

The Cana Community, *by Nancy Gilbert*

"Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory: and his disciples believed in him." John 2:11

"Blessed are you Lord God of all creation, through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. It will become our spiritual drink."

Just as the wedding feast symbolizes joy, celebration, love and friendship, we, the members of the Cana Community celebrate a new union with God and with one another.

The transformation of water into wine shows us how our common everyday lives can be transformed into liberating vehicles of love and fellowship through the powers of faith.

It was faith that first drew us into the Christian fold through the sprinkling of water at our baptism. Today, as we give birth to the Cana Community, we embrace our faith anew as we make to vow to:

- ✧ Commit ourselves to a journeys of personal and collective growth
- ✧ Transform exclusion into acceptance and despair into hope
- ✧ Love, care for and empower all the members of our community
- ✧ Share the good news of Cana with one and all

And with God's help and guidance, transform water into Wine



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A word in you ear....

A visitor at a Vanier retreat was disappointed to see only a few people in wheelchairs. He asked an organizer "Where are the handicapped?" "Oh, she smiled, We're all here!!!"

People of Cana: Beth and Maria
Lata and Jim Hall

Beth and Maria are a mother and daughter team who are regulars at the monthly meetings of the Cana community.



Beth is a lovable 17 year old who is going to Grade 11 at QEHS this fall. Active and sociable, she loves to dance and is a wonderful athlete. When we met her she was off roller blading and was proudly wearing a silver medal for 200m sprint and a bronze for the shot put from Nova Scotia Special Olympics. If this was not enough, she loves to dance (She danced all night at a couple of weddings) and skate, and is the only member on the local Special Olympics speed skating team. Beth is also a music and video fan, liking bands such as the Backstreet Boys, The Road to Perdition and Paramedic movies. Beth is close to her friends Maggie, who does her hair and gives her manicures regularly, and Ali, who takes her to movies. She also has a special friend, Maria (same as her mum) from El Salvador who has only boys of her own, so Beth "her special girl".

Very close to Beth is her mother Maria. Originally from Antigonish, where she first came to know Lata, she now works in Administration at NSCC in Halifax. Beth is the youngest of Maria's five children, and they are obviously a close knit family. When asked why she supported L'Arche coming to Halifax, the answer was quite clear: "What is lacking in Halifax is what L'Arche has to offer-a sense of community". Beth also liked something very thoughtful that Maria once said about L'Arche: "It will give us all a place to belong".

Maria and Beth are both regular members of St. Lawrence's on Dutch Village Road, where Beth is a good friend of Father Owen. Maria is active in the church community, where she has a special interest in refugee families. For fun, Maria relaxes with Samba Nova, a Brazilian street band.

By the way, Beth would not forgive us if we did not tell you about her favourite person-Buddy (in the small picture) and his brother Joey. What a joy to meet such fine people and be able to tell you something about them!



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Impressions of L'Arche, by Jacques and Pat Goulet

L'Arche began in Trosly, France, in 1964 when Canadian Jean Vanier welcomed two men from a local institution to live in the spirit of the Beatitudes. From that simple beginning has grown an international federation of 120 communities where people with mental challenges and those who care for them live, work, and celebrate together.

There are 27 communities in Canada, including 4 in the Maritimes, and at the heart, the core, of these communities those with disabilities offer a precious gift, revealing how to relate heart-to-heart rather than head-to-head.

We first met L'Arche in 1974 when Vanier gave a retreat here in Halifax, a time of grace for many. Later, our family spent time near Trosly, now grown to 300 people. We were privileged to share meals, prayers, and celebrations. Over time, we saw other communities: rainy English Liverpool and sunny Madras, urban Vancouver and rural Cape Breton, the large Daybreak community near Toronto and the tiny home in Calcutta. All were so different yet with one spirit... of respect, tenderness and love.

What touched us most were the warm welcomes, the joy born of struggle, the quiet moments of prayer, and a parting gift: the peace we carried away in our hearts.

CANA BOARD COMMITTEES

<p>Outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Group presentations • Audio -visuals 	<p>Community Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunday gatherings • Newsletter • Retreat / Formation 	<p>Fund Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach Churches & Businesses • Access grants • Special events
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Please help us reach other people in Metro Halifax who might like to know about, and perhaps be involved in plans to establish a L'Arche community here. All we ask you to do is to pass the form below to an interested friend with a request they return it to us, and we will put them on the mailing list for the newsletter. In this way they will know what are the needs and opportunities, and the calendar of Cana events.

I would like to receive "News from Cana" on a regular basis

Name _____ Address _____

Please mail this form or call at (902) 477-8269
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