



Spring 2015

Anna's Story - The Importance of Just Being Together

June 1, 2000 was my first official day in L'Arche. It's shocking to think that was nearly 15 years ago! I started as a returning summer assistant and volunteer. I later spent a year as House Leader. A lot has happened since then, but my connection with L'Arche remains.

I initially came across L'Arche when I was attending university and while volunteering with a neighbourhood program through a local church. I was young, inexperienced, and still trying to adjust to living in a big city. I wanted to gain more experience working with people. **I had no idea what was in store for me, but I ended up gaining much more than just experience!**

Creation House became my home away from home. Family and friends I had grown up with were in another province. At the time, core members, Bill, Craig, Ron, and Arthur welcomed me in. **They, along with the other assistants, became my new friends. They essentially became like family members.** Shortly after Bill's passing in 2003, we invited Rick to Creation House. Sadly, Craig and Rick have also since passed away, but all three of their memories live on!

I enjoyed new experiences. Bill taught me how to bowl and play Yahtzee, the art of being "pun"-ny, and the generosity of a compassionate heart through his child sponsorship. Craig introduced me to the "Old People" (long term community members) from whom I have gleaned much wisdom. He also made me start

to wonder if Elvis really was still alive and believe that fish and chips may in fact be their very own food group! Ron, through his attention to intricate details and his own voice for a tune, taught me to appreciate seemingly simple things. Arthur inspired me to go to new places and meet new people, though maybe not as famous as Ellen! Rick knew the secret to a good cup of "real" tea with milk, which I have since grown to like.

I lived life. I lived life in community. I realized the importance of just being together... and just being. I shared moments with people. Celebrations? Music? Laughter? Fun? Food? There was no shortage of the aforementioned!

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Anna, front row on the right, with her friends at Creation House (circa 2001).

Memorials and Tributes

L'Arche Greater Vancouver gratefully acknowledges gifts received in memory or in honour of loved ones and friends.

In Memory:

Norma Byron	Beeby Family
Peter Atherton	John Adrien Hacault
Marie and Kevin	Kirk Huckvale
McAuley	Elizabeth Kelly
Eleanor Stuckey	Mrs. SC Wong

In Honour:

Betty Campbell's Birthday
 Diane Bruce
 Nathan Korstanje
 Joel Macht
 Anne McElroy
 Fr. Craig Scott

Our Mission is to:

Make known the gifts of people with developmental disabilities, revealed through mutually transforming relationships

Foster an environment in community that responds to the changing needs of our members, while being faithful to the core values of our founding story.

Engage in our diverse cultures, working together toward a more human society.

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From Denise's Desk:

L'Arche is a School of the Heart

If you have visited our community you will have witnessed the work of Sister Normande. For many years she has made things beautiful—adding flowers and small touches to our sacred spaces and worked tirelessly in the gardens around L'Arche.



She has worked in a variety of roles since coming to us in 1979. At present she is on Community Council and accompanies people on their journey in community as they discover and grow in their faith. She has been a dear friend and encourager to me and many others.

Recently she shared her story of transformation with us.

I had been working in a parish in Saskatoon serving the poor. I often had people in my home as guests but my desire was to live with the poor.

Anna's Story Continued from page 1

However, **living life together and being genuine and intentional can be challenging. We also journeyed through mutual support, encouragement, patience, and perseverance, in the midst of frustration, shared tears, grief, and sorrow.**

The richness of living in community with core members and assistants from various countries as well as cultural and spiritual backgrounds was a wealth of discovery and growth. **My experience in community has been invaluable and has helped me through my own faith journey, life challenges, and vocation.**

Over the years, my friends at L'Arche have been very supportive of me prior to and throughout my medical training. **They have continued to encourage me as I worked as a rural family physician travelling within Canada and internationally.** I recently transitioned into practicing as a palliative care physician, providing comfort to patients and their families during potentially difficult times.

There is something sweet and sacred about having authentic relationships that stand the test of time. For these continued friendships, I am grateful, and I feel incredibly blessed. **God, through L'Arche, has shown me that hope, joy, and light can be found in a world that often brings disappointment, despair, and darkness!**

I read about Jean Vanier's work, and, in 1977, I asked if I could have a three month sabbatical to experience what it was like to live in a L'Arche community. The Lord was waiting for me and three months became 38 years and counting.

L'Arche is a school of the heart that transformed me as I walked into my first home in Trosly, France in 1977.

I recall a very special moment of feeling changed. I was invited to dinner in one of the houses in Trosly. Even though they did not know me, I felt a warm and heartfelt welcome from the people with developmental disabilities. They all wanted to sit beside me.

At that moment I experienced deep in my heart the same welcome of Jesus. **"I know you, Normande. You are special to me. I love you as you are with your gifts and limitations."**

The gift of being in this community is that I can be grateful for my gifts and accept my limitations. Jean Vanier has said there is often a gift hiding in our limitations. **I don't have to be perfect. It is a blessing just "to be".**

People with developmental disabilities are often transparent. What you see is what you get. **They want what everyone wants—to be in relationship.**

The cry for relationships is as relevant today as it was when I first came to L'Arche. Technology, gadgets and social media don't fill the need for true and deep relationships.

My heart is full of gratitude to have been called to share the mission of L'Arche which corresponds well with the charism of my own religious congregation (Sisters of the Child Jesus): **"to be a presence of love to the Father and the poor."**



Sister Normande (right) with her friend Sue



The 2015 Art Together Show

Art Together Show ~The Main Exhibition~

April 24 6—9 p.m.
Shadbolt Centre
6450 Deer Lake Road
Burnaby BC

Free Admission
Light Refreshments

~Secondary Shows~ In case you miss the Main Exhibition

May 14—June 9
Bob Prettie Library
6100 Willingdon
Burnaby BC

June 15—June 29
McGill Library
4595 Albert Street
Burnaby BC

The L'Arche artists have been busy preparing for our Art Together Show on April 24, 2015 at the Shadbolt Centre in Burnaby. This year the theme "Be Fruitful" is inspired by our our Community theme from John 15:16

The 22 original paintings as well as prints and art cards will be available for purchase at the event. There will be secondary shows at local libraries.



Above—Lawrence and Alex with their painting "Fruit Loops".

Left—Jennifer and Mary getting ready to paint "Incognito Fruit in Disguise".

Louise's Story: Planning Ahead to Make a Difference



About seven years ago Louise Hemming came to visit L'Arche. While Louise and her friend Tilly toured the building they encountered the Neighbours Helping Neighbours crew as they came in from their morning's activities. One of the people on the crew introduced himself as Patrick and gave her a Neighbours Helping Neighbours card. **She was touched**

by how he presented himself and how proud he was in his role.

Little did we know that Louise had been considering which charities she wanted to support in her will when she passed away. There was a long list of worthy organizations and in the end **she chose L'Arche because of meeting Patrick and seeing how L'Arche was making a difference** in the lives of people who were often marginalized by the rest of society.

Louise was born in Renown, Saskatchewan in 1919 and

passed away in Vancouver when she was 94 years old. She chose Nursing as her career and worked in many different roles from staff nurse to educator. The last 15 years of her career were spent teaching nursing students where she thoroughly enjoyed helping young people achieve their goals.

Louise's friend Tilly describes her as being full of vim and vigor. She liked to prepare incredible meals while entertaining at her home, was a passionate gardener and volunteered for various organizations after she retired. Louise did not have any children of her own **but planned carefully to ensure that she could contribute to organizations that helped young people, especially those facing challenges.**

Tilly said Louise was happy in her last months of life that this goal would be achieved.

*You can also make a difference for future generations by including L'Arche in your will.
For more information call
Sig Stark at 604-435-9544 ex 35*



Jean Vanier, Founder of L'Arche Wins 2015 Templeton Prize

London, U.K., March 11, 2015 – Jean Vanier, the founder of L'Arche, a ground-breaking international federation of communities where people with and without intellectual disabilities live and work together, has been awarded the 2015 Templeton Prize.

Valued at £1.1 million (about \$1.7 million USD), the Prize is one of the world's largest annual awards given to an individual. It honors a living person who has made exceptional contributions to affirming life's spiritual dimension, whether through insight, discovery, or practical works. Vanier joins a distinguished group of 44 former recipients, including Mother Teresa, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama.

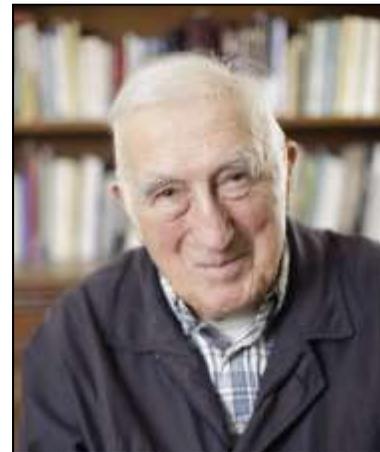
When he founded L'Arche in France in 1964, Vanier, now 86, discovered that those people whom society typically considers of least value, enable the strong to recognize and welcome their own vulnerability and to grow in their humanity. Five years later, the first Canadian community, L'Arche Daybreak, was founded in Richmond Hill, Ontario.

Worldwide, there are now 147 L'Arche communities in 35 countries on 5 continents. Twenty-nine communities are in Canada, spread from Comox Valley, BC, to Cape Breton, NS.

In remarks prepared for the announcement in London, England, Vanier made a plea for global peace, saying **“Before being Christians or Jews or Muslims, before being Americans or Russians or Africans, before being generals or priests, rabbis or imams, before having visible or invisible disabilities, we are all human beings with hearts capable of loving.”**

In her remarks, Jennifer Simpson, daughter of Foundation president and chairman Dr. John M. Templeton, Jr. and granddaughter of Sir John Templeton, noted **“By recognizing the importance of every individual, regardless of their station in life, Jean Vanier underscores how each of us has the ability not only to lift up others, but also ourselves... His powerful message and practice of love has the potential to change the world for the better, just as it has already changed the lives of countless individuals who have been touched by this extraordinary man.”**

Vanier has written and spoken tirelessly over more than 50 years, encouraging social justice, dialogue and unity among Christians and those of others faiths. He continues to live in the original L'Arche community, north of Paris.



For more information about the Templeton Prize and Jean's response to the award go to www.templetonprize.org

Thank you for supporting the work of L'Arche locally

Give online: www.larchevancouver.org and click **“Donate Now”**

CONTACT:

DR. MR. MRS. MS. MISS MR. AND MRS.

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