

## **60 YEARS ALREADY!**

The women of Opus Dei number about 500 in Montreal, Quebec City, Ottawa, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver. Their activities also take them to other cities in Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia.

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Inspired by a strong desire to share their joy in knowing Christ and his Gospel, the women of Opus Dei have gradually expanded their service in Canada over the past 60 years.

Actively engaged in the new evangelization so much desired by Pope Francis, and before him by Paul VI, Saint John Paul II and Benedict XVI, the majority of them are supernumeraries.

There are approximately 500 of them located in Montreal, Quebec City, Ottawa, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver. Their activities also take them to other cities in Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia.

## **Make way for creativity!**

Determined to respond to the call of their baptism in the heart of the world, they simply aim for holiness and seek to bring their families and friends to the encounter with Christ.

Each one carries out her apostolic activities in complete freedom and responsibility, listening to others and

respecting their convictions and conscience.

So let's get creative! In this way, personal initiatives are born that respond to the needs of their friends and acquaintances, and lead them in turn to discover the secret of a happy life: an intimate relationship with God, always present at their side, in their ordinary life.

"There is something holy, divine, that hides itself in the most ordinary situations, and it is up to each of you to discover it," said St Josemaria, the founder of Opus Dei, adding: "Our daily life can be a path to holiness."

### **Stay "connected"**

This is what attracted Bridget Bagshaw, a mother of nine children who lives in Montreal and whose parents were both supernumeraries: "I was attracted to Opus Dei which told me that I could become a saint

without changing the place in my life of being a wife and mother. When I gave birth to my first child, I realized that I was responsible for his soul. So I had to improve! I needed training."

Bridget found this formation through the recollections, retreats and workshops in anthropology, philosophy and theology offered to supernumeraries by the Work. A formation completed by regular spiritual accompaniment, enriched by a life plan that allows each one to remain "connected" to the Lord: daily mass, personal prayer, rosary, spiritual reading.

"I realized that God has a plan for each of us. The best of plans. So I decided to trust Him and place my marriage and family in his hands rather than trying to run my boat in my own way", adds the Montrealer who set up a "club" for girls in her home - a meeting place where

everyone makes friends while having fun (crafts, theatre, cooking, etc.) and receiving little talks about one virtue or another.

With her husband, Bridget has also been involved for 20 years as a moderator of courses on child rearing offered by the organization Famille, Développement et Éducation (FDE). "Karl and I have benefited enormously from this experience," she says. The simple case study and exchanges that followed helped us communicate easily and we quickly realized that the most important thing was our relationship as a couple, even before the relationship with our children. It also taught us how to develop virtues in our children."

## **The secret: friendship**

Jackie MacKay and her husband Grant also acted as FDE session instructors. An octogenarian from

Quebec City, mother of eight children and grandmother of 13 grandchildren, she knew Opus Dei in 1960 and became a supernumerary in 1966. "It was after Vatican II, in the midst of the Quiet Revolution," she recalls. By discovering the link between my faith and my married and family life, I chose to pursue a career as a wife and mother."

In addition to deepening her knowledge of the Faith, Jackie understood the importance of providing herself with a solid human and cultural education. Hence her love of reading on a wide variety of subjects.

She also found in the Work concrete support to remain faithful to God and to develop solid values and virtues: "Apart from the virtues of faith, hope and charity, she says, I believe that humility will always remain THE great quality."

Another exciting discovery: that of her apostolic responsibility. "I really appreciate friendship," she concludes. There is no other way to bring others to God. I still pray every day for my friends; it is essential to be in close contact with the Lord. I listen to Him, He listens to me and advises me... Then I advise them."

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