

GBUC Newsletter



December 2005

New Look!

A Word from the Editor : A New letter with more than just news !

David Miljour, student at UQÀM



You may have noticed that the GBUC newsletter has changed. Ah yes, it is different! A gang of seemingly innocent students held the GBUC staff hostage at their office and demanded that they let them write the newsletter. Figuring they still had work to do for God here on earth, the staff caved in under their evil death threats, giving up a free one-way ticket to Paradise. Phah! They really had no choice!

Okay, you may have figured out that this story is a fake. But it would have made a good headline, don't you think? The real story is that the gang of students came to help out the staff, who already have many projects under way. Good projects. Did you know that the Groupes Bibliques Universitaires et Collégiaux have been around for 40 years and now reach out to 15-20 campuses annually? Or that, they have the potential to minister to nearly 100 French-speaking campuses consisting of 400 000 students in Quebec alone: four French-speaking universities, one with campuses in six cities, and about 89 colleges and cégeps? And, did you also know that there are only SIX workers in this vast mission field? Incredible.

This letter is not only meant to get more students involved, but also to show you what we're doing to make the love of Christ as expressed in the scenes of Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" known. It was precisely this love that pushed Jesus to accept a slow and terribly painful death. Even on the cross, he was destined to be alone, Perfect God opposite imperfect humanity.

But after three days he came back, the victor over death, having accomplished what no one else could have done. This is too much for us to keep inside ourselves: we have no choice but to speak up on our campuses! It is not an option to sit still before such an awesome display of love. That is why the GBUC feels it's necessary to develop a mission on the campuses. It's what mobilizes us to spread the news of this "proof of life" – no, more than life – eternal life!

So in this edition you'll find reports about the interesting activities that the fellowships are organizing to get the message to students of what God wants for them. Activities such as our fall retreat (which was a great success) and a fascinating conference which caught the attention of some history students. Read also the feature of a marginal groupe biblique operating in Quebec City, which has found a way to encourage numerous other groups. But, before I give away too much ... I'll put a cap on my pen so you can read what is *truly* interesting!

The Newsletter now has its own email address!
Do you have comments, words of encouragement, or a
desire to write?
ldn@gbuc.ca



Fall Retreat Big on Colors!

Stéphanie Blanchet, GBU member at Université de Montréal



On the weekend of October 22nd to 24th, GBUC groups from all over Quebec joined together at Parkside Ranch in the Eastern Townships for one of our bi-annual retreats. Once again, the retreat lived up to its good reputation. Weather-wise, it was the best autumn could offer: blue skies and Indian summer. Yes, it rained: nimbus clouds of colourful leaves, which flittered through the sun-filled air.



Around 40 students and staff came from various campuses: U of Sherbrooke, Cégep of Sherbrooke, UQÀM, U of Montreal, and Lionel-Groulx, Edouard-Montpetit and Montmorency Cégeps, as well as the ETEM and FTE theological schools, and friends from Quebec (Have I forgotten anyone?). Let's not forget the healthy representation of international students from Denmark, Guadeloupe, France, Germany and so forth.

Eric Wingender, professor from the École de Théologie Évangélique de Montréal (E'TEM), was the main speaker, and he was very appreciated by the way. On the theme "Who's behind the wheel when I lose control?", we time-warped backwards into episodes in the lives of Abraham, Joseph and Isaac (In this order!). It's enough

to knock your socks off when you realize that their whole lives were filled with such hair-raising episodes. The teaching sessions were edifying for both staff and students, since we all have a tendency to question our usefulness, our futures and our dreams as we stumble through life as Christian believers.

A spontaneously formed worship band composed of two or three guitars, a djembe and a brass trio (trumpet, trombone and sax) led us in enjoyable times of ska-worship. And what's a ranch without horses? The riders became Québécois cowboys from the Wild East, clip-clopping their way through the scuffy leaf-littered trails. Following such a great weekend, one wonders if there is anything left that could possibly leave a lasting impression on international students studying here in Quebec? Well ... of course they haven't experienced our impressionable winters yet. Speaking of which, here's a call to all GBUC students: see you at the next retreat this winter (March 4-6)! Pack up your wool socks and tuques and come on out!



History of French Protestants Inspire Youth in Quebec City

Nathalie Bellerose, student at Université de Québec à Montréal

Considered to be the new "guiding light" out of Chambly QC, the historical society *Le Lys, la Rose et la Parole* ("the Lilly, the Rose & the Word"), whose focuses include the history of Franco-Protestants and of the Bible's dissemination, taught us a great deal through their fifth conference. Since their first one in 2000, the Quebec conference was greatly anticipated. On October 30th, some 60 eager participants met, all ears, in the pews at the Church le Carrefour Chrétien de Québec. They were excited to discover that God's light had shone deep in the heart of our history.



Wearing ancient costumes, Mr. Alain Gendron and Mr. J. Archambault began the conference with startling enthusiasm.

How appropriate that two founding members of the *Le Lys, La Rose et la Parole* take the stage for an overview of the Huguenot and Franco-Protestant adventure in Quebec! Surrounded by an impressive array of photos and coffee table books on display, they told us the story of men and women like us, who persevered in their faith despite opposing values in their era, the founding of New France. Using history, they affirmed our faith and hope by

showing us how God worked through our ancestors. Understanding this cultural heritage helped us to connect our identity with the history of the Franco-protestant community.

Hats off to these gentlemen, who accomplished their mission of preserving and passing on the little known history of our predecessors. By its passion for truth, *Le Lys, la Rose et la Parole* gave us a thirst to discover more of the roots of the movement that gave rise to today's Quebecois Churches.

And by the way, this is how I discovered how important it is for young people to be touched by the past to be able to share their faith and establish new contacts as they build a future for Christianity together. Let's face it: if we do not react, sooner or later the chain of history will be broken. But you probably already knew this, right? So my message to all students is: I hope you will rise up to the challenge to write the next chapter of the history of the Franco-Protestants of Quebec!

The conferences & historical society have a web site that you can visit : www.lysroseparole.org.



Divine Supervision is Advised: Contains Explicit Christian Language!

Véronique Monchamp –Leader of GBC at Vieux-Montréal College



What do you get when you cross a long-haired, scraggly goateed, silver glasses-wearing guy, with Christian hard rock, bodacious thematic segments & original special guests? No, not "Singing in the Rain," nor "Dances with Wolves." You get a radio show! David Miljour, a GBU member at UQÀM, takes off for God every Monday at 3:00 PM on *choq-fm*, the University's internet radio station.

The program is called "Radio Celeste" ("Heavenly Radio"). Its goal is to demystify God for non-Christian students at the university, and to promote Christian activities held on campus as well as throughout Quebec. Activities such as the inter-Church youth impro league, the historical conference *Le Lys, la Rose et le Parole* (see article pp. 2-3). "Radio Celeste" can also deal with current or academic issues, such as the ethics of water or the creation-evolution question.

Every week, heavenly softcore rhythms travel the air waves with lyrics dedicated to God alone. The host is proud of his convictions, and promotes God from his mike, through segments like "Band Bio", biographical pieces on Christian groups, and "C'est pas chrétien, mais c'est pas loin" ("Not Christian but close"), a concept aiming to recognize groups that don't proclaim themselves as Christian but whose lyrics exhibit Biblical values. This mix of music & content segments is a Christian cultural portal for everyone at UQÀM.

If you would like to send ideas, comments, or event info to "Radio Céleste," Please contact David Miljour at bozo_le_clown007@msn.com, and he will gladly respond. Until then, let's meet every Monday at 3 PM on *choq-fm* for "Radio Céleste". Happy listening!

For more info or to tune in: www.choq.fm.

GBUC Reminder

- **Fall Retreat:** March 4-6, 2005 at Camp Plein Air Amitié - Theme: "Guy-Girl Relationships." Speakers: Yves et Kathryn Alarie, Contact: Mélanie (819) 877-2474
- **End of Year Party and Annual Meeting:** April 30, 2005
- **40th Anniversary of GBUC:** October 28 or 29, 2005 in Montreal- with Ramez Athallah. 40 Years– That's big!

I will pray for a thunderous 2005 on each campus and for each staff member.



Québec : Je me souviens!

Portrait of a bible study group a little out of the ordinary...

David Miljour, student at Université de Québec à Montréal

There is only one rule in effect within this group: to speak the truth instead of presenting the perfect, expected Christian answers. This is the objective of a Bible study group that has been meeting in the capital city of Quebec for the last six to eight months. Every Tuesday from 7:30 to 10 P.M. at the café-bar “Loft” in the lower part of the city, Richard Ouellette leads a study on a Bible passage. The technique is simple: after the text has been read out loud, each person looks over the passage on a photocopied handout and selects the points which seem striking or intriguing. This leads to an enriching and enlightening discussion. It’s in this intimate and relaxed atmosphere that participants share and discuss the Bible passages with one another.

However, “café-bar” naturally equates with “drinks!” In fact, participants are free to enjoy a beer during the study. It’s not to get drunk, but to seek God’s face while being yourself. Richard says, “The goal is to reconcile the two dimensions of young adults’ lives, their partying and their faith, into a person who has the integrity to be the same in a bar or in the local church.” In other words, good inductive Bible studies or “OIA”—observation, interpretation, application—help us get to know Jesus in a place that favours discussion about the guiding principles of our lives. What could be better?

Where does the group find discussion topics? From the curiosity of the members who come, but equally from the desire to seek life guidelines based on God and not on a code of conduct which is morally acceptable but not open to discussion. Each person puts forward questions, comments, life experiences and the desire to discover God and live life to the fullest. The text reveals itself to each one in a way that makes that person think. How? “By trying to bring out the life principles that answer the question, ‘Living by faith is...?’ And learning to know Jesus and to discuss the questions that preoccupy me in the light of Scripture, with a group that’s also striving to understand what matters in their life of faith,” Richard explains. It’s hard work, but certainly worth trying!

For the other patrons of the bar, though, isn’t it weird to see young people opening the Bible and seeking God instead of playing pool, getting smashed, flirting with the opposite sex or pursuing any number of other irresponsible activities? Well... no! The group gets a positive reaction, some curious questions and even approval! People remember them, Richard points out. “When I go to the counter to pay for my pint of bitter each week, the waitress always says, ‘See you next Tuesday!’ It’s encouraging to feel that we’re welcome here and that the bar staff is intrigued by what’s going on in the group of young adults around me, with two or three Bibles on the table in the middle of their beer glasses.” As for me, I believe that one day the members of this group will surely hear God say to them, “*Je me souviens!... I remember!*” For more information about this group, contact Richard Ouellette at rouel@cltc.net.



GBU-Café*: Leadership Means a Team Serving Others



Mélanie Auger, staffworker at Sherbrooke

* Pronounced « J’ai bu café »!

The GBU at the University of Sherbrooke has organized GBU-Café meetings for the last few years. We have created them out of our desire to learn to love and serve our neighbours. We discovered that the greatest need on the campus is for friendship. This led us to create a relaxed atmosphere that lends itself to discussion and friendly interaction. At each gathering, we encourage the deepening of the friendships that have begun in our group. The GBU-Cafés take place once every couple of weeks to once a month, depending on student availability. The most well attended GBU-Cafés are the coffeehouse concerts and the dinners. This year, we had the privilege of welcoming the musical group Mission Up, as well as Francois Bergeron, a chalk artist who explains the message of salvation through marvelous drawings and a creative lighting! We have also had film and discussion evenings as well as gatherings to play games and listen to music. The GBU-Cafés allowed us to accomplish our main objective, which is to love one another by creating friendships with each other. Each participant was able to discover his or her talents, develop them, and use them to contribute to the group. Friendships were formed with people outside the group, with the community (campus and churches) and even within the group. These relationships can go along away, i.e. engagement this fall! So what can we say about the success of the GBU-Cafés? As we say around here: “To try is to buy”.

Did You Know the Meaning of the Christmas Candy Cane?

Jessica Healy, Volunteer Staff,
Cégep Edouard-Montpetit in Longueuil



Did you know? More and more GBUCers hand out candy canes on their campus as a way of sharing the joy of Christmas. Why? Because of its meaning! It represents the true significance of Christmas! Several “legends” going back to the XVIIth century explain different ideas of its conception, but each one draws the same conclusions regarding its symbolism. The image of the candy cane represents the origins and foundations of the Church. Thus, this treat tells the story of Christ our Saviour!



Its **shape** in a "J" is the first letter of the name of Jesus. Upside-down, it represents even more powerfully the staff of the good shepherd.



Its **white colour** represents the unique conception of Jesus Christ : born without sin, he lived a sinless life and died pure.. white as snow.



The **three little red lines** symbolize the whip marks and the suffering that Christ endured for our sins when he took our guilt on Himself. Others prefer to attribute these three lines to the Trinity.



The **big red line** is the blood of Christ poured out at the cross. It is only by His blood that we can be purified from all our sins.



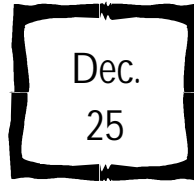
The **hardness** of the candy reminds us that Jesus Christ is the most solid foundation and the foundation of the church. His promises are true and are always fulfilled. Thus we can base our lives on him, our rock.

Sadly, today the cane has become simply a traditional Christmas candy. We have lost its history and its meaning by making it a commercial and traditional object. People even give it different colours and different shapes....

So let's try to remember its meaning, but even more deeply what it represents : the most beautiful gift in the

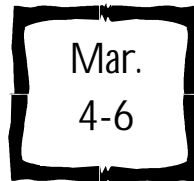
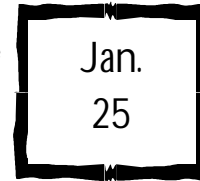
world. I invite you to share with others the meaning of the candy cane which represents the most beautiful gift from God to us, and how Christ has changed your life by His sacrifice.
Merry Christmas!

Note : You are more than welcome to use this article as a tool in the distribution of candy canes.



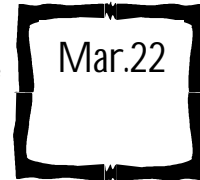
December 25, 2004
Joyous birth of Jésus;
Have a wonderful holiday season!

January 25, 2005
Board Meeting at the GBUC office.



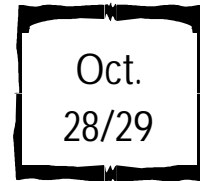
March 4-6, 2005
GBUC Winter Retreat

March 22, 2005
Board Meeting at the GBUC office.



April 30, 2005
GBUC's End of Year Party and Annual Meeting

Oct. 28 or 29, 2005
Huge E vent! 40th anniv. of GBUC!



The Mission of GBUC

Our Mission: To see students discover the reality of Jesus Christ, mature in him, and mobilize as his witnesses.

Our Five Priorities:

- **Witness:** To establish a witness for Christ on campus, both individually and collectively, through action and speaking our faith in words.
- **Training** : To help participants grow in their faith through Bible study, prayer, fellowship and witness, encouragement in local church involvement and development of biblical thinking.
- **Love for others** : To learn to genuinely love others, both those in the group and those outside, by the way we relate to them in witness.
- **Christian thinking** : To assist participants to explore and assert in the educational community and beyond the relevance of the Christian faith to every area of life.

Coming up in the next GBUC Newsletter...

- Interview with Sem Pierre, leader of a new ministry to international students.
- Survey of GBUC's ministry in Quebec since its beginning 40 years ago.

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