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*COMMUNIQUE NO. 1*

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*SISTERS OF HOLY CROSS  
25<sup>th</sup> GENERAL CHAPTER*



*"Together ...  
on the pathways of resurrection  
of the world"*

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***EVE OF THE OPENING***

Delegates and service personnel were convoked to Pierrefonds June 24, 2016, for

a "soirée" that coincided with the celebration of the feast of St. John the Baptist. The events of the evening were planned and executed by Sisters Mariette Thibodeau, Denise Robert, and Claire Vanier - members of the pre-chapter committee.



We were invited to enter a beautifully-decorated dining room where we were welcomed to a social gathering and enjoyed each others' company while hors d'oeuvres and punch were served. This was followed by a buffet prepared by the kitchen staff.

A history of this feast from its "pagan" origins to the present day was narrated by Sister Mariette Thibodeau. This feast has great significance in Peru as well and Sister Saturnina Mamani Laura narrated the Peruvian version of this celebration. Both were very interesting and informative.

...And can we sing! Sister Claire Vanier led us in song with a multitude of famous Canadian tunes. Whether we knew the words or not, we all joined in with rhythmic gestures, foot tapping, and clapping. It was an evening that was truly enjoyed by everyone.



Since we are celebrating our 25<sup>th</sup> General Chapter, we had the opportunity to go back in time. This table displays the Letter of Convocation of the First General Chapter handwritten by Mother Mary of Saint Basil, dated 1890, photos of the first General Council, the blue cord, chaplet, and heart of Our Lady of Seven Dolors - and one of the

famous figurines dressed in full garb.

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## ***OPENING OF THE 25<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL CHAPTER***

### **St. Joseph Pavilion**

Remaining faithful to our commitment as a Congregation to do what we can to reduce our carbon footprint, it was a "nuns on the bus" scenario as everyone was bussed to the Pavilion for the formal opening of the 25<sup>th</sup> General Chapter of the Sisters of Holy Cross.



The Delegates processed into the chapel with Sister Marlene Bosch, her friend Kate McDonald, along with Sisters Trinh Ta, Denise Turcotte, Becky Do, Élodie Guiré who graced the procession with a liturgical dance to the song, "In the Breaking of the Bread".

Sisters Denise Robert and Diane Dupéré, who prepared the opening of the Chapter, extended a brief welcome to those assembled for the opening.

In a PowerPoint presentation, we remembered our 140 deceased sisters who have attained their eternal rest since the last Chapter. Sisters Claire Lanthier and Claire Vanier prayerfully named each sister and, after twenty sisters were named, the assembly responded with, "We believe you are here with us."

A new addition at the opening of the General Chapter was the introduction of the younger members of Holy Cross whose photos were presented and whose names were read by Sisters Agnes Louis and Theresa Martin. The response to these introductions was, "As women of faith, we commit ourselves to build with you and leave as a legacy a vibrant community."(CL 4)

In keeping the Gospel narrative of the Disciples of Emmaus alive, Sister Jean Goulet proclaimed the Word and read an excerpt of Luke's Gospel 24: 28 - 32:

*... "Were not our hearts burning inside us  
as he talked to us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?"*

As a reminder that the delegates constitute a faith community, a Profession of Faith was recited. The introduction proclaimed the following:

The future is not ours it belongs to the infinity of God and, today, "in Basile Moreau's gathering and in that of our forerunners in Holy Cross, together let us affirm our faith and our hope in the God of the impossible."(Report 2005-2011) The last response to the Profession of Faith confirmed that we are "strong in our heritage to leave a legacy, we believe in our future. Amen."

Imploring the Spirit for guidance and for inspiration the assembly was led in the singing of the "Veni Creator Spiritus" in its traditional Latin

rendition.

This was followed by  
the Statement of the President, Sister Kesta Occident,  
Congregational Animator  
who presented the objectives of the Chapter;  
outlined the work to be accomplished;  
the Roll Call of the Delegates  
and, finally,  
the Opening Declaration:

*"On this day, June 25, 2016, I proclaim open the 25<sup>th</sup>  
General Congregational Chapter of the Congregation of the  
Sisters of Holy Cross, which has been convoked by circular  
letter and which is legitimately assembled in conformity with  
the norms established by the Constitutions of the  
Congregation."*

Following the roll call of delegates those in attendance then extended their hands in a gesture of blessing upon the group which was prayed in three languages alternately. What follows is an example of one of those blessings:

*"May you be inspired to let go  
if grace is taking you somewhere else."*

The blessing was followed by the singing of our traditional Magnificat.



Becky Do, Élodie Guiré, Trinh  
Ta

The ceremony concluded with the recessional, "Somos Todos De Cristo". The dancers led the delegates out of the chapel waving what resembled flames to the message "taking to the people the fire of your love, seeds of justice and solidarity."



Kate McDonald, Denise  
Turcotte, Marlene Bosch

**[To access Sister Kesta Occident's complete texts: Visit our website](#)**

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# ***RETREAT***

The retreat opened Saturday evening with a conference given by Simón Pedro Arnold, OSB.

[All of Simon Pedro's conferences can be accessed in English, French, and Spanish ... Visit our website](#)

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