



PRAIRIE WOMAN CHERISHES ASSOCIATE RELATIONSHIP

By Angie Worobetz

Associate of the Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception (SCIC)



After more than 50 years in Saskatchewan, my husband, Miro and I moved to Edmonton, Alta. in 1988. As luck would have it (or was that God's plan?), our home parish was St. Matthew's. We made good friends there and had our first encounter with Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception (SCIC). The special talents of Sisters Mary Beth McCurdy, Arleen Brawley and Theresa Hucul enriched the life of that parish.

About 1994-1995, I joined my friends Betty Gregoire and Margaret Detric in the inquiry phase of the process to become an Associate of the SCIC. Under the guidance of Sister Aline Roulston and the entire group, we humbly celebrated our commitment, stating our shared *charism*. I had studied and practised intercessory prayer with a Christian women's group while in Saskatchewan. I desire to bring people's needs to our Lord and I lean deeply on the intercession of others during my own difficult times.

SCIC had established a "hair cutting ministry" at the inner city's Bissell Centre. Thanks to my friend and associate, Agathe Joly, I was asked to get involved. This was a learning and rewarding experience for me. The respect and concern shown for each individual by Sisters Marion Garneau and Maggie MacLean was the example to emulate. They always had a soft, calming voice and a listening, non-judgmental ear for everyone. The benefits I gained helping with that team of dedicated people are immeasurable -- Christianity in practice.

By 2005, chronic osteoarthritis was making ordinary tasks difficult for me. Miro and I sold our Edmonton home, downsizing to a condo. I had my right hip replaced that fall. Sadly that ended my Bissell Centre volunteering. Happily it did not end my relationship with SCIC and Associates.

In 2006 we left Edmonton to "house sit" for our youngest son. He had fallen in love with the Sunshine Coast and purchased a home in beautiful Davis Bay, near Sechelt, B.C. It was like a vacation for us. We enjoyed flowers blooming in continuous succession, birds singing their songs, while deer came by to munch on the rose bushes. In six years we only saw snow three or four times and it never stayed more than a day or two. However, rain fell often and my joints didn't like the dampness. My left hip was replaced in 2007, followed by my right knee in 2010.

Throughout this time my SCIC and Associate friends kept in touch faithfully. The Prairie Associate newsletter and handouts arrived in our mail with heart-warming notes from Sister Marion in her beautiful penmanship. Later, Agathe took over, continuing the pattern. Many kept in touch with encouraging cards, phone calls and even a visit from Associate Nicole ("Nicky") Thorhauer and her husband, Harry. Words cannot express how valuable these friendships are to us.

By 2012 we knew it was time to put our west coast experience behind us, to be closer to family, friends and medical care. We are enjoying Edmonton again, close to our daughter whose assistance has been invaluable, along with that of our three sons and our grandchildren. We are gifted with a wonderful family.

Year 2013 brought us much sadness and sickness, with the devastating loss of a grandson and two more surgeries for me. The support of our SCIC and Associate friends is overwhelming. We are so blessed by their concern, expressed in prayers, cards, e-mails, etc. One more surgery, a knee revision, January 2014, has me quite "bionic" and optimistic that life is going to become easier. The constant love and assistance of my husband, Miro, gives me courage.

My positive Association experience strengthens my hope and courage. Praise God!

(Photo: Brenda Seibert)