

NUNS BUILD *(continued from page 3)*

I stayed with the Dominican Sisters of Peace on both trips. Their warm hospitality was just great. They really catered to all our needs.

What can be accomplished in just 5 days? We got all the insulation done; almost all the drywall up (4' by 12' sheets) including on the ceilings. Our supervisor was very pleased; she didn't expect us to be half as advanced!

This past November, my team of 12 was assigned to a house that had been purchased from the city to be sold to a first-time owner. It had three bedrooms, two full baths, two living rooms, a kitchen and dining area, utility areas and a garage. We were to do the interior painting. We primed the whole house on the first day finishing an hour early. The supervisor was dumbfounded, thinking it would take us two days. The next days, we put on two coats of paint. Thursday, we did all the caulking, and Friday, we painted the doors that had just been delivered plus all the baseboards.

As I look back, I found this work to be very fulfilling, something I had always aspired to. My ongoing experiences with Habitat for Humanity enabled me to guide some of the volunteers. I was happy too that my parish of St. Anne's in Salem made a generous contribution to the Project. I thank Sr. Agnes and our Sisters for letting me participate."

Sr. Pauline Fortin, SSCh. (with Sr. Lisette Michaud, SSCh.)



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Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Convoy of Hope came to Marlborough on October 12, 2013! Convoy of Hope is an international faith-based non-profit organization. Founded in 1994, it has served more than 55 million people throughout the world. Its driving passion is to provide help and hope to people in poverty.

Dr. Rob Woods, pastor of New Hope Church, with the assistance of his small church community, planned and worked a whole year to enroll city government agencies, community businesses and benefactors in order to bring the Convoy to Marlborough. A city recreational field in the economically depressed part of the city called French Hill, was chosen for the site of the event. French Hill is a misnomer because most of its present residents are Hispanics and other immigrants.

*Goal of Our Lady Thrift Shop —
to serve families in need*

In August, an article in our local weekly newspaper described Convoy of Hope services and requested volunteers from any organization willing to provide these services to the needy people of our area. For us the call was loud and clear. "We are sent to serve the poor and the lowly (Rule of Life)." And the goal of Our Lady Thrift Shop is to serve families in need. Sr. Jeannette Desorcy enthusiastically endorsed the project, and asked Sr. Cecile to be the contact person. Dr. Woods responded most graciously to her and referred her to Nilsa Roman, the leader for Community Services. Both Dr. Woods and Nilsa showed their appreciation for our desire to participate and were always available to help us plan for the event. Nilsa allocated a very advantageous spot for us in the Community Services Tent. Our material contribution would be our donation of items taken from our thrift shop: the best of the best: clothes, shoes of all sizes, toys, knick-knacks, Christmas items, children's books, etc. Sr. Jeannette D. spent many hours with her team packing these items: a total of 18 big



boxes! Sr. Claire Robert, Sr. Jeannette Gonthier, Jeannette Desorcy, Cecile Berthiaume, ssch. volunteered to man our booth. If we wanted a parking space, we were expected to arrive at 6:30 a.m. to leave only at 3:00 p.m.... We accepted the challenge... The morning was cold and raw... We were ready! Sr. Louisa Perreault was our relay driver, at our service all day for bringing things we needed.

Everything at the event was free: hot dogs, hamburgers and drinks, groceries, haircuts, family portraits, children's shoes, even social service counseling to help people connect with helpful programs. Special priority was placed on the faith aspect of the event. In the Prayer Tent were several ministers who had been invited to come and pray with interested participants.



Sr. Cecile Berthiaume, SSCh.

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From the Desk of Sr. Agnes...



We are happy to offer you another edition of the St. Chretienne Annals. In this issue, you will be interested, and perhaps inspired, by the articles about our efforts in reaching out to the poor in our midst. With much enthusiasm, our Senior Sisters devoted themselves with great generosity to the Convoy of Hope project in Marlboro, MA. Sister Pauline Fortin, having developed many skills in home renovating at Habitat for Humanity, put her talents to work in the Nuns Build project in New Orleans. This group helps to renovate homes there destroyed in Hurricane Katrina. I congratulate all of them for the work on behalf of God's poor.

reach to the elderly, to the homeless street children, and evangelization in the dioceses in which they serve. At present, there are 21 African Sisters, 1 novice, 4 postulants, and several aspirants. In the fall of 2014, we expect a possible entrance of 14 postulants. Because of this growth, it will be necessary to look for additional housing for the



I would like to draw your attention to another project close to our hearts, one that I invite you to participate in if you feel moved to do so. While here in the U.S., vocations to religious life have greatly diminished, they have increased at a rapid pace in Africa. The Sisters of St. Chretienne are present in three countries there: Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Tanzania. Our Sisters minister in education, health care, social services, pastoral ministry, out-

postulants and to construct a new multi-purpose facility to continue the ongoing formation needs such as retreats, renewal days, and the initiation of interested aspirants. All of these efforts will require additional funding to keep up with the growth. If you feel called to help us in this way, please fill out the form below and send it in with your donation. The Sisters of St. Chretienne thank you and promise to remember you in prayer. God bless you!

Sr. Agnes Therrien, SSCh, Regional Leader

I am interested in contributing toward the needs and ministries of the Srs. of St. Chretienne in Africa.
\$100 _____ \$75 _____ \$50 _____ \$25 _____ Other _____
Your concern and interest are vital to us and any contribution will be greatly appreciated.
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NUNS BUILD - MAKING A DIFFERENCE

More than seven years after Hurricane Katrina, almost 8,000 family homeowners in Greater New Orleans have still been unable to return. Two years ago, the Sisters of St. Chretienne heard about a fascinating non-profit, the St. Bernard Project, started in 2006, involving volunteers to rebuild homes for vulnerable residents struggling to recover from the devastation and trauma caused by this tremendous natural disaster. One of the groups is Nuns Build started by Sr. Mary Keefe, OP. This is a week's experience in which our own Sister Pauline Fortin has participated in November, 2012 and 2013. Our readers may remember that she has been a long-time member of Habitat for Humanity, helping to rebuild homes in the Salem area. Pauline's enthusiasm and energy is apparent in these reflections from her experiences.



"For my first experience in 2012, we were about 70 people, mostly Sisters and friends and family from 17 states and Canada, working at 7 different sites. Most of us Sisters were in our 60's and 70's. The first morning, my group had our orientation at the house of a single mother of two children who is still in Texas, but is eager to get home. Her family has lived in this house for four generations. However, it had suffered severe water damage. We were given various tasks: insulation, prep work for drywall and putting up the drywall. This last job was given to my crew. Our work day went from 9:00 to 3:00, but we often extended that in order to finish up a task. We stopped for lunch which was often donated. The evening meals were hosted by the Knights of Columbus and local parish groups. The BIG EZ supper was provided by a group of volunteer homeowners in the New Orleans area. The EZ comes from their names which all end in 'ez'! There was even a reception for us in a restaurant in the French Quarter.

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In Loving Memory
Sister Beatrice Ebacher
(Sister Marie Henriette)
October 9, 1914 - January 3, 2014



On January 3, 2014, Sister Beatrice Ebacher died at the Marie Esther Healthcare Center in Marlboro, Massachusetts. Born in Lawrence, Massachusetts, Sister was the third child in a family of eight, and one of four who entered the religious life. Her life and ministry at St. Chretienne spanned 80 years, leading her to generous service in three countries.

Sister began her ministry as a teacher and then a principal at several parochial schools in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. She was then called to be the local superior at one of our convents in

Québec for two years. It soon became obvious that Sister Beatrice possessed qualities of leadership that made her qualified to continue a ministry in congregational government on the local and general level. She was called to serve several communities in France, three in Metz and one in Paris at the Major Seminary. Remembered with great affection by all who knew her, Sister Beatrice was an open, broadminded, kind and joyful person, whose presence in a community helped to make it a very pleasant place to be. She understood well the charisma of a Sister of St. Chretienne to reach out to the poor and lowly, manifesting God's tender love and mercy in the parishes and neighborhoods where she was sent. Sister Beatrice left a rich spiritual legacy to all of us left behind and who continue to labor in the Lord's vineyard. May she rest in peace.