



Presentation NL's Dominica Ministry

The Nature Island of Dominica is situated among a group of eight islands in the East Caribbean of West Indies, between Guadalupe and Martinique. The calm Caribbean Sea on its west coast and rough Atlantic Ocean on its east coast surround the island's rain forested interior. Its rivers are plentiful but beaches, few. So, tourism takes the form of Eco-tourism. The main language is English, but Creole is often used.



Rainbow over Dominica

Youth comprises a large portion of the population - hence, the importance of education. The Irish Christian Brothers, already established in Saint Mary's schools, perceived a need for teacher training amongst the many teachers around the island. The teachers in the public school system could apply for teacher training after 5 years of teaching experience. So, many beginning teachers needed basic teacher training. The Presentation Sisters could answer this call. So, the first three Sisters left Newfoundland to go to Dominica in 1993: Shirley Hogan, Francis Pennell and Corona Wyse. They were followed by others: Marilyn Doyle, Paula Delahunty, Marilyn Costello, Sarah Hynes and Carmel Kelly.

Their first home was Nagle House on Morne Bruce overlooking Roseau, the capital city. The Sisters left Nagle House daily, driving along narrow, mountainous roads to various primary and elementary schools across the island. They worked with teachers on site, helping provide them with classroom teaching techniques, especially around reading. The Sisters went to a school for a period of four months to a term, depending on the need, then on again to another to begin again with a new group of teachers. Usually, the Sisters brought library books with them and other supplies to distribute to the teachers.



Associate Jean O'Neill with young readers

When the dwelling on Morne Bruce no longer served their needs, the Sisters moved to Salisbury, where they live to the present day. In 2009 the Newfoundland Sisters who went to Dominica and those who followed – Betty Rae Lee, Sylvia Staples and Marie Roche and Associate Jean O'Neill – worked principally out of CALLS (the Center were Adolescents Learn to Love and Serve), hence changing the educational focus to adolescents and young adults.

Sister Marie Roche and Jean O'Neill returned to Newfoundland in 2019. The lantern flame was then passed on to fellow Presentation Sisters Annmary Andrews from the North India Unit, Mary Therese Raphael from the South India Unit and Lynette Rodriguez of the Africa Unit, reflecting the global light of our presence in Dominica. Lynette has since returned to Africa.



Celebrating CALLS' 20th Anniversary

- Marilyn Doyle, Archives, 2022.