

Faith and Sharing – Ottawa, its history

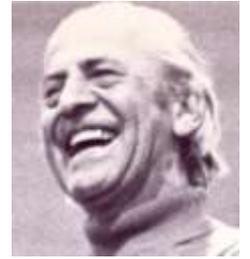


Isabelle Frappier
in 2000

By Isabelle Frappier

In 1968 Jean Vanier animated the first retreat in Toronto that gave this momentum that we know. In 1969, at the archbishop of Ottawa Aurèle Plourde's request, Jean Vanier preached the first retreat in French.

What were the fruits of this 1969 retreat? That was the beginning of Faith and Sharing in Ottawa. A committee was formed of six people including Louis Raby o.m.i (he himself animated many retreats for the Ottawa group). It was the beginning of the prayer group. From 1970 until 1995, annual retreats were organized. The retreats were offered to everyone ("open retreat") starting in 1984.



Louis Raby,
died in 1975

In 1972, members helped the installation of L'Arche Alleluia in Ottawa.

In 1981, the members offered support to St-Vincent Hospital patients for the pilgrimage to Lourdes, France, organized by Jean Vanier.

Faith and Sharing – Ottawa touched hundreds of lives from all walks of life during all these years.



Jean-Marie Côté, Marc Rioux, Claire Leblanc, Gertrude Leclerc and
Jacqueline Leblanc in 1988

In 1995, the activities ceased. The year 1994 saw the last annual retreat organized by the group.

What went on between 1995 and 2016?

Some members of Faith and Sharing got involved in the family pastoral at St-Charles parish, the monthly meetings and the annual retreats. That is how Robert and Isabelle got acquainted with Faith and Sharing by attending regional and North American retreats and visiting other Faith and Sharing Communities. Isabelle has been on the North American committee for seven years.

Following the North American French-speaking retreat of June 2016 in Quebec City, a new group was formed and started meeting and praying in Ottawa in September 2016. Since then, the small group meet twice a month to meditate the Word of God and pray together. I have a feeling that we are going back to the roots of what Faith and Sharing was at the very beginning.



Madeleine Séguin

This 2016 7-day retreat in Quebec City bore fruits and graces that we can't begin to imagine. Here we are two years after this event: *La Maison La Charité* was founded (See the article *Another Fruit of Faith and Sharing* in the [Heart-to-Heart bulletin of October 2017](#), pages 10-11) and members still meet to pray the same way as the founders did.

What will be Faith and Sharing Ottawa in the next few years? No one can predict, whatever happens will be God's will. 💜



At *La Maison La Charité*, 2017



The 20 years of Faith and Sharing in 1988 at the Diocesan Center of Ottawa. Marc Rioux in the background on the left, Émile Leblanc near Marc, the late Gabrielle Bérubé in the foreground.



In 1968,
Jacques Huppé with four of the first members of L'Arche Agapè community in Gatineau



In the foreground, Bill Clarke and Madeleine Séquin, 2017

