



CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF LIFE & MISSION IN PERU

SAINT JOHN, N.B. – Giving thanks as they complete 50 years of presence and mission in Peru, Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception (SCIC) celebrated June 11, 2017 on Holy Trinity Sunday at Carmel Chapel here among Associates, staff and guests. Father Don Breen presided at the eucharistic liturgy. He is pastor of St. Mark's Parish in Quispamsis, N.B. which is twinned with St. Luke's Parish in Otuzco, Peru.

Sister Rita Coumont's return to Canada from Otuzco brings to completion SCIC presence in Peru. A total of 20 Sisters ministered in eight Peru missions since 1967. During the liturgy, Sister Mary Beth McCurdy, SCIC congregational leader, expressed thanks for all the ways the Sisters have been in relationship with the people of Peru. Together, they shared life and hope, "learning from one another," offering mutual support and uniting to serve the community, she added.

Sister Mary Beth noted that at almost the same time as the anniversary liturgy, the people of St. Luke's Parish in Otuzco and neighbouring communities were gathering to bid farewell to Sister Rita. Earlier this year, Sister Mary Beth visited five former SCIC mission sites with Sister Rita in Peru. Joyfully, the people of Otuzco also honoured the Sisters' 50-year history in their country.

In 1989, after serving in other areas of Peru, Sister Rita and Sister Muriel Buckley founded the last SCIC mission high in the Andes Mountains. They accompanied subsistence farming families in Otuzco in the Diocese of Cajamarca. Sister Muriel served in Peru from 1968 to 2014, while Sister Rita was missioned there since 1970.

The anniversary celebration included lively Peruvian dancing by Carla and Carlos Salazar of Saint John, who are originally from Peru. The celebration continued with a Peruvian dinner prepared by staff at Ruth Ross Residence. Another celebration is planned for September at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Saint John. (*Artwork by Sister Muriel Buckley, SCIC depicts women in Peru. Text in Spanish indicates a Mission Called Hope and Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception in Peru, 1967-2017.*)



Sister Katherine Savage examines a banner at Ruth Ross Residence tracing the 50-year history of the Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception in Peru. Photo displays, artifacts and colourful hand-woven cloths adorned the residence as Sisters welcomed Associates and guests for an anniversary liturgy and Peruvian dinner. (SCIC photo)



Peruvian dancers Carla & Carlos Salazar now of Saint John, N.B. during the anniversary liturgy