



# Miriam Centre News

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21  
years of service

Dec. 2009

*"I will be with you always till the end of time."*

Mt 28:20

## *Our Password: Compassion*

*Sr. Rita Lacelle*

**M**iriam Centre is a member of a great community united by a consummate force called compassion. A number of people, groups and Churches become associated to the Centre's mission through volunteer help or financial support, allowing us to fulfill that mission towards families.

For over 20 years, the Centre offers both its emotional and material support to any person going through a difficult pregnancy. Others, whether grieving from the loss of a child due to a miscarriage, an abortion or the death of a baby, all are welcome at the Centre where our compassionate staff guides them on the road to healing and peace.

A team of volunteers shares many of the tasks filling our days. Others are involved in our various fund-raising campaigns. Each and every one of these volunteers is needed to guarantee the Centre's quality service and

smooth operation. Now and then, representatives for various church traditions come in to get acquainted with the Centre and then encourage their congregations to offer their services.



Last April, no other than Archbishop Terrence Prendergast of Ottawa paid us a pleasant and encouraging visit. He had previously showed interest in coming to get acquainted with the Centre and the visit turned out to be an excellent opportunity to express our appreciation for our volunteers. Archbishop Prendergast pointed out the human and Christian aspects of the Centre and its obvious role in the mission of protecting life. He took time to go through our premises and to share a meal with us. His visit was highly appreciated and once again we express our heartfelt gratitude.

At the heart of the Centre's mission beats our staff team, and last Spring, we experienced some changes in our midst. At the beginning of May, Lise left us after more than five years of service. So many families benefited from her encouragement and her dedication in often difficult situations! Many of the volunteers trained under Lise's care are still active with us. As relations officer, she ensured the Centre's vitality and public profile. At the end of May, Gabrielle was to leave us after more than two years of service. As soon as she started in, Gaby became involved with the mothers and their children. Her gentle approach went straight to their hearts. As accounts officer, Gaby's computer creativeness and expertise rendered precious services. Lise and Gaby, please be assured that your contribution to the Centre's mission will go on to bear fruit. We wish you the best in all your endeavours.

I would like to welcome Shirley Hayes who has been on staff since the beginning of May. She is doing a nice job with the families and expertly handles the Centre's accounting.

*Thank you from the bottom of our hearts...*



*... to the Centre staff with Archbishop Terrence Prendergast, Fr. Daniel Berniquez and a few volunteers.*

## ***Do You Believe?***

We believe that Miriam Centre has a future! For over ten years now, the Miriam Centre Foundation has been building that future. Thanks to your generosity, our Foundation is growing and bearing fruit. The interest generated by the invested capital is disbursed annually to Miriam Centre. Your donation has thereby become permanent. In planning your estate, please remember the Miriam Centre Foundation. To make your contribution now, please see the enclosed flyer. *Thank you*

## ***Employment available***

**Full time position:  
community liaison and  
volunteer coordinator.**

Miriam Centre is a ministry seeking a compassionate pro-life person who is fully bilingual, excellent oral and written communication skills, (French and English mandatory), has computer skills (Word, Wordperfect, Electronic mail) and public speaking ability. Applicants must be motivated and able to work independently.

*Send your résumé to*  
**info@miriamottawa.org**  
**or call 613-830-8623**

**web site : [www.miriamottawa.org](http://www.miriamottawa.org) / email : [info@miriamottawa.org](mailto:info@miriamottawa.org)**

# Healing of the Heart... my story!



It is hard to believe that it has been over ten years since my original article was published in the Miriam Centre newsletter. I was delighted to be asked to share an update to that original piece. My affiliation with the Centre began as a social worker in the community. I would often send my pregnant and parenting clients to the Centre to receive support and donations of maternity and baby clothes.

I never realized that Miriam Centre would play such a crucial role in my healing story. In 1997 at a post abortion training held by the Centre, I learned about the symptoms and trauma often experienced by post abortive women. I felt both naked and vulnerable. I had been working with young pregnant and parenting teens for over five years. Each sentence spoken was like reading a chapter of my own book. Listening to Evelyn speak and watching the film *Dear Children*, I felt my own abortion wound being opened. It had long been silenced but never healed.

I approached Evelyn and said "I need help". Through a series of one on one meetings Evelyn patiently and sensitively walked me through the Bible Study, *Forgiven and Set Free*. I had a profound encounter with God, was able to work through the pain of my abortion, receive forgiveness from

God, forgive others involved in my abortion and most precious be reconciled to my three precious babies.

We often expect that healing is instantaneous, but that does not always happen. It can be progressive and equally authentic. It took me a number of years to understand my guilt and shame and be set free from an eating disorder I developed the month following my last abortion. All this, being both a Christian and a leader in my church. I began to understand that I had taken the sole responsibility for my decision and therefore had felt unable to truly receive the forgiveness offered. I was never explained about the physical, emotional or spiritual consequences of my abortion decision.

I have continued to work through multiple layers of healing and have for the past five years been involved in Ottawa providing post abortion support to other women and men. I am honoured to be able to help them receive God's grace and forgiveness in their abortion recovery. I have now met close to a hundred other women and men who share similar stories to my own. I no longer feel alone and silent in my pain.

I have truly received a deep and profound healing that has lasted throughout these last ten years and I take such joy seeing others

experience the same gift from God. I now speak out publicly at women's retreats and conferences and in churches about post abortive healing. My precious husband Ken is now walking beside me sharing his own post abortive story with men to enable them as well to have the liberty to be healed. When the Lord says in the Word, "All things work together for good", I could never have imagined how the devastating loss of three of my children could work together for good, but I see it clearly now. Each time I speak it brings honour to God and to them. And I know without a shadow of a doubt I will see them again one day.

**If you are reading this and either you or someone close to you is struggling with pain from an abortion you need not suffer in isolation and silence. Please call Miriam Centre. I promise you it will be the beginning of God's best for your life.** Thank you Miriam Centre for all you have done in my life and all you continue to do. Thank you Father God for the incredible sacrifice of your son Jesus Christ for my precious children and my miraculous healing of the heart.

*Vicky Green*

# *A Message from the Board of Directors*

Christmas will soon be upon us, and once again we are totally involved with celebrating the Birth of Jesus. In this whirlwind of activity surrounding the Holidays, reflecting upon the true meaning of Christmas is imperative. The birth of Jesus very nearly did not happen. What would have happened to Mary and the child she was carrying if Joseph had repudiated her as allowed under Jewish law? Fortunately, Joseph, an honourable man, chose to obey the Lord and to take Mary for his wife, thus becoming her protector and that of Jesus.



*May this peace be with you and yours this Christmas season and throughout the coming year.*

In our society, many women have to face up to a pregnancy on their own. People on whom she should count on vanish faced with the responsibility brought about by this new life. With no support, these women find themselves destitute, abandoned and dejected. What society has to offer as a “choice” then seems to be the only way out. Very often, an abortion is not sought, rather it is submitted to under coercion. Following Joseph’s example, Miriam Centre is committed to these women. We offer support not only to mothers faced with a difficult pregnancy, but also to families afflicted by a miscarriage, an abortion or the loss of a baby. Such support is available at all levels, emotionally and spiritually, as well as materially.

Recently, during a discussion, I was told that “pro-life people only preach down to people, telling them what they shouldn’t do, what are they doing, really, for pregnant women? I know very well that this is a false accusation. **Miriam Centre doesn’t get a cent from the**

**government.** We strive solely on the generosity of persons as you who recognize the dignity of the unborn, by supporting their mothers. **As the Christmas season approaches, we hope that you will send a contribution to Miriam Centre, as support for the “feeblest among us”.**

Our most heartfelt gratitude goes out to those men and women who, over more than 20 years, have so generously guaranteed that Miriam Centre can carry on its mission.

*A very merry Christmas to all!*

*Doris Germain-Gagnon,*

## **Miriam Centre Staff**



**Sr. Rita and Shirley**

Miriam Centre receives no government grants.

We are a registered charity and our number is 11904 2091 RR0001.

We issue receipts for income tax purposes. Our fiscal year ends December 31.