Sr. Yvette Robert, CSC  
60 years



Sr. Elaine Theoret, CSC  
60 years



Sr. Janet Belcourt, CSC  
65 years



Sr. Elaine Marquis, CSC  
65 years



Sr. Angela Moreau, CSC  
65 years



Sr. Doris Ouellette, CSC  
65 years



Sr. Jacqueline Verville, CSC  
65 years



Sr. Norma Comeau, CSC  
70 years



Sr. Germaine Goyette, CSC  
70 years



Sr. Marguerite Gravel, CSC  
70 years



70 years



75 years

# 2021 JUBILEES



Sr. Blanche Lamarre, CSC  
60 years



Sr. Françoise Savoie, CSC  
60 years



Sr. Claudette Gagnon, CSC  
65 years



Sr. Pauline Lebel, CSC  
65 years



Sr. Evelyn Boucher, CSC  
70 years



Sr. Yvette Thibault, CSC  
70 years



Sr. Louise Tarpey , CSC  
75 years



**A**s scripture states, 'There is a time for everything...'. With a heart filled with gratitude, I come to share with you that after 16 years of service I will be retiring from the Office of Development as of June 30, 2021. There is no way except through prayer that I can thank you from the bottom of my heart for your generosity and faithfulness to the Sisters of Holy Cross. Your loyalty and financial support have allowed us to accomplish many projects that would not have been possible without your help. As I leave, I wish to thank you for your inspiring notes, confidence in our prayers, and your generous donations. My wish is that you continue supporting the Development Office for it is truly a great help to our community. Thank You!!!

Gratefully and with the assurance of my daily prayers.

Sr. Jacqueline Brodeur CSC



# *In Loving Memory*



**Sr. Pauline Plante (Sr. Antonine)**

**March 5, 1936 - March 9, 2020**

Sister was born in Nashua, NH. She entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Holy Cross in 1954 and pronounced her final vows in 1961.

Sister Pauline was a junior high teacher in New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. She was Principal at St. Augustin School in Manchester. Served as secretary at St. Anthony School in Manchester and later Director of Religious Education in Windham.

In 1978, Londonderry House was opened where Growth Counseling took place and Pauline's gifts of listening, kindness and acceptance of the other provided an atmosphere of trust. Fifteen years later her dream of a big white farmhouse in Pittsfield became a reality. BERAKAH, a Place of Blessing, a sabbatical program for women who came from around the world, benefited from Pauline's gifts. She continues to be remembered by many who participated in the program.

**REST IN PEACE , PAULINE.**

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**Sr. Pauline LeBel (Sr. Helene of France)**

**November 18, 1932 - June 11, 2020**

Sister was born in Manchester, NH. She entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Holy Cross in 1951 and pronounced her final vows in 1958.

Sr. Pauline was a teacher in Connecticut and New Hampshire; Massachusetts ; she was also a teacher of humanities at Notre Dame College. In 1987 she became Director of Spanish apostolate for the Diocese of Manchester.

In 1990, along with other members of the Holy Cross family, Sr. Pauline moved to Bronx, NY as part of a collaborative pastoral team, where her love of the Spanish language was apparent in the liturgies, bible groups and as a homilist.

In 1995 she returned to Manchester where she served as a receptionist for 14 years at Catholic Medical Center. Sister was fluent in French and in Spanish. She was often called upon by the Spanish community of Manchester, as an interpreter, a service that was much appreciated by all.

**REST IN PEACE , PAULINE.**



**Sr. Doris Guerette (Sr. Mary Doris)**

**Augustt 14, 1927 - July 17, 2020**

Sister was born in Nashua, NH. She entered the Sisters of Holy Cross in 1946 and pronounced her final vows in 1953.

Sr. Doris earned her BA degree from Notre Dame College in Manchester and her MA degree from Rivier College in Nashua,

She served in parochial schools in Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. Besides teaching academics, Sr. Doris taught religious education for several years in New Hampshire. While in Rochester she volunteered as librarian and day care worker.

She retired in 2008 to St. George Manor in Manchester where she served as librarian and driver.

Sr. Doris will be remembered as someone who lived a life of gratitude.

**REST IN PEACE, DORIS.**

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**Sr. Lucille Dutilly ( Soeur Marie de St. Jean -de- Jésus)**

**March 25, 1923 - August 8, 2020**



Sister was born in Rochester, NH. She entered the Sisters of Holy Cross in 1941 and pronounced her final vows in 1948.

She earned a bachelor's degree from Notre Dame College in Manchester.

Sr. Lucille was an elementary school teacher in Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Connecticut and a Religious Education Coordinator in several parishes.

In 1994 She returned to Vermont and served as Pastoral Minister.

Her artistic talent was appreciated at Holy Angels Parish in VT, where she created awesome decorations and magnificent banners. Her paintings were equally inspirational to all who gazed upon them.

**REST IN PEACE, LUCILLE.**

**Sr. Pauline Lavigne (Sr. Mary Pauline Therese)**  
**January 7, 1926 - November 2, 2020**



Sister was born in Manchester, NH. She entered the Sisters of Holy Cross in 1957 and made her final profession in 1964.

Sister earned a bachelor's degree from Notre-Dame College in Manchester. She taught elementary school in New Hampshire., Massachusetts and Connecticut

In retirement, she carried out secretarial duties at Sacred Heart School in Groton. Stricken with a physical handicap which cut short her ministry in schools, she retired at St. George Manor in Manchester in 1991. Her warm smile will be missed by all.

**REST IN PEACE, PAULINE.**

**Sr. Ruth George (Sr. Rita)**  
**March 8, 1926-November 11, 2020**



Sister was born in Mohegan, RI. She entered the Congregation in 1949 and made her final profession in 1956 and served the congregation for 71 years.

Sr. Ruth earned a BA degree in Music and Education from Notre Dame College, an MA degree in Religious Education from Boston College; and a CAGS degree in Pastoral Ministry from St. Joseph College in East Hartford, CT

She taught music in elementary and high schools in St. Hyacinthe, Quebec, Canada; in New Hampshire, and in New Bedford, MA. She was also involved in Pastoral Ministry and DRE programs in Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

Sr. Ruth retired to St. George Manor in Manchester, in 2002.

**REST IN PEACE, RUTH.**

**Sr. Denise Turcotte (Sr. Jerome of the Cross)**  
**February 25, 1946-December 12, 2020**



Sister was born in Springfield, MA. She entered the Congregation in 1963 and pronounced her final vows in 1971.

Sister was an elementary school teacher in

MA and CT. She received her BA in Biology from Notre Dame College. From 1970 to 1999 she ministered at NDC as Biology Instructor, Associate Professor and Campus Minister. In 1980 she received an MKS Degree in Environmental Education at Antioch University. She also ministered at the Audubon Society. In 2006, she became co-coordinator at New Dawn Earth Center, Mercy Northeast Ecology Ministry, Cumberland, RI. In 2007 she became the Director. Sr. Denise also provided programs in environmental Concerns and Cosmology at Berakah, in Pittsfield. NH.

Sister Denise had a great love of nature, and working in the Green Space on Island Pond Road. Sr. Denise, we know you are being lifted up on eagles' wings.

**REST IN PEACE, DENISE.**

**Sr. Cecile Lebeau ( Sr. Marie Cecile, Martyr).**  
**September 19, 1920-March 19, 2021**

Sister Cecile was born in New Bedford, MA . She entered the Congregation in 1939 and pronounced her final vows in 1946.

Sister began her elementary teaching career in Baie Comeau, Canada,two years later she returned to the U. S. to teach in MA and VT. She began teaching high school in 1963 in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Vermont and Maine. She was also a principal in Massachusetts. From 1994 until retiring in 2014 at Holy Cross Health Center, Sr. Cecile lived and served in St. Albans, VT as teacher, catechist RCIA and home visitations.

She will be remembered for her joyful smile and her acceptance of God's will. Her love of words shone through in her compositions, poetry and in the games she created using each one's name.

**REST IN PEACE, CECILE.**





# **TEL-A-CROSS**

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