

Faith and Sharing



Heart - to - Heart

North American Bulletin

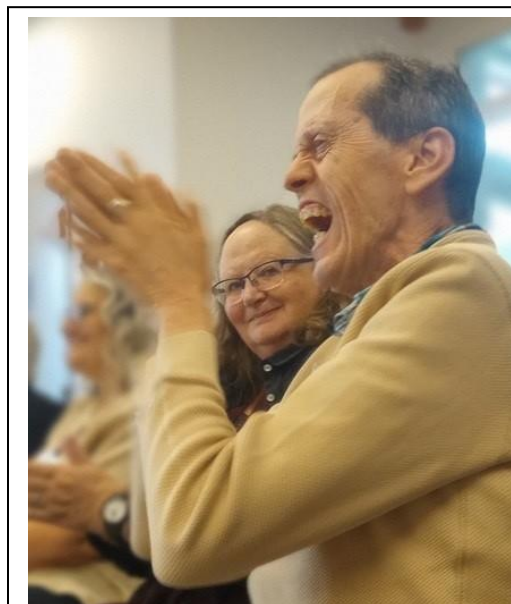
April 2026
Volume 52, no. 2

Theme of this bulletin: ***“Staying strong in challenging times”***

The Hope Stone

*By Shauna McRae Okine
Vancouver Island*

Hope is an attitude
which allows us to grow
forgives our past, develops a future
Without hope
we are paralyzed by fear of failure
by sadness, by aloneness
Hope opens the door
allows us to try
Hope is the basis of change
When we hope we yearn for something better
To have hope is the most basic and important of all desires
Hope will build the strength to change
The fortitude to be what we aspire to be
Hope is the flicker of light in our darkness
Hope allows us to know who we really are and who we wish to become
Hope grows deep in the human heart
To have hope is the most beautiful and difficult of all our needs
Hope changes our future,
creates opportunity,
and makes a strong
To have hope is
to be Free.



Shauna sharing a moment
of joy with Cory

How I stay strong in challenging times



By Guylaine Garneau
Sherbrooke

Not often enough, but occasionally, I listen to the Rosary on YouTube with NDML (Our Lady Mother of Light). I recite it silently along with the other people. I love their beautiful, youthful voices that touch me deeply, drawing me closer to Our Heavenly Mother, Queen of Heaven, and her only Son, Jesus, our Savior. Suffering from a degree of hearing loss, I am very sensitive and receptive to certain vocal timbres. Unfortunately, many don't resonate with me; that's just how it is. I don't pick up on the messages, however beautiful they may be. It's too bad...



And now, how I stay strong in challenging times?... Reciting the Rosary with its mysteries: Joyful (childhood), Luminous (public life), Sorrowful (passion), Glorious (resurrection). This is what works best for me, guided and narrated prayer, as well as listening to beautiful Christian hymns with lyrics, including those by Robert Lebel, Carey Landry, and many others.

And most recently, I've enjoyed rediscovering the lives of our saints and martyrs, and more, through short Christian videos, favorites of Michel Denis, a member of the La Maison Les Béatitudes community in Sherbrooke.

And finally, from time to time, participating in the community prayer at La Maison Les Béatitudes, in the beautiful little chapel, is also a highlight for me, as is listening to the very beautiful weekday Masses on Radio Ville-Marie, celebrated at Saint Joseph's Oratory in Montreal.



May Divine Will be done, and not mine! 🙏



Heart-to-Heart Bulletin

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Next dead line:
September 20, 2026

Theme for the
October 2026 bulletin:
"How great are Your works!"
Ps 92,5

Staying strong in challenging times



By Angèle Gagné
Quebec city

Upon receiving this theme for March, I immediately thought of that old, small house in the Saguenay region, which remained strong and firmly attached to the rock despite the flood. It has become a place of pilgrimage and wonder for the world!



Also rising in my heart was this passage from Luke 6:47-48:

“As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built.”

Difficult times indeed! I believe we all experience them. How can we get through them while keeping our heads and hearts high? How can we live through them without being broken, becoming withdrawn and depressed? Without becoming unbearable to those around us?

Jesus invites us to *"come to Him."* Let us go find Jesus in our deserts. Let us listen to His Word of Life, Peace, and Love. Let us allow Him to touch us. Let His saliva touch our eyes, blinded by these difficult times. It contains enzymes capable of digesting the misery we find in living! (Ha! Ha!)

Let us try to put into practice a Word capable of "digging deep" within us until we reach the solid Rock of God within us. And there, in the depths of our being, with "God our strength", we too can remain strong. Even if the framework of the house remains fragile, even if illness spreads through our bodies, even if we limp and stumble, our Rock and our Shield will help us remain steadfast in faith and hope.

This is what I try to do and live when knocking at my door: the incomprehensible; the pain of the heart; the absurdity of life; the coldness of those around me; a hurtful word; tears; etc.

I end with this Lenten hymn from the breviary. When I pray it alone, loudly in the privacy of my room, I say my name instead of Israel:

Be strong, be faithful, Angèle, God is leading you into the desert; It is He whose sovereign arm opened a path in the sea beneath your feet.

Forget the supports of the past, in Him alone is your strength! It is He, like a consuming fire, who desires this crucible for your faith today.

He wants, beyond the desert, to lead you to rest; Upon you shines forth in His eyes the blood of the Lamb slain in the night.

Continue your exodus, Angèle, walk on toward your joy! God passes with you and snatches you from the night.



Staying strong in challenging times



*By Claire Donovan
Vancouver Island*

I believe that an important part of staying strong in challenging times is finding and nurturing community. For many of us, Faith and Sharing is a place we are drawn to, because we form strong communities that pray together, support and encourage each other, and remind each other about matters of the heart.

At our last reflection day in October 2025 in Nanaimo, Vancouver Island, we gathered on the feast of St Francis, so naturally we focused on Franciscan spirituality - peace and justice, respect for creation, the dignity of each person, prayer and service. We learned about St Francis, sang songs, brought symbols from nature, prayed the Prayer of St Francis together, listened to some poems and shared cake together. We left feeling strengthened by St Francis' message and example and by being together in loving community for a few hours.



Laurent, our strongman

“Staying strong in challenging times”



By Jean Roy
Sherbrooke



The people at Faith and Sharing Sherbrooke know Laurent Croteau. He's our longest-standing participant. He's been coming to Faith and Sharing meetings almost since the beginning in Sherbrooke. He likes to lend his strong voice to the community when it's time to announce the resumption of activities after the break.


On a few occasions, Laurent asked me to accompany him to the "Carrefour de l'Estrie" shopping center to do his shopping. For me, a shopping mall is a convenient place, but not a pleasant one. Too many people, too much hustle and bustle, too much noise, too many sales pitches. In my mind, it's a place that encapsulates several problems in our society: overconsumption, superficiality, utilitarian and unfriendly human relationships, and the divide between the rich who can afford goods and the poor who cannot.

Laurent, on the other hand, enjoys going to "Carrefour de l'Estrie". It's a sheltered spot, protected from the elements, with a flat floor suitable for his wheelchair, and an elevator for when he needs to change floors. Of course, he can buy a few things there, to meet his needs or treat himself. But the best part is that in a shopping center, there are so many strangers to greet!

Indeed, Laurent enjoys saying "hello" to the people he passes. With a smile, and taking the time to acknowledge their reactions. Most people don't respond; they walk quickly, surprised by the greeting. A few return the "hello" with a smile. I haven't seen anyone take offense or criticize this behavior. It must be said that there's nothing threatening in Laurent's face and voice. There's only kindness.

Thus, Laurent is a "strong man" in the context of a shopping center. Strong in his kindness, his politeness, and his trust in people. A strength he likely draws from his vulnerability and his trust in God: *"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness"* (2 Corinthians 12:9).

"Staying strong in challenging times." Walking with Laurent gives me strength. While I might see people in a crowd as unwelcome strangers, Laurent helps me believe that every encounter can be pleasant, and that it's good to be in relationship, even if that relationship is just a greeting. I'm trying to adopt this way of seeing people, which surely resembles God's way of seeing all of us, but I confess that I don't have Laurent's gift.

Thank you, Laurent, for all those greetings, all those smiles, which reflect God's love in you. 

Like Sheep Among Wolves: The Spirit That Guides Humanity



By Robert Cronier

Ottawa

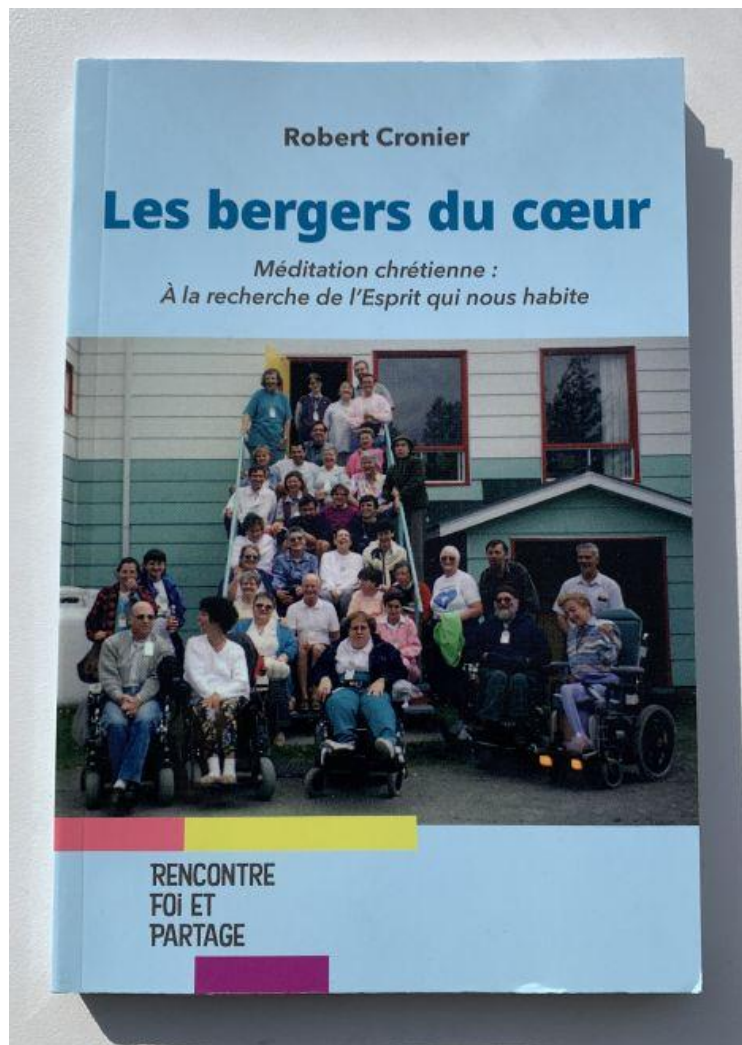
December 13, 2006

Fear, vanity, and greed are the wolves that ravage humanity. These predators are the creation of an orphaned mind that believes itself alone in facing existence.

This inner solitude is the source of all human misery and can only be healed when it calls upon its Father to intervene. Like a naked child in the arms of existence, our orphaned voice invokes the creative universe to intervene and deliver it from the darkness of its solitude.

Yes, the creative Force that moves the universe intervenes on behalf of its child, raising its consciousness beyond all expectations. The solitary mind becomes the creative mind of the infinite. Our caterpillar shell bursts open, and the splendor of what is transforms us from within, allowing us to fly with angelic wings. Our earthly destiny is fulfilled. Our shell allows the splendor within us to blossom. Our inner wolf becomes the shepherd of its earthly flock.

Serving humanity in Your presence is our destiny: let us go forth and be.



Three priests who recently died

By Jean Roy

French speaking coordinator

Recently, three communities have been affected by the death of a priest who provided them with spiritual guidance.

Let us give thanks for these priests who have helped the Faith and Sharing communities and many people to walk with Jesus...



Fr. Édouard Ntiyankundiye
Ottawa



Fr. Luc Beaudin
Valleyfield



Fr. Gilles Beauchemin
Quebec city

Father Édouard Ntiyankundiye

1949-2026

By Isabelle Frappier

Ottawa

Father Édouard was a longtime friend of my husband Robert Cronier and me. Originally from Burundi, he belonged to the Bene-Yozefu (Saint Joseph) Brothers congregation.

He first participated in a North American Faith and Sharing retreat in 2016. It was after this retreat that the Faith and Sharing meetings resumed in Ottawa. Father Édouard



served as chaplain to the Ottawa group ever since. He joined Marc Rioux, Jean Roy, Robert and me to visit the Vancouver Island group and participate in their retreat in 2018.

In November 2021, Father Édouard suffered a stroke that left him paralyzed on his left side. He spent all these years in a wheelchair or bedridden. He passed away on February 15, 2026.

He was a devoted priest, a friend, and a confidant. We already miss him.

He has left our shore, but we know that his loved ones who have gone before him are waiting for him on the other side.

May his soul rest in peace for eternal life with the Lord whom he loved with all his heart.

Faith and Sharing Activities 2025-2026

Group	Activity	Location	Dates	Remarks	Person to contact
Sherbrooke QC	Monthly meeting	La Maison Les Béatitudes 2295, Galt West	2nd Sunday of the month 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm	Theme: <i>"Jesus, my strength"</i>	Jean Roy 819-822-3172 jea_r@videotron.ca
Valleyfield QC	Monthly meeting	"Salle des Oeuvres" of the Cathedral 66, rue du Marché	3rd Monday of the month 6:45 pm to 9:15 pm except Dec. 1 and June 15	Theme: <i>"Daring the Encounter"</i>	Julie Prigent 450-373-1956 julie1971.pregent@gmail.com facebook.com/Coordonnatrice.de.la.communaute
Quebec city QC	Monthly meeting	Church Notre-Dame-de-Recouvrance 290, ave Bélanger	3rd Tuesday of the month 10 am to 3:30 pm	Theme: <i>"Hope, source of life"</i>	Jean-Claude Lizotte 418-831-0125 Website : www.foietpartage.org
Quebec city QC	Retreat	Church Notre-Dame-de-Recouvrance 290, ave Bélanger	August 17 – 19, 2026		Jean-Claude Lizotte 418-831-0125 jclizotte@gmail.com
Vancouver Island BC	Renewal Day	Brechin United Church, Nanaimo, BC	May 30th, 2026 10 am to 4 pm	Theme: <i>A Pentecost Retreat Day: Blown by Wind and Touched with Fire</i>	Claire Donovan merryfish321@gmail.com Invitation letter, May 30th
Jacksonville Florida	Retreat	Marywood Retreat and Conference Center	May 18-21, 2026	Theme : <i>The Heart of a Servant</i>	Sister Rita Baum rbaumssj@yahoo.com facebook.com/FaithAndSharinGStJohns

Zoom Meetings

Group	Zoom Link	Date	Time	Remarks	Person to contact
Quebec city QC	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4185761789?pwd=qH6Oae8E8VX3zHzbYbpHthrMFUzJhR.1	Each Monday	9:15 am	Prayer and sharing with the Gospel of the day	Jean-Claude Lizotte 418-831-0125
Ottawa ON	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87189648771?pwd=U2ISUnhDTW5iS09jN2lVcTBkQnljQT09	1 st Monday of the month	7:00 pm	Theme: <i>"To Hope"</i>	Isabelle Frappier 613-565-9435 isabelle_f@hotmail.com
Prayer in French by North American committee	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8198223172 Meeting ID: 819 822 3172	3 rd Thursday of the month	10:30 to 11:30 am	Prayer and sharing around the Word of God (in French only)	Jean Roy 819-822-3172 jea_r@videotron.ca