

# MARY CENTRE NEWSLETTER



## IN MEMORY OF A GRACIOUS LADY



When Doreen Cullen went off to study social work at the University of Ottawa's St. Patrick's College in 1950, Catholic social agencies were dominated by well intentioned amateurs who offered a haphazard patchwork of services. By the time Doreen retired in 1994 as the first lay person to head up Catholic Charities in Toronto, she had blazed a trail for professional competence and filled many of the gaps that had existed in the Catholic network of care.

Doreen succumbed to a six-month battle with cancer on December 30, 2007. She was 79.

Always a quiet and persuasive diplomat, Doreen pushed Catholic social agencies into a new era of professionalism during her nine years as executive director of Catholic Charities. "Doreen was so calm and organized in direction that people wouldn't know they were being revolutionized"

said Kathryn Johnson, Doreen's old classmate from the St. Patrick's College School of Social Work, class of 1952. "Her own dedication to certain things just gradually caught on."

Among other things, Doreen was dedicated to professional standards. She brought a level of knowledge and experience to Catholic Charities that someone who had never worked in the social work profession really couldn't have.

Among Doreen's proudest achievements from her years running Catholic Charities was helping to establish **Mary Centre** which supports families with developmentally disabled adult children up to and including a place where developmentally disabled adults can live independently while still being supported by a community.

After retiring from Catholic Charities, Doreen joined the Board of Mary Centre for a six year term, served as its President and she was also responsible for recruiting many of Mary Centre's most valued Board members. **All of her friends at Mary Centre will miss her. She truly made a difference in this world.**

Though she had often worked outside the Catholic milieu, Doreen always regarded her work as a vocation.

"It is the social worker who takes up where the formal church leaves off," said Doreen's big brother Fr. Bud Cullen, preaching at her funeral. "The social worker picks up the parts of life left dangling by the more formal church, or introduces the neglected participation of Jesus in the person's life, thus supplying what is needed to effect a close bond to Jesus."

*"Celebrating Developmental Challenges"*

A sense of vocation permeated all the early graduates of St. Patrick's school of social work, which has since become the faculty of social work at Carleton University.

"That was the origin of Doreen's commitment. They were a strongly bonded group," said Doreen's friend of 55 years, Jean Vale.

Doreen's career in social work included stints with the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Toronto, the Ontario Ministry of Health, the Children's Aid Society of Metropolitan Toronto, the Hospital for Sick Children's Thistletown Hospital northwest of Toronto, and project management for the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services.

Doreen's sense of mission and commitment in everything she did had a lot to do with growing up in an Irish-Catholic family that produced three priests among her four older brothers.

"It was that deep family, church, belief kind of thing — belief in God," said Johnson. "There was a spiritual development that I think only the old Irish can have."

Cullen's brothers — Basilian Fr. Ronald James Cullen, Fr. Bud Cullen, Fr. Dermot Cullen and Ray and his wife Kay Cullen — were present to mourn their baby sister's passing.

*Excerpted with permission of the Catholic Register*



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

May 13, 2008

9<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraising Golf Tournament  
Glencairn Golf Club, Milton

November 6, 2008

11th Annual Fundraiser  
Famous People Players Dinner Theatre

For information contact Marion Patterson at (416) 630-5533 or [mpatterson@marycentre.com](mailto:mpatterson@marycentre.com)

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## OUR FUNDRAISING DOLLARS AT WORK



Christmas was very special to the residents of Mary Centre. Through the generosity of the Estate of Michael Wilson, one of our resident's family, we were fortunate to purchase 4 brand new Mazda 5 vehicles.

Transportation is a major issue for our agency. Public transit is not dependable and taxis are very expensive. The addition of the vehicles insures residents will get to all the appointments and activities in the community.

This gift removed a major item from the "wish list" on marycentre.com. Thank you to all our supporters.

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# SMILE CORNER

Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson went on a camping trip. After a good meal and a bottle of wine, they were exhausted and went to sleep. Some hours later, Holmes awoke and nudged his faithful friend.

"Watson, look up at the sky and tell me what you see."

Watson replied, "I see millions and millions of stars."

"What does that tell you?" Holmes said. Watson pondered for a minute.

"It tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. And that The lord is all powerful and that we are small and insignificant. Also, since the sky is clear, I suspect that we will have, a beautiful day tomorrow. What does it tell you?"

Holmes was silent for a minute, then spoke. "Watson, you idiot, someone has stolen our tent."

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If you would like more information about Mary Centre and/or you would like to make a donation, clip out this and we will provide you with a Charitable Tax Deductible Donation.

- I would like more information about the agency
- I would like information on becoming a volunteer
- I enclose a cheque in the amount of: \_\_\_\_\_ or charge to my Credit Card  
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*“Celebrating Developmental Challenges”*