



Making an Impact in Canadian Society

Our 50th Anniversary has been a big year for L'Arche. This bulletin offers some glimpses of the life and creativity that are expressed when L'Arche people with and without intellectual disabilities celebrate together. Celebration and forgiveness are at the heart of L'Arche, as Jean Vanier has pointed out. Celebrations in L'Arche call forth great creativity, they nurture our gratitude, and they help build commitment to one another and to those in need beyond L'Arche.

- Kathy Adamo, Acting Executive Director
L'Arche Canada Foundation

In Brief...

L'ARCHE 50TH CELEBRATIONS

IN OTTAWA in early November are being prepared as this bulletin goes to print.



L'Arche was deeply touched when HRH Princess Anne indicated she wanted to honour L'Arche on its 50th Anniversary during her visit to Canada. A special reception is being planned at Rideau Hall.

The new Norflicks film, "*Love and Belonging: Jean Vanier at L'Arche,*" is to be premiered at the National Gallery. (Vision TV listings)

A presentation on the history of L'Arche will be mounted in the Centre Block of Parliament.

A reception in Gatineau will celebrate L'Arche's anniversary and honour former long-time L'Arche Canada board chair Jean Dansereau, who received the 2014 Governor General's Caring Canadian Award.

MARKING 50 YEARS: CELEBRATING, GIVING THANKS, DEEPENING OUR COMMITMENT

A Symposium: "Who Cares?"



L'Arche reaches into our society with a message of care and hope. Thus, not surprisingly, a central part of the L'Arche Atlantic Region's 50th celebration in October was its co-hosting a three-day symposium on the theme "Who Cares?" L'Arche took the leadership in the Friday night program at Dalhousie University in Halifax, inviting author and *Globe and Mail* senior journalist Ian Brown, who gave a lecture titled, "The Strong and the Fragile: The Unexpected Gift of Vulnerability." His message was essentially that, through facing and welcoming the vulnerability in others, particularly in people with intellectual disabilities, we can embrace the vulnerability in ourselves. Rather than being undone by this perceived weakness, we can find ourselves becoming more human—more open, forgiving, and

gentle. The world of success can be enriched by encounters with fragility. Three civic leaders each gave a prepared response. An audience discussion followed. L'Arche's partners in this venture were Dalhousie University's Segelberg Dialogues on Faith and Public Policy, the Dalhousie Multifaith Centre, the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Public Affairs, and the Waves of Compassion Association.



The next afternoon L'Arche members and friends from the five Atlantic communities gathered for a Fest with art, story-telling, dancing and traditional East Coast music, including the Men of the Deeps coal miners' choir. They concluded the weekend with a thanksgiving service in Trinity Anglican Church in Halifax.

An International Celebration

It is impossible not to see the hand of God in the way that, with no over-arching plan, L'Arche has spread around the world helping so many thousands of people with disabilities and their families and inspiring so many others, since Jean Vanier first welcomed Raphael and Philippe in 1964.

Agnieszka and Kim represented the Canadian L'Arche communities at the 50th Anniversary international celebration in Paris this fall. All 35 countries with L'Arche communities sent delegates to this colourful gathering.

Kim comments: "I loved it! I discovered how big L'Arche is. I



Agnieszka and Kim with Jean Vanier in France

met many people from around the world. Some wore traditional clothes. We stayed in two different homes of L'Arche friends. I met a new friend, from Ukraine. There was sight-seeing, music, skits, singing and a parade. Jean Vanier kissed my hand and thanked me for coming." Agnieszka adds, "The welcome and organization were amazing! We were in small, very international groups. Ours had



people from four continents. For the parade, 7,000 people joined us in Paris—members and friends of L'Arche in France and of the general public."



JEAN VANIER CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL in Scarborough, Ontario, was one of the first schools to be named after the L'Arche founder. The WITH poster above features two JVCSS students and was a gift from L'Arche Canada to celebrate the school's 25th and L'Arche's 50th anniversary. The school is including L'Arche in its fundraising walkathon, and L'Arche is collaborating with the school and donors to place WITH ads based on this poster in local buses.

AN ONLINE EXHIBIT OF ART by L'Arche core members around the world will be launched on Dec. 3rd, the UN International Day for Persons with Disabilities. This juried exhibit is sponsored by L'Arche International and curated by Canadian artist and International board member Jacquie Boughner. Check www.larche.ca/en/art50 after Dec. 3rd to view the exhibit.

THE 2014 NOTRE DAME AWARD for International Human Development and Solidarity was presented to Jean Vanier and L'Arche in October. This award "recognizes substantial contributions to human development through research, practice, public service, or philanthropy."

A NEW L'ARCHE VIDEO "Pareil pas pareil" ("Alike; not alike") is a collaboration between L'Arche Canada and the Association des Arches du Québec. View it at: <http://pareilpaspareilpartage.org> and click on "cc" at screen bottom for English.

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A National Celebration in Quebec

The Association of L'Arche in Quebec hosted a two-day festive gathering in Trois Rivières, welcoming 300 people from the eight Quebec communities and 50 guests from other Canadian L'Arche communities. A typical L'Arche celebration, it included skits, prayer, tender moments, traditional music (by the group *Bardefou*), laughter, and dancing into the wee hours. The powerful and beautiful new L'Arche film *Pareil pas Pareil* was shown. It focuses on seven members of L'Arche in Quebec. There was a time to recall the founders and those who walked closely with the communities in the early days and,

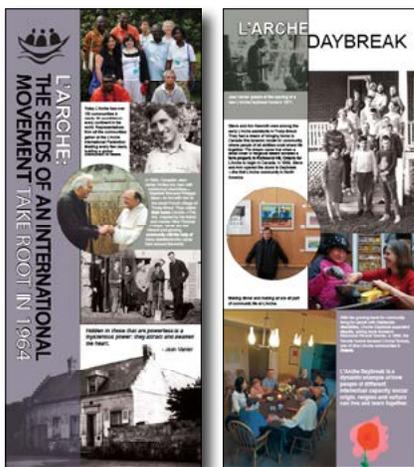


during the Eucharist, to remember those community members who have passed away. The sense of friendship, love and peace was palpable. A magnificent feast concluded the celebration. Strong links of belonging were formed during these two days—links which will help to sustain the



communities in their common purpose for years to come.

The Story of the First L'Arche Community in Canada



L'Arche Daybreak and the Kelly Library (St. Michael's College, University of Toronto) have collaborated to create a striking display of six large panels, unveiled at an October celebration at the library. The panels depict the 50-year history of L'Arche from its founding to the establishment of the first L'Arche community in Canada, and its growth. Today, it consists of two large separate communities—

Daybreak, the original community in Richmond Hill, and L'Arche Toronto, which grew out of Daybreak. The panels will travel to various schools after several weeks at the library. (The Kelly Library houses the Henri Nouwen and Jean Vanier archives.) In conjunction with this event L'Arche co-sponsored a lecture by Professor Pamela Cushing, founder of the Disabilities Studies program at Western University in London Ontario.

A Boat Cruise and Prayer of Thanksgiving

L'Arche Saskatoon members and friends celebrated the 50th anniversary of L'Arche with a boat trip along the beautiful South Saskatchewan River, followed by a prayer service during which the story of Noah's Ark was told.

The L'Arche Saskatoon community is poised to grow. It will open a second home next year and is expanding its small workshop, which presently consists of three people with disabilities and a few assistants. They are inviting others into the group who have little to do during the day. They do creative projects such as weaving and



felting, go out for coffee, and reach out to individuals who need help, buying groceries or visiting in the hospital. The group's motto: "Making Art, Making Friends, Making Peace."

Cody and Wyndham—playing Noah and Noah's son, Ham—collect animals to be brought onto the Ark.

