As July unrolled itself in a most agreeable way and was followed by August, bringing a summer sunshine much sought after by happy vacationers, hopefully, you have been able to repose yourself magnificently!

The Marie Anne Blondin Centre has regained its deep roots at the Motherhouse and is close to the tomb of our blessed foundress. Here, there are no special rooms nor are there showcases, as in Estherama; however, that does not prevent us from welcoming you personally or in a small group and also a big group. We will make up for the deficiency in a different way by bringing certain objects to your attention. Some of our projects for 2012 may be elaborated upon. We wish to remind you that the Marie Anne Blondin Centre is permanently situated at

1950 Provost Street, Lachine, Quebec H8S 1P7
Tel: 514 637-3783 extensions 208 or 207

If you have received a favour through the intercession of Mother Marie Anne, we would be very grateful to you for notifying us by letter as to the precise type of favour. Doing this will be much appreciated and will help the Cause in view of her canonization, for which we greatly hope. Please note that we respond to all our correspondents.

We remember you in our daily prayers, asking that Mother Marie Anne obtain your requests.

Jeannine Serres, S.S.A.
Marie Anne Blondin Centre
MARIE ANNE BLONDIN
and
THE MYSTERY OF HER SILENCES

Looking at the life of Esther Blondin – Mother Marie Anne – we see it strewn with silences. Looking closely at this reality, found so often in her journey through life, we cannot ascribe it to any emptiness. Quite the opposite, for her the silences always offer an experience deeply marking her interior life:

- to see the invisible,
- to savour unknown perfumes,
- to listen to sounds, otherwise unheard,
- to taste what nourishes and fills the soul,
- to touch and discover the spiritual within…

By its nature, silence is more than an absence of words, of roars, of noises… throughout one’s life, it violently tears at a person at times. It wrests with a person so as to create a particular atmosphere and favours the person’s spiritual flowering to make that person unique in his or her own way.

The silences of Mother Marie Anne are “territories” that she gives to herself, creations where the plenitude shines out. A vital breath seems to fill her and transform her very being.

Let us allow ourselves to scrutinize some of Mother Marie Anne’s silences so as to introduce them to ourselves, to plunge into so as to discover – despite limited access – the nature of the functions of these territories that seduced and nourished her by the Divine Will.

If it is good and even necessary to make use of words, of signs for communication and dialogues with others, silence – this undefined internal space that we give ourselves, imposes itself so as to live a soul experience disclosing the presence of God within us.

While still at a young age, Esther felt interiorly the refusal of her parents to let her share in the family’s lengthy evening prayer. She found a way, though, to let herself slip into her interior self to hear and understand the
recited prayers, the formulas, and to confide them to her memory. Success in this memorization opened the door to participation in the communal prayer of her parents and older siblings.

This victory of a first conscious awareness of an internal territory, at the daily prayer of the Blondin family, made her search for a source of life that she had felt a presentiment about before and where she could quench her thirst. Thus, by the start of this new sharing, she sank deeply into the silence of face to face sharing.

Her territory of prayer will expand and find ever larger horizons. It ripens and so molds an ideal; it is the territory of dreams that take shape in Vaudreuil. Invited to leave Terrebonne after a short time in Montreal, in the novitiate of the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame, Esther accepts the invitation of her friend, Suzanne Pineault. In her contact with the scholarly world, Esther discovers in herself her vocation to educate. Aware of the lack of schools for young boys, this teacher sees come to birth within her the foundation of a community of educators. This interior birth, nourished by prayers and reflections, will come to seduce her within the limits of this new field of action.

“See, try, do not cease to pray…” advised Bishop Ignace Bourget. Thus invaded interiorly by the exigencies of this new “silence”, Mother Marie Anne found shelter in Divine Confidence: “God wants to do everything.” The God to Whom she prays and Who has nourished her dream comes to the help of His humble servant. The little community flourishes and, like bees leaving a hive, swarm off to Saint-Jacques de Montcalm.

A year after her arrival in this new environment, Mother Marie Anne is obliged to create within herself another territory of silence. In August 1854, the bishop, influenced by reports made by Father Louis-Adolphe Marechal, demanded the demission of the Foundress. Her letter of acceptance of his orders sealed the commands of the bishop. But within her, a new territory of a long silence, made greater by her “Zero Year”, opened within her. It was the territory of renouncement. She lost her stature of foundress and had to renounce her designation as “mother”. It was truly the territory of renouncement of what she had been earlier, of what she was at that moment, of what she would become. It was the
In 1864, following the addition of a wing for the Simpson Manor, bought in 1861, to enhance Villa Anna, Lachine became the new site of the Motherhouse of the Sisters of Saint Anne. Mother Marie Anne was transferred there and greeted… by charity. She accepted the unkind welcome, but responded that “…the charity of God has always preceded her.” Under this new roof, an unedited silence imposed itself. It took form in the humble tasks assigned and the community services that rose from this obedience. She did not have to try to find silence in this new territory of formation. Her reaction manifested itself: she found a blossoming of her person preparing her for her luminous encounter and happiness with her God. Her heart opened interiorly to celebrations of praise and thanksgiving. The most humble tasks became many occasions for belief in a life that permitted enlarging a territory of silence and to feel good doing so. Each action invited her to allow the Spirit to act in her, to accept the interior silence that showed she was looking for God. Without ceasing to listen to her own heart, her life became a perpetual quest for God. This last territory, created by the acceptance of her silence, would end in a sublime pardon that would crown and mark the hour of her death, January 2, 1890.

Today, the “martyr of silence” has become the blessed one of silence. Recalling the different territories of this reflection, although a little superficial, are only examples of someone with a deep interior life. Silence shaped her earthly passage, taking form day by day, and it nourished her prayer. This interior silence revealed itself to her: “language,” “verb,” “word.” God filled with plenitude that which appeared “empty” and transfigured with praise and thanksgiving, the reality of her great dream.

All these territories of silence now reveal the mystery of why they are so resonant. These silences speak more loudly than words; they read in listening to the Other where they find their source. Consenting to the Spirit in her, they have acted in her, they have become places of intense encounters with God, they have revealed His pardon. Through her silent death, Mother Marie Anne allowed her last silence to be heard by those who were around her and had accompanied her (Father Louis-Adolphe
Marechal and some novices and professed Sisters).

May she grant us, who are her daughters, her associates, her friends, to hear the silences that are more eloquent than all verbal expressions!

Jeannine Serres, S.S.A.
Translator: Margaret Cantwell, S.S.A.

GRATEFUL TESTIMONIES
FOR FAVOURS RECEIVED

I have great confidence in Mother Marie Anne. My family and I ask for her intercession every day. I made a novena for my sister L…who was very sick. Currently, her health is much better! I thank you very much, Mother Marie Anne!

Mrs. J. L…Montreal, QC

I prayed hard asking Mother Marie Anne that my son passes his exams so he could begin his formation at Nicolet as a police officer. He passed and began his formation at the end of February.

Mrs. P. L…Palmarolle, QC

Thank you, Mother Marie Anne, for all you have done for me and my family. We confidently ask you for favours.

Mrs. F. G…Repentigny, QC

Last year I had great problems. I had two operations, one in February and the other in August. My health did not allow me to work any more. Financial problems piled up. My sister, who died in September 2009, had given me the Mother Marie Anne prayer. She is the one who told me about Mother Marie Anne. My sister said: “Pray to this Sister. You will see that she is very powerful. She will help you!” I remembered her words and the confidence she had in this religious. I made the novena and, little by little, all began to be taken care of. I stopped worrying and I made the novena every week. Blessed be the Lord for His humble servant! Thanks to my sister, who is in heaven, for my having come to know Mother Marie Anne Blondin.

Mrs. C. B…St. Jacques-le-Mineur, QC
I want to tell you that my great confidence in Mother Marie Anne is rewarded. Know that, many times, when I am starting a novena to obtain a favour, a positive reply arrives even before the end of the novena. My heart is full of thanksgiving for Mother Marie Anne.

*Mrs. M. G…Montreal, QC*

I promised to send you my testimony. Thanks for Mother Marie Anne who interceded to help my daughter find work. As a matter of fact, my daughter is now working full time! I am very grateful to Mother Marie Anne.

*Mrs. F. B…St-Remi, QC*

By writing this letter, I wish to thank Mother Blondin for two favours: buying a house that suits us perfectly and the sale of a property at a good price.

*Mrs. J. G. Quebec, QC*

Thanks to Mother Marie Anne for having responded to our prayers and for comforting us in difficult moments.

*Mr. C. G…Laval, QC*

I prayed asking Mother Marie Anne for her help at the time of my eye surgery for cataracts. The operation was successful. I had also asked Mother Marie Anne for employment for my daughter. She had been let go after 20 years of service; her position had been abolished because of the recession. My daughter has now found work in a multinational business only a few kilometres from her home. Thank you, Mother Marie Anne!

*Mrs. D. P…St-Laurent, QC*

My 96-year-old mother suffered greatly; her legs were always swollen and reddish. She took medication that had no beneficial results. Then my mother had the idea of putting a photo relic of Mother Marie Anne on her legs. After a while, the redness, the pain, and the swelling of her legs disappeared; my mother at last can sleep through the night. A big “thank you!” My mother continues to put the photo relic on her legs. She has great confidence in Mother Marie Anne. Big thanks!

*Mrs. M. L…Sorel-Tracy, QC*
During Mass at St. Julienne last December, a Sister of St. Anne native to St. Julienne parish brought us a statue of Blessed Marie Anne Blondin. After I had read a summary of her life, I began a novena and I begged her every day to take under her protection, my daughter, who had been waiting a long time to be acknowledged professionally. My daughter has, at last, received the promotion she had so long merited.

Mrs. P. L…St. Julienne, QC

After a snowstorm, much rain had followed. This situation had left us with much water around us and our basement had received its share of the water. After having implored Mother Marie Anne, the next morning, the rain water had almost disappeared and as a consequence, the basement received only a few inches of water. Thank you, Mother Marie Anne!

Mrs. G B-M…St. Laurent, QC

The basement of my daughter’s house was flooded. I implored the help of Mother Marie Anne. All was soon taken care of! Thank you, Mother Marie Anne!

Mrs. B. R. G…Mirabel, QC

I had asked Mother Marie Anne to find me an apartment where I really would feel good. Very quickly, she responded to my prayer; today I am in my new lodging. It is beautiful, I feel at home, and I am very happy! Every day I pray asking for her help; I love her very much. I feel that she protects me!

Mrs. F. B. P …Montreal, QC

We thank Mother Marie Anne for responding to our prayers for helping us in difficult times. We continue to pray with confidence. A big thank you!

Mr. Mrs. C. G…Laval, QC

Thanks to Mother Marie Anne for her good work in reconciling a couple!

Mrs. R. E. P…Dover, Massachusetts, USA

Thanks to Mother Marie Anne for protecting my family and me.

Mrs. H.L…Pierrefonds, QC
I thank Mother Marie Anne for protecting me and also all my family. I am very grateful!

Mrs. C. T…Sherrington, QC

I am sending a donation for a favour obtained from Mother Marie Anne Blondin. I had prayed asking that she help my husband pass his exam and allow him to drive. All went well! Thank you, Mother Marie Anne!

Mrs. H. L…Chateauguay, QC

Thanks to Mother Marie Anne for good medical results! A special thanks for work for someone close to me.

Mrs. R. R. W…Montreal, QC

On the 3rd of January 2011, I received bad news. The mammography taken in May had been reread and showed that I had a lump on the right breast. It was necessary to have an ultrasound as soon as possible. I said to myself: “That is not possible because I do not feel any lump.” So I turned to Mother Marie Anne. While making my novena I told her: “Prove to me that you really are a saint!” I went for the ultrasound; three days later I received good news. The doctor said that it was only a little cyst; there was nothing cancerous nor anything serious. Now I have great confidence in Mother Marie Anne for she gave me proof! Thank you!

Mrs. G. L…Laval, QC

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THE MESSAGE OF MARIE ANNE BLONDIN

The Eucharist is celebrated quarterly for the intentions of all our benefactors and friends.

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This publication is not intended to anticipate in any way the decisions of our Mother Church, but wishes to conform entirely to her rules and spirit.

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