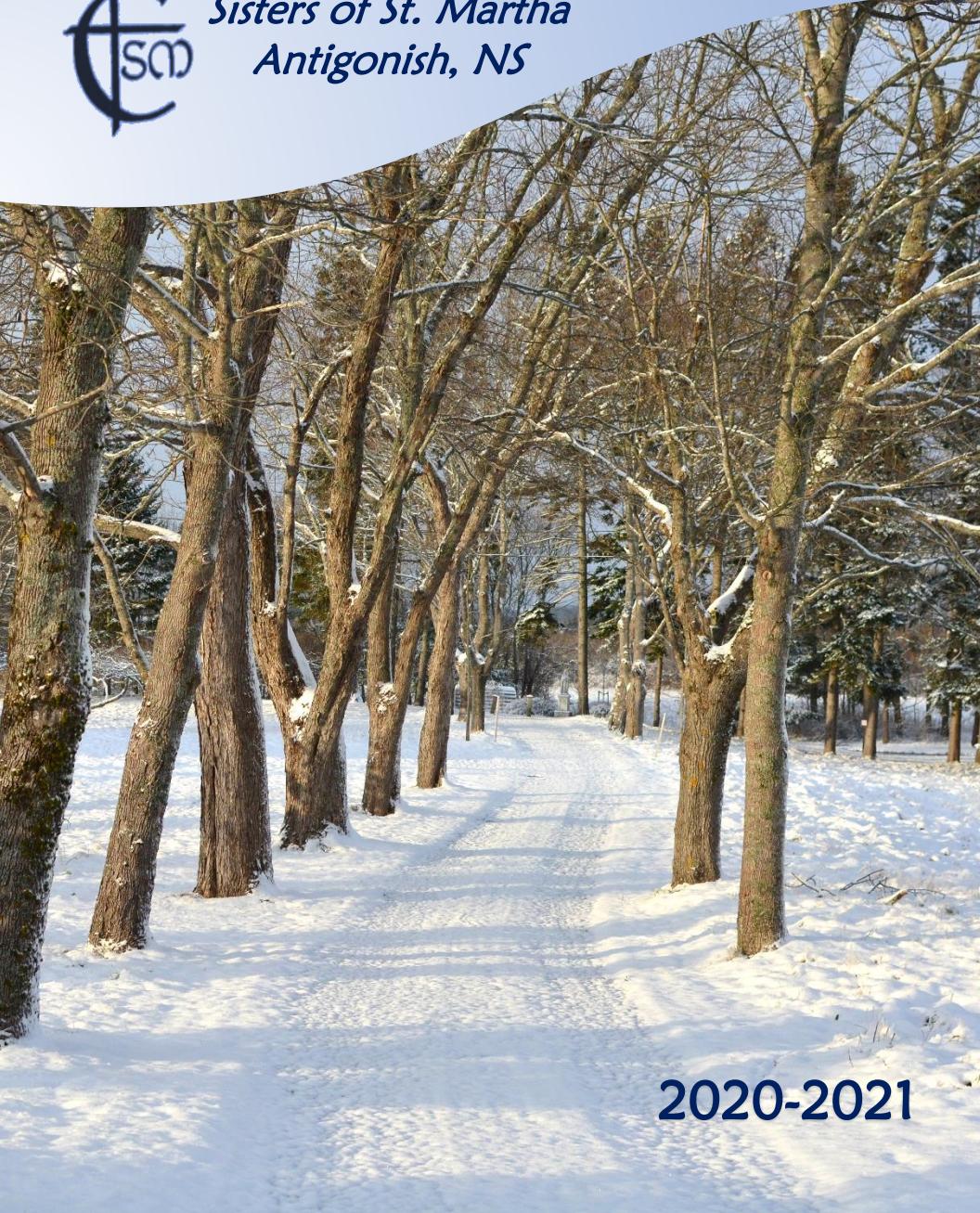




*Sisters of St. Martha  
Antigonish, NS*



**2020-2021**

**MARTHA MINISTRY OF SPIRITUALITY**

*Opportunities for Spiritual Growth*

*“Yes, Lord,” Martha replied,  
“I believe that you are the Son of  
God...” (John 11:27)*

*A woman named Martha opened her home to him... (Luke 10:38)*

Because of our belief in Jesus, and the call to live our charism of Gospel Hospitality, we continue with faith and undaunted hope the Martha Ministry of Spirituality at Marian Community.

The world in which we live and are called to serve is very different from this time last year. The suffering globally, through the COVID-19 pandemic and the tragic events here in our own province of Nova Scotia have sent us to our knees and given us opportunities to be united in prayer and solidarity. We struggle to experience the presence of the Divine in ways we have not been called to before; our faith is challenged. As the Sisters of St. Martha Chapter Direction Statement of 2014 states *“in the face of our reality, we dare to stand in undaunted hope.”*

The Sisters exercising our Martha Ministry of Spirituality offer that hope through opportunities for **PRAYER, SPIRITUAL DIRECTION, RETREAT DAYS**, and the availability of our **TWO HERMITAGES**, situated in our beautiful old growth forest.

Conscious that our ministry is evolving, we look forward to, and plan for new expressions in response to ongoing need.

To inquire or register for any offerings call at  
**902-863-4726; 902-863-4822**  
or email at  
**spirituality.bethany@themarthas.com**

# Year-at-a-Glance

## PROGRAMS

### Centering Prayer – Fridays

September 25	February 5, 19
October 2, 16, 30	March 5, 19
November 13, 27	April 9, 23
December 11	May 7, 21
January 8, 22	June 4, 18

### Oasis Days – Wednesdays

October 14	February 3
November 18	March 3
December 9	April 14
January 6	May 19

June 16

### Introductory Workshop on Centering Prayer

Monday, October 26

### Deepening in Centering Prayer Workshop

Monday, March 15

### A Twofold Opportunity to Welcome the Topic of Hospitality

Monday, November 9

Monday, November 23

### The Journey to *Laudato Si*: A Quick Trip Through the Evolution of Catholic Social Teaching

Time and date TBA

### Spiritual Direction

Ongoing opportunities for those who wish.



### **Labyrinth**

The labyrinth is a walking prayer, a sacred tool for meditation and reflection used in many religious traditions. It is a symbol for the sacred journey of life. Our labyrinth is located on the front lawn and is mown into the grass.

# Centering Prayer



*"Be still and know that I am God."*

Psalm 46:10

**Two Fridays a month 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

Twice a month, the Centering Prayer Community meets to listen to the word of God in Scripture through the practice of Lectio Divina (Divine Reading) which nurtures contemplative prayer. The source of Centering Prayer is the Indwelling Trinity. Its practice consists in responding to the call of the Holy Spirit to consent to the Divine presence and action in our lives. After the prayer with Scripture and the practice of Centering, we have a time of instruction on Centering Prayer and Spirituality which includes conversation about living the Christian Life in our current church and world situation. New members are always welcome.

Dates:

September 11, 25	February 5, 19
October 2, 16, 30	March 5, 19
November 13, 27	April 9, 23
December 11	May 7, 21
January 8, 22	June 4, 18

Cost: Donation

Facilitators: Sr. Claire Mac Neil & Team

Pre-registration: call 902-863-4726 or 902-863-4822

**Introductory Workshop on  
Centering Prayer  
Monday, October 26**

This Christian prayer form is a way of letting go and growing in the ability to wait upon and rest in God's presence. The day provides input, the practice of centering prayer, and discussion. The workshop could also act as a refresher for those who are already practicing Centering Prayer.

**Deepening in Centering Prayer  
Workshop  
Monday, March 15**

This is a follow-up process for those who have already taken the Introductory Workshop and for those who have been praying using the Centering Prayer practice for months or years.

Facilitators: Sr. Claire Mac Neil & Team

Time: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Cost: \$25/day

Pre-registration: required

# Oasis Days

*Come and enjoy a time to be, a time to pray, a time to rest!*

These are days of prayer, reflection, some sharing and ritual, using themes following the seasons of nature and of the liturgical year. Participants find that these are grace-filled days where we assist each other on our spiritual journey. There is opportunity for spiritual direction if you so desire.

**Wednesdays 9:45 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

October 14	<i>Autumn – The Season of Letting Go</i>
November 18	<i>November – The Season of Remembering</i>
December 9	<i>Advent – We Wait in Joyful Hope</i>
January 6	<i>Embracing the Mystery of the New Year</i>
February 3	<i>Quenching your Thirst: come to the Water</i>
March 3	<i>Journeying with Jesus in Lent</i>
April 14	<i>Easter Challenge</i>
May 19	<i>The Spirit Alive in Creation</i>
June 16	<i>The Tapestry of Creation</i>

Cost: \$25/day

Facilitator: Sr. Claire Mac Neil

Pre-registration: 902-863-4726 or 902-863-4822



**Claire Mac Neil** is a Sister of St. Martha and the Director of Martha Ministry of Spirituality. After years of spreading the Word through teaching at various levels and being in ministry as a Pastoral Assistant a Liturgy Coordinator, she was called to Retreat Center ministry and has been engaged in that ministry for many years. She holds an MA degree in Spirituality and is privileged and happy to use the gifts she has to help people on their journey with God.

## **Spiritual Direction**

### ***Come as You Are***

*“You don’t have to pray at all, or pray well, or feel that you are close to God or even living the life you want to. Spiritual direction is a very simple process of putting out what you want and most deeply desire and having someone respond to that and help you to live from what you really want. So, come as you are and at least try it.”*

Sister Mary Ann Scofield

The above quote from Sr. Mary Ann, one of the founders of *Spiritual Directors International*, has put in a few words what we believe about Spiritual Direction.

The goal of spiritual accompaniment is not to tell a person what to do but to help one become more aware of God’s presence and activity in one’s life, with a view to making choices in fidelity to that awareness. It is a way of providing support for the spiritual journey.

Spiritual direction is a confidential, one-on-one encounter lasting about an hour. Claire Mac Neil, CSM is available to anyone who wishes a spiritual companion as they search for the many ways God is present and active in their personal journey. Claire is a trained spiritual director and has years of experience giving retreats and helping people journey in the mystery of God.

To contact Sr. Claire for an appointment or to inquire about the dynamic, please call at  
902- 863-4726 or 902-863-4822  
or email at [cmacneilcsm@gmail.com](mailto:cmacneilcsm@gmail.com)

**Spiritual Direction is also available through Zoom.**

There is no set fee for Spiritual Direction.  
A donation would be appreciated to assist in the  
Martha Ministry of Spirituality.

# A Twofold Opportunity to Welcome the Topic of Hospitality

*Hospitality Is More Than a Cup of Tea.*

Monday, November 9 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

In our lives, hospitality is generally a warm and a welcomed act, however, it is not often viewed as a topic that can create a stir in a person's imagination. This presentation will help engage, explore and mine the deep richness of Hospitality. In fact, we can almost guarantee that you will never look at hospitality the same way you did before you attended.

*Hospitality with a Gospel Twist: Isaiah Even Spoke About It.*

Monday. November 23 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Like Isaiah, Jovita will speak once more on the topic of hospitality. This time, the presentation will help engage, explore and mine the richness of Hospitality from the Gospels that we, Sisters of St. Martha, call Gospel Hospitality. To do this, we will review briefly the basic themes of hospitality described in the first presentation and then delve into the Jesus affect.

Cost: \$15/day

Presenter: Sr. Jovita Mac Pherson

Pre-registration: call 902-863-4726

or 902-863-4822



**Jovita MacPherson** is a Sister of St. Martha and a native Antigonisher. Jovita has a diverse ministerial background which served to grow her vision of our topic. As a presenter, she will draw on the wisdom of the group, share stories, and use humor and imagination. One of Jovita's personal preferences is to make history rather than save it.

# The Journey to *Laudato Si*: A Quick Trip Through the Evolution of Catholic Social Teaching

Time and date TBA

*What is Catholic Social Teaching? Where does it come from?  
Where can I find it? Why don't I hear about it?*

If you have ever asked yourself these questions, you aren't alone! Catholic Social Teaching has been described as the Church's best kept secret. This session aims to let you in on that secret! We will explore the evolution of Social Thought and Teaching through the lens of Papal Encyclicals, Letters, and the Documents of Vatican II, beginning with *Rerum Novarum* through to *Laudato Si*.

Cost: \$15/day

Presenter: Sr. Joanne O'Regan

Pre-registration: call 902-863-4726 or 902-863-4822



**Sr. Joanne O'Regan** entered the Congregation in 2001. She is in her second term on the Leadership Team. She has a passion for Catholic Social Teaching and Liberation Theology, and credits learning about both aspects of our Church Teachings as the roots of her return to and deepening of her Catholic identity. Hopefully this lens through

which to see the world – to see our lives – will aid us in understanding the Gospel message and new ways to experience our faith.



## Prayerful pathways for private reflection

Bethany grounds provide spaces where individuals can touch into the wonder and beauty of creation realizing the love and care of the Creator.

### St. Theresa's Garden

The garden invites us to enjoy the delight of a pond, flowerbeds, trees and very friendly squirrels and chickadees. The traditional,

devotional Way of the Cross is next to the pond. Across the path is a beautiful grotto to Our Lady of Fatima.





## Contemplative Trail

The trail opens up the heart of the wooded area and invites us to be immersed in nature's drama of birth, life, death and new life. Cradling a lake in the centre, it is a home to many plants, animals and birds.

Benches along the way are an invitation to sit and marvel. The purpose of this trail is to invite people into stillness and to touch the sacred within and around them.





### Sacred Heart Forest Trail

This short trail brings us from St. Theresa's Garden through very old and gnarled trees in which birds nest and which are their pulpits for

proclaiming to the world "God is Here!" The completion of this trail brings one to Sacred Heart Grove.





## Bethany Arboretum

Bethany property is the home to many beautiful trees. We have chosen 25 trees as Phase I to help you identify and get to know them better. Each tree commemorates persons or events in the history of

the Sisters of St. Martha, honouring the deep connection of our shared journey. The Arboretum is an ongoing project which is growing into the future.





## Hermitages

*Solitude and silence allow for a new hearing and healing from the stillness and deep connections to God through the beauty and wonder of the Universe.*

Our Hermitages are modern, fully furnished and conducive to contemplation. Inside you'll find cookware, basic food items (tea, coffee), towels and bed linens, refrigerator, stove, microwave, kettle, toaster, and coffee maker. Groceries are not provided but are available at local stores.



## **Bethany Grounds provide:**

- Access to Eucharist in Chapel at Martha Place for those in Hermitages.
- A Contemplative Walking Trail
- Labyrinth (seasonal)
- Walking Paths
- Contemplative Garden

## **Please note:**

- A minimum stay of 3 nights is required. The maximum stay is 30 days.
- Reservations are required.
- Unfortunately, pets cannot be accommodated.
- All buildings and trails on Bethany property are smoke free.
- Spiritual direction is available upon request.

## **Suggested Fees:**

- \$45/day
- \$315/week
- \$1,350/month
- A non-refundable deductible deposit of \$50 is required to complete your registration.
- Spiritual guidance by donation per session.

**To arrange your stay at a hermitage  
contact Martha Ministry of Spirituality  
at 902-863-4726.**



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45 Bay Street  
Antigonish, Nova Scotia  
B2G 2G6

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Left to right: Sr. Rosalie Lavallée, Sr. Claire MacNeil, Sr. Jean Harris

*We, Sisters of St. Martha, inspired by God's graciousness,  
hear, embrace and respond to the cry for Gospel hospitality.*