



## “You can’t look forward until you look back.” (Cornel West)

With the end of 2021 just weeks away, Fontbonne Ministries is looking back on a full calendar year of providing service in the midst of a pandemic that continues to affect the way we work and interact.

Planning for the opening our indoor space has been a top priority for the Fontbonne Ministries team since the summer of 2020, as we initially aimed for an autumn resumption of programs. While this date continued to be moved back over the next year, the preparation – developing policies, procuring equipment and supplies (including masks, gloves, plexiglass barriers and HEPA air filtration units), monitoring changes to public health directives, and conferring with colleagues to determine best practices – went on, and was updated as the situation continued to evolve. When our long-awaited opening day finally arrives, we’ll be ready – and in the

meantime, we continue to look forward to seeing you all again.

While all this preparation and planning was going on, we continued to find new ways to serve the community throughout the pandemic.

Through the generosity of **Ontario Trillium Foundation**, Fontbonne Ministries received a Resilient Communities Grant to develop a one-year pilot Community Center Without Walls program focusing on using technology to keep participants connected while physically apart.

Spearheaded by Andrea Linton and her team at our Village Mosaic site, the pilot program was well-received from the very beginning. Within a few months, virtual programming by iPad and conference call was underway – everything from art classes to trivia nights, bingo, armchair foreign travel, yoga and meditation. Participants were

delighted to get back together with friends they hadn’t seen for months.

Warmer weather this summer and fall also allowed us to gather (at a safe social distance, of course) outdoors at both Prince of Wales and Jimmie Simpson Parks for exercise and connection.

Whether “Dancing in the Park” or being mindful with a Tai-Chi class, the simple act of gathering with others in the same place at the same time – after literally hundreds of days – meant as much to our staff as it did to our participants.

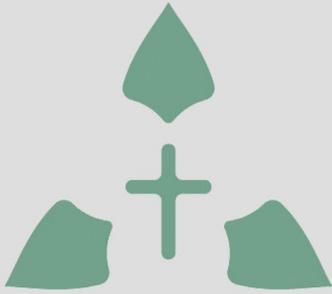
While we’ve begun the process of slowly opening up our spaces, it’ll be some time yet before we’re back to where we want to be. We’re very excited about having you back as soon as we can all do so safely.

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***Pictured Above: Dancing in the Park***

**“Advance good works until they are almost finished;  
and then, wherever possible, let them be completed by someone  
else who will receive the honour.”**

**(Maxims of the Little Institute, #85)**



## Catholic Health Sponsors of Ontario

As they did previously with the schools and hospitals they founded, the Sisters have secured the future of Fontbonne Ministries through the building of partnerships and the creation of valued relationships with trusted lay partners, including Catholic Health Sponsors of Ontario (CHSO).

CHSO was established in 1998 at the direction of the Sisters to initially assume sponsorship of their three Toronto hospitals (Providence Health Care, St. Joseph's Health Centre, and St. Michael's Hospital). As the Sisters withdrew from day-to-day operations, the creation of CHSO ensured that their founding mission and values would live on in the hospitals. Even today, the Sisters remain involved and connected in many ways to the early ministries they founded.

The Sisters are committed to ensuring that their ministries and programs flourish into the future, demonstrating their mission and values in an ongoing and vibrant way.

As part of this process, Fontbonne Ministries is taking steps to ensure its programs continue to respond, over both the short and long

term, to the vision, mission and values the Sisters have articulated for the organization. Over time, Fontbonne Ministries will evolve into an independent, self-sustaining organization that remains deeply connected to the Sisters and becomes the living legacy of their mission and values.

Many steps have already been taken along this path toward Fontbonne Ministries' Annual General Meeting in early 2022, when CHSO formally assumes sponsorship of the organization and a new Board of Directors will begin their work.

New lay members are being recruited to join the Fontbonne Ministries' Board of Directors – a group that has traditionally been comprised of the Sisters' Leadership Team. The Board provides strategic oversight to Fontbonne Ministries and ensures that its mission and values are firmly integrated into our programs and decision making.

Framing this work in part will be the Program Evaluation that was completed on our behalf by an external organization in the fall of 2020. This evaluation outlines a number of recommendations to

be implemented over the next two years. These changes will enable us to both to strengthen our programs in local communities and support our staff and volunteers in their work going forward.

In the spring of 2022, we will also be embarking on a comprehensive Strategic Planning process to set the direction and goals for Fontbonne Ministries over the next three to five years. All of our stakeholder groups – Board, volunteers, donors, partners, participants, staff, and others – have a role to play in the development of the Strategic Plan and we look forward to your insights and participation.

The process, and how our stakeholders will participate, is still being developed, and more information will be passed along as it becomes available.

If the pandemic has taught us anything, it's that while change can be unsettling, challenging, and emotional, it's also an opportunity to open our eyes to more, better, and highly effective ways to continue to support those we serve in receiving what they need.

*Doing the ordinary...  
with*

# “Community is about so much more than belonging to something; it’s about doing something together that makes belonging matter.”

(Brian Solis)

One of the greatest lessons COVID-19 has taught us is that Fontbonne Ministries is part of a wider community of organizations sharing similar values and facing similar challenges. Knowing that we are not alone in supporting those experiencing food insecurity, loneliness and isolation became increasingly important this past year.

Through our connections with Toronto East Health Partners, Anishnawbe Health Centre, the South Riverdale Community Health Centre, LAMP, and others, we were able to provide COVID-19 testing and vaccination clinics as well as flu shots to members of our community



*The vaccine crew at Mustard Seed.*

who might otherwise not have access. We’re stronger for working together – and sets the stage for

future collaborations as we begin to move out of the pandemic.

# “A good collaboration pushes the boundaries of both partners.” (Neil Blumenthal)

In mid-November, our Mustard Seed site began a partnership with Journey Home Hospice to provide by-appointment foot care to our participants and community members. Journey Home is one of Mustard Seed’s newest friends, and we’re excited to work together to provide a much-needed service to our community.

And speaking of foot care, the Downtown East Footcare Clinic project of the Downtown Faith Communities Hub (Fontbonne Ministries, St. James Cathedral, Metropolitan Toronto United Church, St. Michael’s Cathedral, St. Michael’s Hospital) officially gets off the ground on December 6 at our Mustard Seed site.



*Foot Care at Mustard Seed in 2021.*

By mid-December, sites will be operational at St. James Cathedral and Metropolitan United Church, bringing up to five days of foot care each week at three locations on a rotating basis.

This project would not have been possible without the support of **La Fondation Emmanuelle Gattuso**, which generously provided one full year of funding to equip and operate all three sites.

We are enormously grateful for their support and thank them for their commitment not only to this project but to many others serving vulnerable communities in Toronto and elsewhere.

**“The holiday season is a perfect time to reflect on our blessings and seek out ways to make life better for those around us.”**

**(Terry Marshall)**



**Left: Celebrating Sister Helen Kluge's recent retirement from Studio on the Hill as Ministry Director and Teacher.**

**Right: Welcoming sidewalk art at Mustard Seed.**

As we move into 2022, we invite you to partner once again in meeting the challenges of providing service in a not-quite-post-pandemic reality. While our services, and the way we deliver them, may look different on the surface, they are no less essential to the participants who have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

We invite you to make a gift at [www.fontbonneministries.ca/donate](http://www.fontbonneministries.ca/donate).

If you wish, you can direct your gift to a specific support or service within Fontbonne Ministries.

Thank you for your generous support, and for accompanying us on this amazing journey for more than two decades.

From the Fontbonne Ministries family to you and yours, we wish you every joy of the Christmas season and health and happiness in the new year.

With best wishes and gratitude,

**Ben Vozzolo**  
Executive Director



Fontbonne Ministries  
SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH, TORONTO

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Fontbonne Ministries, Sisters of St. Joseph, Toronto, offers diverse programs that are welcoming and inclusive. The charity was founded in 2000 by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto, a community of women who, through their compassionate presence, respond to various needs. Fontbonne Ministries continues, with the Sisters, their mission of reflecting the love of God and neighbour.

The ministries are funded by the Sisters of St. Joseph and individual donations. Thank you for your support!