

Louise Marie Clara Van Belleghem, SNJM - Letter to My Youthful Self

Family Life - Path of God's Love

This is the Lord's doing. It is wonderful to see. Psalm 118.23

Louise, I know it is your belief that experiences become memories that influence one throughout life. March 23, 1932, is a memorable date as it marked your birth as the second child of Clara (Ysenbaert) and Joseph Van Belleghem. In the company of your brothers Albert, George, Roger and numerous relatives and friends you experienced the many joys of family life. No doubt the memory thereof helps you realize today how such union with others revealed to you first glimpses of the gentleness of God teaching you by example how to profess and live your faith in communion with others.

Belgian Heritage - Tradition

*For you, God, have heard my vows;
you have given me the heritage of those who fear your name. Ps. 61.5*

As a young woman today you must continue to be inspired by the dedication and service of your Mother and Father to the Belgian people. The gift of your Belgian heritage enabled you to develop many gifts of mind and heart such as love of language, education, inclusiveness and open mindedness to an ever wider civic community with a desire to be of service.

Education - Leadership

Yet here I am among you as One who serves. Lk 22.27

In response to a call to serve you entered the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary on July 24, 1951. Memories related to being missioned to various schools in Manitoba and Quebec are evidently marked by the joys of working collaboratively with numerous professional and faith educators. Gifted in natural administrative ability you were provided opportunities to share your gift of leadership in many roles: Principal, Provincial Superior, Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent of Catholic schools. With gratitude recall that your success was due in large measure to your God-given gift to recognize and call forth the giftedness of others.

Pastoral Care - Sacrament of God's Presence

*There are different gifts but the same Spirit,
different ministries but the same Lord 1 Cor 12.4*

Subsequent to your work in the field of education you sought in new ways to witness to the love of God for each person responding to the unfolding of other people's journey by visiting them in care homes and hospitals extending friendship of the heart as an ongoing expression of pastoral care.

SNJM Spirituality - Witness to the Gospel

*Let my prayer rise like incense before you. Ps. 141
Evermore I'll sing your praise. Ps. 16*

For you, Sister Louise, your life at this moment reflects the lived experience of the SNJM spirituality centering on the Holy Spirit's call to enter into every deeper relationship with God and others. May Mary continue to be your model of discipleship as you journey with Mother Marie Rose endeavouring to witness to the Gospel in response to the Word: *Each one of you has received a special grace, so like good stewards responsible for all these different graces of God, put yourself at the service of others. 1 Peter 4.10*