

## LIVING WITH CHRIST THIS WEEK

Sunday, August 29:	Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time (C) - green
Monday 30:	Ferial - green
Tuesday 31:	Ferial - green
Wednesday, September 1:	Ferial - green
Thursday 2:	Ferial - green
Friday 3:	St. Gregory the Great, pope, doctor - white
Saturday 4:	Ferial - green
Sunday 5:	Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time (C) - green

# Our Sainly and Historical Heritage



## 10. *Three Women who Founded Religious Orders*

In Canada, many religious communities of nuns were founded by women who were born in the province of Québec. We will examine the lives of three of these outstanding women who have been declared Blessed by the Church.

We begin with Sister Émilie Tavernier-Gamelin, the foundress of the *Sisters of Providence*. She was born in Montreal on February 19th, 1800. At the age of 23, she married Jean-Baptiste Gamelin, a shoemaker and cultivator of fruit trees who was well known for his love for the poor. When she was widowed, her extended family included the elderly and orphans, the poor and unemployed, prisoners, the deaf, the sick and the dying. In 1843, at the request of Msgr Ignace Bourget, Bishop of Montreal, she founded the *Congregation of the Sisters of Providence*. Sister Émilie died in 1851 and Pope John Paul II proclaimed her Blessed on October 7th, 2001. Her feast day is September 24th.

Sister Esther Blondin (Mère Marie-Anne), the foundress of the *Congregation of the Sisters of St. Anne*, had a remarkable and challenging life. Though she was illiterate at age 20, she founded a religious teaching community at 39. She was born in Terrebonne, QC on April 18th, 1809 into a family of illiterate farmers. She finally learned to read and write and one of her first jobs was as a teacher in the parochial school. Later she would travel to Montreal to submit her proposal to Bishop Ignace Bourget to found a religious community dedicated to the education of poor children in rural areas. The *Congregation of the Sisters of St. Anne* was established in Vaudreuil, QC in 1850 and *Mother Marie-Anne* as she was known became the Superior of the convent. There were serious conflicts with Father Louis-Adolphe Maréchal who was the Chaplain at the Convent. This situation continued for years and eventually resulted in her being restricted to a humble existence in the Mother House in Lachine, QC where she remained until her death on January 2nd, 1890. On April 29th, 2001, she was proclaimed Blessed by Pope John Paul II and her feast day is April 18th.

Sister Eulalie Durocher was born on October 6th, 1811 into a family of ten children in Saint-Antoine-sur-Richelieu, QC. From 1831 to 1843, she used her talents to organize, educate and gather support for her projects while she worked with her brother, Théophile, the parish priest in Beloeil, QC. On October 28th, 1843, at the invitation of Bishop Bourget, she founded the *Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary*, an order which is dedicated to the Christian education of youth. She died on her birthday in 1849 at the early age of 38. She was beatified by Pope John Paul II on May 23rd, 1982 and her feast day is October 6th.

*Gilles Leblanc*

Translated by Honore Kerwin Borrelli