

Our founder

Sister Madeleine St-Michel, member of the congregation of the Religious Hospitallers of Saint Joseph



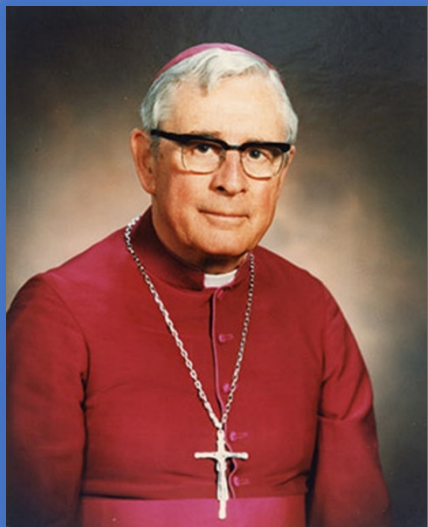
The philosophy and the essence of SASMAD/PHC (Pastoral Home Care) are inextricably linked with health care centres, with the mission of the congregation of the Religious Hospitallers of Saint Joseph and with Jeanne Mance who was side by side with Sieur de Maisonneuve and Marguerite Bourgeoys at the very beginning of New France and the birth of the city of Montreal. This historical backdrop reminds us of the importance for all nations to care for their citizens with a holistic approach; the spiritual aspect is an integral element throughout this process.

Sister Madeleine St-Michel, founder



With her 30 years of experience in the health care field, including 10 years as head of palliative care for AEV (Association d'Entr'aide Ville-Marie), Sister Madeleine knew in her heart that looking after people's bodily needs could be a means of touching their souls. However, the rigours of home health care are such that there is little time to attend to the spiritual needs of the sick. It was at this moment that the idea was born in her heart: to initiate a system of complementary health care, unlike any other before

and using a holistic approach to care for the spiritual needs of the homebound sick or elderly: SASMAD/Pastoral Home Care.



Following her meeting with Cardinal Grégoire and Mgr. Jean-Claude Turcotte, she left her position with AEV and joined the staff of the Archdiocese of Montreal in order to offer personalized spiritual accompaniment to all of the ageing population of greater Montreal.

An enormous challenge, a huge adventure, a project rooted in faith, an unprecedented venture, was to take its first steps.

Gradually, SASMAD/PHC took root all throughout the diocese of Montreal with the help of volunteers who made a commitment in the name of their faith.

As a result of the great success of this endeavour, Sister Madeleine quickly came to understand that in order for her project to continue to grow, significant financial

backing and an efficient organizational structure would be necessary.

In order to ensure the longevity and the quality of pastoral service, she called upon the religious communities for financial support and in 1999 she established a foundation called “Les Amis de Jeanne Mance,” in recognition of Jeanne Mance, first lay nurse and co-foundress of Montreal.

Sister Madeleine Saint-Michel, “a woman sustained by the Word of God”



As a woman of faith, Sister Madeleine always strives to live and embody the Word of God in her daily life. Verse 36 of the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 25 touched her personally: “I was sick and you visited me” became the cornerstone of SASMAD/PHC in 1992. She experiences the presence of the Lord in each sick or elderly person, in everyone who is poor or helpless. She recognizes that “I was sick” means that the Lord is present in all of us. This is the mission that she aspires to pass on to all the volunteers during their training and, later on, during their personal visits to individuals’ homes. For her it is paramount that the

volunteers must go and visit people in order to offer them compassion, active listening and comfort in their moment of suffering or adversity.

Sister Madeleine is still alive and well; she continues to keep a sharp eye on the propagation of this magnificent mission that was conferred by God on the diocesan Church of Montreal