



**ASSOCIATE RELATIONSHIP INSPIRES
HOPE & GRATITUDE**



Bonnie Casey is an SCIC Associate based in Saint John, N.B.

Here is her story: Faith was part of our family life as I grew up in Saint John, N.B. and attended St. Jude's Anglican Church. I sang in the choir and joined other youth as a member of the parish junior auxiliary. I attended Saint John Vocational School, now Harbourview High School. Later, I graduated from Modern Business College with a secretarial certificate.

I was employed with an insurance company in Saint John when I decided to go to Halifax to work. It was there I met my future husband, Alan, who was in the Canadian Armed Forces. After a long distance relationship, we were married at St. Jude's in 1970 and began our married life in Halifax, N.S.

In 1972, Alan was posted to Canadian Forces Station Lowther near Kapuskasing, Ont. There, I taught Sunday school in the Anglican parish of Lowther. In 1973, we were overjoyed at the birth of our daughter, Michelle. Military life also took us to Debert, N.S., where in 1975 we welcomed the arrival of our identical twin boys, Corey and Wayne. We then moved to bases in Greenwood, N.S. and Oromocto, N.B. and finally settled in Saint John.

In Greenwood, the children and I made our profession of faith in the Catholic Church, where Alan was a regular member. My desire was for our family to participate together in church life. On the base, I was a catechist and participated in the Cursillo movement. It was while we were in Greenwood that I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and I continue to live with this illness today.

After we were posted to Saint John, we became active members of Our Lady of the Assumption Parish. I became a eucharistic minister until the multiple sclerosis prevented me from continuing. I was also invited to participate on the team for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and did so for one year. This was during the time when Sisters of Charity lived across the street from the parish, where Hospice Greater Saint John (Bobby's Hospice) is now located.

I met Sister Rita Duncan and actively participated in the prayer group she facilitated for many years. Since her death in 2009, I have continued to meet weekly with that group at Ruth Ross Residence where Sisters of Charity reside. Sister Teresa Duncan, Sister Rita's sister is now involved. In recent years I have also participated in a wisdom circle with four Sisters and one other Associate. We gather monthly for prayer and shared reflection.

More than two decades ago, Sister Rita encouraged me to become an Associate of the Sisters of Charity. I began the inquiry phase and since becoming an Associate, have renewed my commitment annually. Since 2013, I have been a member of the leadership and planning team of Atlantic Associates.

I have twice been diagnosed with and treated for cancer. During the second bout with cancer, in 2006, my husband died. I was grateful when Sister Mary Beth McCurdy (now SCIC congregational leader) and Sister Arleen Brawley organized and planned his funeral. Other Sisters also sang in the choir. Throughout my health journey, I have received caring and prayerful support from family members, as well as Sisters and Associates.

Today I cherish my role as grandmother to Michelle's two beautiful daughters, Casey, 10 and Keely, 9. I also continue to give thanks for my relationship with Sisters of Charity and Associates who have long been an integral part of my life.

(Photo by Michelle Flanagan)