

**Ontario Social Justice Award – Martha Whelton
St. Paul the Apostle CWL Council, Alliston, ON**

Martha joined the Missionaries of Charity in 1984, in Buffalo, New York, after completing her bachelor's degree. She remained with the order for six years, renewing her vow of poverty each year. During that time, she worked in Chicago's projects with the poor; spent two years in San Francisco, working in the soup kitchens, and poor areas of the city; and also served in Philadelphia for a time. Mother Teresa visited each of the cities periodically where Martha got to experience Mother's holiness.

Martha did not take her final vows and made a decision to leave the order. But then, while visiting the Motherhouse in India, Mother Teresa encouraged her to try again and it was while serving in India that she contracted TB while working in the TB clinic and left the order permanently.

Martha then obtained her teaching certificate, and has spent her years working with the kids in her school. She is presently the Chaplain of St. Thomas Aquinas high school in Tottenham, Ontario. Over the years she has led the Social Justice committee to raise awareness in the students and has introduced them to activities through Development and Peace. She has organized retreats, joined Masses with the L'Arche community at the local level, organized weekly wheelchair basketball games at the community centre, collected iodized salt for Dr. Simone and art supplies for torture victims in Toronto, collected milk bags and had kids making bed mats, raised money for wells in developing countries, raised funds for foster children, and for food drives. She has escorted kids to Kenya to help build a school there, and will be accompanying kids to China in 2017.

She herself has travelled the world extensively, walking the El Camino, touring various countries in Asia, North Africa and South America. She continued on with her education and obtained her Masters of Education degree. Recently she lived in Australia for a year on a teacher exchange program.

In the Parish, she leads the RCIA program and is the Spiritual Development chair on the parish level CWL. In those capacities, she can be relied upon to speak intelligently and passionately on issues of social justice – in fact, we frequently use her as a speaker at our functions where the ladies enjoy her talks and always feel they have learned something new and interesting. She is a very active CWL member, pitching in on all our activities. She makes a difference.

Martha is a person who lives by her principles by paying attention to where she shops, what goods she buys, where the clothing she wears is made, and is an example of living simply. She shares whatever she has.





**Presentation of Social Justice Award to
Martha Whelton by President-elect Anne Madden**