

## **“Live the Parable of the Good Samaritan” Response to Panel Presentations by Lorette Langlais, SBC**

We were touched by the talks of the three panelists and the reactions from the audience reflected the relevance of the points presented. Used to working as part of a team, I would have preferred to react as part of a group and present a structured text but allow me to informally point out the issues that have affected me.

As a first step, to let oneself be touched one must listen, hear, see, look, feel, experience, discern, choose, decide and act; in a word, "live the parable of the Good Samaritan."

### **Revisiting Basic Values**

The three speakers revisited basic values: seekers of God, we are called to develop evangelical attitudes, to choose and respect life, to believe in the dignity of persons especially those who live on the margins, to ensure a quality of presence in relationships, to adjust to reality by developing our self-confidence, courage, joy and hope. The participation of the laity in our mission is fruitful and supportive. The partnership between communities is promising. Cooperation, interdependence and shared mission are ways forward.

### **Highlights of the Three Talks**

What struck me in the presentation of **France Croussette**, general superior of the Antoniennes de Marie Sisters:

- Persons in authority are women like any others with their strengths and limitations.
- We moved from a model of perfection to a simpler, more collegial style with attitudes in which God's mercy is a forgiving presence. Lucidity and liberty go hand in hand.
- The exercise of a dynamic leadership respects God's design for each sister, reflects the spirit of the Constitutions, supports the mission, elicits the cooperation of all members, and values the work of each and every one.
- A golden rule: ensure consensus before making changes. Gradually we realize that we are fashioned for the times we live in and the task becomes enjoyable, exciting, but always challenging.

The presentation by **Gaétan Sirois, FSC**, reflects the commitment to social justice and to the service of marginalized populations. Teacher, facilitator, close to those seeking dignity and justice, he was able to engage with people, to get involved in social issues. As citizens, collectively questioning the decision-makers' projects is a form of political involvement, a form of charity that takes into account the common good. He spoke about and questioned Bill 52 on Dying with Dignity. Some elements of this law require reflection, clarification and the need for guidelines.

Gaétan Sirois established links with community groups, stressed the importance of fraternal communities where bread and the Word are shared with people from all walks of life, an opportunity to let oneself be evangelized by people living in poverty and exclusion.

**Gaétane Guillemette, NDPS**, drew for us a great historical fresco of religious life after Vatican II. Renewal, discovery of the Church-people of God, a Church that loves the world, a Church of communion.

Hopes-Crisis-Wilderness. Necessary shifts despite vulnerabilities, diminishment and difficult planning. Repatriation of vibrant forces must ensure proximity with people and the transmission of the charism that is God's gift to the Church. The governance of our institutes requires boldness, foresight, wisdom. Difficult choices invite us to live the Paschal Mystery, to restore the area of the world which is close to us.

Between the dream and the reality, do what we can, keep hope and creativity alive. We are going through a learning process. We are “transmitters,” bridges between what is and what is to come. Openness to new communities is a path to explore.