

Louise Bray, SC (1932-2016)

Louise Bray was a woman of action who knew what it meant to be human, to love those living in poverty and to face challenges with courage and boldness. Her time in leadership, both as a provincial in Cape Breton, NS and as Congregational Leader for the Sisters of Charity of Halifax, was marked by initiatives that invited those around her to choose life.



Louise entered the Congregation from Boston in 1950. Early in her ministry as a social worker, she was missioned to the coal mining community of Glace Bay, NS. Her mind and heart warmly embraced this land and the people who lived there. In the early 1970s, she collaborated with several church leaders in Glace Bay to address the need for affordable housing.

With community strategizing, home visits to identify the people who would most benefit and with boldness and creativity in finding funding and support, the project - Seton Foundation - took off and affordable housing in that area became a reality.

Her sense of justice, of being on the side of “the poor ones,” of living the Vincentian charism, of seeing in each individual the face of Jesus made her stand out. She believed that “each and every person is God’s work of art.” Louise often encouraged people to let go of the hurt of the past in order to make way for the life they wanted to live. Throughout her life, she was a friend and mentor to many.

Her term as Congregational Leader, 1988-96, was a time that called for new images of religious life and leadership. The work of many congregations in those years was re-founding. Louise believed that this “has something to do with letting go and becoming empty...not in a negative sense but for the purpose of making room for God.”

The joy and engagement with people that characterized Louise’s life continued through her ministry at Southdown Institute in Aurora, Ontario and into her retirement in Halifax. Hospitality is part of the charism of the Sisters of Charity. In her life, it was supported by her awareness of God’s grace and the long practice of opening her arms in a wide embrace to all she met. Sister Louise died on July 28, 2016 at the age of 84.

QUOTATIONS:

"Have courage to do what you must do. Do it heartily."

“Each and every person we encounter is sacred”

LINK: <http://schalifax.ca/>