



SAINT JOHN — Sisters of Charity [SCIC] highlighted the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity this January with prayer and ritual at St. Vincent Residence in Saint John (photo left). Ecumenical friends were invited to send greetings and pictures enjoyed by Sisters at both St. Vincent and Ruth Ross Residence next door. Sister Mary Beth McCurdy, congregational leader, also sent a letter of blessing and greeting to ecumenical friends in New Brunswick. During Christian Unity week, guests are usually invited to Carmel Chapel at Ruth Ross. This year, however, Sisters could not receive visitors. (L to r) Sisters Irene Buechler, Muriel Buckley and Margaret MacLean participated in a ritual symbolizing the journey to God in the centre, which also brings closeness to one another beyond divisions. (SCIC photo)



SAINT JOHN — Sister Laura Hughes wears a mask and gown to move between the two Sisters of Charity residences in Saint John. Throughout the pandemic, the Sisters have been living in separate bubbles at St. Vincent and Ruth Ross Residences. Earlier, they moved freely between the two houses via the connecting pedway. Sr. Hughes liaises with Sisters and staff to assist with personnel and financial resources management. The needs and workload have increased during the past year to follow necessary protocols and ensure health and safety. Connecting online, Sr. Hughes also continues to serve as ethics educator for St. Joseph's Hospital. (SCIC photo)



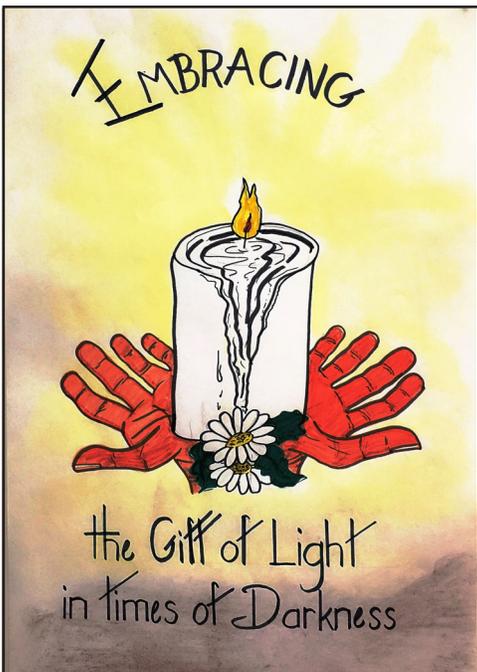
SAINT JOHN — In uncertain times, Sisters of Charity remain committed to celebration. At St. Vincent Residence in Saint John, they honoured Sister Monica Plante (left) December 6, 2020 as she completed 19 years of service with their congregational archives. Here she enjoys a moment with Sister Sandra Barrett during festivities filled with laughter and storytelling. Sisters of Charity give thanks for essential staff in their residences who help prepare for special occasions and provide for daily needs. (SCIC photo)



SAINT JOHN — Associates and friends of the Sisters of Charity visit and sing during walkabouts outside Ruth Ross and St. Vincent Residences in Saint John (photo left). Here visitors greet Sisters gathered above on the second floor of Ruth Ross. On August 1, 2020, the group waved New Brunswick flags before the provincial holiday. Sisters and Associates look forward to resuming their indoor visits and gatherings when possible. (L to r) Linda Pye; Bunny Keleher; Sharon Jacquard with granddaughter Anna Cleveland; Danny Joyce and Myra Murphy with Fenway the dog. (Pat Poole, SCIC photo)



SAINT JOHN — Sister Doreen McCarthy signs a letter advocating for human rights during a Write for Rights gathering of Sisters of Charity and staff at Ruth Ross Residence in Saint John. A similar gathering was held December 10, 2020 at St. Vincent Residence on Human Rights Day with materials from Amnesty International. During the pandemic, Sisters have been advocating for social and ecological justice and peace online, via letter-writing and signing of petitions from organizations such as Development and Peace-Caritas Canada. They focus on care for creation, elimination of poverty and racism and just relationships with Indigenous peoples. In the background is Sister Anne Somers. (Photo Andrea Butler)



‘Together with hope and courage’

A message from Sister Mary Beth McCurdy

Based in Saint John, Sister Mary Beth McCurdy is the congregational leader of the Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception.

SAINT JOHN — How are we experiencing and learning from the pandemic? Each of us has a unique story to tell. We — Sisters of Charity — thank Bishop Christian Riesbeck, CC of the Diocese of Saint John, for the invitation to share aspects of our community life from the past year in *The New Freeman*.

We join all of you in asking the God of hope and healing to help us overcome the pandemic, locally and globally. We also recognize this *kairos* moment in history — God’s opportune time.

Calling on God’s Spirit, we seek a just recovery that ensures equality, peace and attentiveness to those who are most vulnerable. With Pope Francis and other prophetic leaders, we are also committed to heeding urgent cries of earth and all creation.

In an anxious time, we hold individuals and families in prayer amid suffering, separation, loss and mourning. We are also praying for public health officials, leaders and administrators faced with difficult daily decisions.

With heartfelt thanks, we remember frontline workers, dedicated volunteers, pastors, medical teams and other caregivers. Their remarkable resilience, courage, compassion and generosity bring the gospel alive in our day.

We are painfully aware of widespread suffering from COVID-19 among migrant workers, Indigenous communities and many people



Sister Mary Beth McCurdy
(Photography Flewwelling photo)

living in poverty in Canada as well as the Global South. Clearly, the times cry out for social and economic transformation. We are grateful to participate with many others who are committed to such vital transformation.

As members of the Sisters of Charity Federation, we participate in responding to global concerns highlighted by our non-governmental organization representative at the United Nations. Together, we are in solidarity with the global community now facing challenges to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals focusing on elimination of poverty and environmental responsibility.

Early in this new year, we were happy to connect for prayer with the Sisters of Charity Federation via Zoom. Together, we honoured the 200th anniversary of the death of St. Elizabeth Seton — wife, mother, widow and foundress of the North American Sisters of Charity. The Seton Shrine in Emmitsburg, Maryland offers virtual tours and a new video about the saint at www.seton200years.org.

In this sacred season, the Sisters of Charity affirm the 2021 Share Lent theme of Development and Peace-Caritas Canada: Share Love, Share Lent! The Sisters join me in wishing the people of the Saint John Diocese and beyond a safe and graced Lenten season.

Together with hope and courage, let us journey with Jesus through life and death to health, wholeness and resurrection joy.

For more about Sisters of Charity and Associates, see [\\$](http://www.sistersofcharityic.com)

SAINT JOHN — Resident artist Sister Muriel Buckley creates many inspiring posters (left) at St. Vincent Residence, Saint John honouring church feasts, as well as national and global observances. The hopeful images and messages convey beauty while raising awareness among Sisters and staff. Sr. Buckley also creates smaller posters to greet and thank service providers and others unable to enter the residence beyond outer doors. During the pandemic, Sisters miss receiving guests, going out to ministry and travelling to visit family. Like many others, they rely on media and technology to keep informed and stay connected. (Artwork by Muriel Buckley, SCIC)