



Learning and rites of passage

I believe that it is important for churches and their members, for parents and students, to understand the importance of school environment for young people's social, personal and Christian instruction. It is at school, cegep and university that a student learns the three principles of socialization, identification and incarnation (the last one being the unique privilege of Christians).

1. *The Principle of Socialization*

For children, school is the place where they learn to socialize. Up to this point, their world is limited to their family and friends of family members. It is at school that children begin to discover a much bigger world that becomes even larger as their schooling progresses. Arriving at university, a student is very conscious of the

world of work, politics and the challenges of globalization and so on.

In today's secular society, school and studies have become "universal" rites of passage. From day care to kindergarten, from primary to secondary, from secondary to college, from college to university: at each level, we celebrate graduation as a rite of passage that allows us to go on to the next level.

It is in attending school, cegep and university that other worlds open up to us: in order to become a businessman or woman, nurse or doctor, an accomplished artist (musician, actor, painter) or politician, one must go through the stages predefined by society. In this way, we gradually become familiar with different spheres of society according to our interests *(continued on page 3)*

Learning Jesus' Way at UQAM

Learning French has had its risks, its rewards, and its challenges. The other day, after French class, I said to the professor, or well, at least what I *thought* I said to him was, "I'll wait here because there is a big line-up outside." He responded with a look of disbelief as his eyes lit up and he began to chuckle. "Pardon me?!" he asked, with a big grin. I repeated myself and he chuckled some more as we headed outside the classroom so that I could point to him the long line-up that I was talking about. At this point, he was in full out laughter, as he replied to me, "Oh, there is a long line!!" He explained to me that instead of what I was trying to say, my poor pronunciation of "big line" sounded more like, "There is a *big ass* outside" ... definitely *not* the message I was trying to convey!

I have been told by many people who have learned a second language that one must take risks in order to learn, even at the expense of sounding silly or embarrassing oneself. As I risk, I learn that I need to give up my *need* to be understood. There are so many things that we cannot control, and how we are understood by others is some-



Ryan (left), Alex and Dave in the Agora at UQAM.

times one of them.

Whenever we open our mouths in the name of Jesus we risk being misunderstood. More and more I see the need to speak from a position of humility and genuineness and trust that the Holy Spirit is speaking deeper truths to the other person in ways that my words cannot reach.

Ryan is staff in training at UQAM

World Environmental Crisis: A Spiritual Approach?

From October 20 to 24, the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES) held a symposium entitled "Faith and Environment: Responding to the Challenge of Climate Change" in Runaway Bay, Jamaica. This symposium for graduates and researchers of all fields was designed to outline the multi-dimensional effects of climate change and the world environment crisis. The challenge of this undertaking was to include a reflection anchored in the Scriptures and our Christian faith.

It was with joy and a sense of immense blessing that Priscilla Dugas (recent GBUC intern, currently specializing in geography) and I accepted the invitation to represent the GBUC movement of Quebec at this international conference. There were diverse subjects covered during the week, each emphasizing in its own way the moral importance of our participation as Christians in the solution to the environmental problems of our time. In this way, the symposium clearly demonstrated the pertinence of the Scriptures to rethinking our

responsibility towards God's creation. For example, in examining Psalm 8, we see that creation proclaims and witnesses to the greatness of God. What's more, the Bible tells us that all life is an expression of the voice of God (John 1). When creation is attacked, it is in the name of God that is attacked. I invite you to think about the role that God gave us regarding creation, especially of taking care of it in a way that proclaims His name and contributes to building His Kingdom. Let's not forget that like humanity, creation suffers and impatiently awaits the triumphant return of God. My hope is that the Lord would use the GBUC to mobilize the church in Quebec regarding this

opportunity to act individually and collectively as Christ's witnesses in a world that takes creation for granted.

Catherine LeBlanc, Masters student in anthropology at Laval U., member of the Quebec City Inter-Campus Group.



Catherine LeBlanc and Priscilla Dugas with Gopi Akash, a delegate from Mauritius.

**STUDENT SUNDAY,
SEPTEMBER 14 2008**
Prayer for students,
schools and Christian
student associations,
the second Sunday of September.
Next year: Sept. 13, 2009

**Thank you to the following
local churches that informed us
of their participation:**

Église Évangélique Baptiste de Côte-des-Neiges (Montreal)
Église ACM de Dollard-des-Ormeaux (West Island)
Centre Chrétien Métropolitain (Montreal)
Église Baptiste Française de Moncton
Église Chrétienne de St-Laurent
Assemblée Chrétienne Bonne Nouvelle (Quebec)
Assemblée Chrétienne de Sherbrooke

(If your church also participated, please inform us!)

and training. Where I find myself in society depends on who I am.

2. The Principle of Identification

It is also in our world of studies that we continue to deepen our own identity, who we are. “*Who am I?*” is one of the most elementary existential questions for all humans. Our schools, despite the limits of their mandate, are interested in us as complete individuals. This is why they offer leisure activities (sports and art) and supporting resources for students. Despite the pressures of our world for “success” and “efficiency”, our own identity cannot be reduced only to our job or “function” (dentist, mechanic, engineer, receptionist, etc.) in society.

Our identity is also a “collective” question. I am not just an individual. As a person, I am also a “Québécois pure laine” or member of a Haitian community or a Hispanic. My identity then is at the same time ethnic, linguistic, sexual and it can also become political depending on my adherence to a political party. It is often in our schools that the issues of our identity as members of a particular group become clear to us.

These first two principles concern all students. A third one exists that only pertains to Christian students.

3. The Principle of Incarnation

It is as students that we learn about incarnation for the first time. It is the only missionary model given to the church: Jesus said: “As the Father sent me, so I send you into the world.” It is into this secular world of today that I am sent by Jesus as a witness. I am called to live as a Christian in a social context that is not. I perform my “socialization” as a believer in a society committed to secularism. I don’t have to see secularism as a threat or enemy of faith but simply as the world as it is defined today.

The advantage for us is that we have a much clearer idea than others of who we are. We have been created in the image of God. In Jesus Christ, we have a deeper identity than our racial, ethnic and linguistic identity (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11). Before being a Quebecois, I am a human being and I share this humanity with people who don’t share my language and culture. I can then identify myself in absolute security and develop relationships with people unlike myself. I can build bridges, as others do not threaten me. Christian students, then, have a lot to contribute to today’s dialogues.

What can you bring to your school as a believer? What are the advantages of your faith?

1. In Jesus Christ, we have found the essential answers to the questions of humanity, answers that make it possible for us to love God and others. Our first two principles of socialization and identification are assisted by our rootedness in our faith in Jesus Christ;

2. You have assurance about who you are and who we all are: human beings created in the image of God;

3. Because of this assurance, you are able to love others because God’s love is inclusive and no one is excluded;

4. This love enables us to encourage reconciliation, to find new ways to resolve differences.

In conclusion, I invite you to become, as bearers of the heavenly image, people who reflect Jesus. It is in this way that our witness will bear much fruit.

Pierre LeBel, member of the GBUC board, Director of Youth with a Mission in Montreal and author of Imago Dei: devenir pleinement humain (Imago Dei: Become Fully Human).

On the 7th and 21st of November, the GBU at UQAM held an exhibition to commemorate the life of Martin Luther King. His fight for peace and non-violence, his beliefs, and the relationship between his faith and actions were presented with the help of diverse media.



From October 17-19, about 25 members of the GBUC participated in the 2008 Fall Retreat. This event enabled them to get to know one another and basically have a great time. Speaker Francis Pearson led a series of reflections that helped them to consider their willingness to serve God in today's world, using the incarnation as their model.

**GBUC
Retreat**

Next Retreat:
Feb. 27-March 1
Villa de Brôme



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Position: Staff Worker for International Students - *Porte Ouverte* Ministry

GBUC is looking for a full-time coordinator for its *Porte Ouverte* ministry. Its purpose is to reach out to international students arriving in Quebec through hospitality, help with adaptation and sharing the gospel with them.

The candidate must have love for internationals, practice hospitality, and have a desire to share the Gospel. They must enjoy working in a team, lead a life of integrity and love God.

Candidates must be ready to set up and carry out their own fund-raising for their ministry. We will offer the necessary training. There is also a possibility to work alongside the present coordinator for a transitional period.

Please send your résumé before December 31 2008 to:

Sem Pierre, 4110 de la Martinière, Terrebonne, QC J6X 2H4; or : sem@gbuc.ca

Pray for the GBUC, Where you are!

Receive the *Sentinelle*, a weekly prayer chain by email.

Subscription, information, or words of encouragement? Contact Kathleen Wilkes at sentinelle@gbuc.ca

GBUC Office

GROUPESBIBLIQUES
universitaires et collégiaux

Mailing Address: C.P. 362, Succ. C
Montréal QC H2L 4K3

Office Location: 1204, boul. St-Joseph Est
Montréal QC H2J 1L6

Tél. 514-843-4028 Fax 514-807-0643
info@gbuc.ca www.gbuc.ca

Campus News

A Word from Cégep St-Laurent

For me, the Groupe Biblique meetings at my cegep are times of encouragement in my faith that give me strength for the rest of the week! The ideas of our staff worker (Bernard) are very helpful when it comes to knowing how to better approach the other students of our school. We are studying the different aspects of our post-modern culture. This study gives us a better knowledge of how people think and therefore how to bring the Gospel to them! It is also a meeting place where we can encourage one another in our faith, be reminded of our ultimate goal on earth as Christ's servants, sing praises to God and pray for one another. In short, it's a real blessing to have such a group in our school. I can't wait to see what God will do through this group in our cegep!

Myriam, student

Perseverance in Saguenay

The GBU is now in its third year at the Université du Québec à Chicoutimi (UQAC). In the two previous years, the meetings were held at the Cégep de Chicoutimi, a five-minute walk from the university. The group existed in the past, but not on a continual basis. Due to studies and other campus involvement of Christian students, attendance has always varied. At our most recent meeting, we were five girls studying the Bible together. The group is going well, but there is not enough time to be more involved on campus, in the GBU or even to promote the group in the various churches in the region. Here are two prayer requests: (1) that God would give peace to Christian students and help them to manage their time; (2) that the numerous seeds that have been planted in the hearts of students on campus would grow and produce fruit!

Rachel, student leader

New Arrivals

After 9 years of ministry with GBEU de Switzerland for Cécile and 5 years as a Church youth group leader for Joel, we began to wonder what God had in store for the next step in our lives. We wanted to work more as a team and were ready to "move beyond" Geneva, to serve if possible in another part of the French-speaking world. This was what we had in mind when we arrived in Quebec for our vacation in the summer of 2007.

During these two weeks, we began to receive a call from God to work with the GBUC. It came as we learnt that the GBUC were looking for French-speaking workers, through the realization that our gifts and experiences corresponded to their needs and as our relationship with the Debanné family developed. Our eyes also began to open to Quebec society and its challenges.

Today, 15 months later, we are now in Montreal. We have experienced God's faithfulness in our preparations to leave Geneva. We also experienced it upon our arrival, through our new colleagues who welcomed us, the enthusiasm of the students, and an apartment that was seemed to be "waiting" for us.

At this point, we are thrilled to continue to discover Quebec and to witness the work that God will accomplish among students.

Cécile and Joël



Campus Groups and Other Contacts (Dec. 2008)

Active groups:

Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières (UQTR)
Université du Québec à Chicoutimi (UQÀC)
Cégep de Chicoutimi (conjoint avec l'UQÀC)
Cégep Lionel-Groulx (Ste-Thérèse)
Cégep du Vieux Montréal
Cégep Gérald Godin (Ste-Geneviève)
Cégep St-Laurent
Université Laval
Université de Montréal
Université de Montréal, étudiants internationaux
Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)
Université de Sherbrooke
Collège de Montmorency (Laval)
Cégep Édouard-Montpetit (Longueuil)
Friends of GBUC (graduates; Montreal Region)
Friends of GBUC (Quebec region)

Daniel Grétilat, gbutr@yahoo.ca
Rachel Tabah, shelly_rst@hotmail.com
Rachel Tabah shelly_rst@hotmail.com
Mathieu Giguère, m.giguere@ebetm.org
Del Gibbons, delgibbons@yahoo.ca
Nicolas Cotnoir ncotnoir@ebee.qc.ca
Bernard Tremblay, bernoir@sympatico.ca
Richard Ouellette, rouel@megaquebec.net
Priscilla Dugas, priscilla@gbuc.ca
Sem Pierre, sem@gbuc.ca
David Kieft, dave@gbuc.ca
Tommy Gagnon, manghai@gmail.com
Bernard Tremblay, bernoir@sympatico.ca
Jessica Healy jessica@gbuc.ca
Salomon Nkankue, snkankue@yahoo.fr
Richard Ouellette, rouel@megaquebec.net

Pioneering Groups:

Université de Moncton
Cégep de Rosemont
Cégep Bois-de-Boulogne
Collège Univ. de St-Boniface

Paulin Blaise Ngweth, pngweth@yahoo.fr
Marc Debanné, marc@gbuc.ca
Bernard Tremblay, bernoir@sympatico.ca
Mark Huebert, mhuebert@mts.net

Other Useful Contacts:

Director: Marc Debanné, marc@gbuc.ca
General Information: Marijane Nancekivell, info@gbuc.ca
Administration, Finances: Marijane Nancekivell, marijane@gbuc.ca
Board President: David Brown, brown7877@sympatico.ca
Website: Joël Cornuz, joel@gbuc.ca and Sylvain Morel, sylvain_morel_2002@hotmail.com
Prayer Secretary and Sentinelle (GBUC prayer chain): Kathleen Wilkes, kathleen@gbuc.ca
Coordination, Cegeps Partnership: Jessica Healy, hjessica@canada.com

GBUC MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

- **Campus Staffworker: Trois-Rivières, Moncton or Montreal. Possibilities in other cities.**
- **Campus Staffworker for International Students Ministry**
- **Coordinator for Cegep ministries (Montreal)**

Send your résumé to Marc Debanné at marc@gbuc.ca.
These positions are only for people who are ready to embark on the adventure of fund-raising, which is exciting but demanding.
We can train you!

A WORD ON FINANCES :

Thank you for the donations that you sent this fall. Through them, you exercise an essential partnership in our ministry. In this end-of-year period, with the present financial crisis, we are expecting revenue decreases for our **general fund**. We invite you to give generously so we can end the year in a good position. Also, we are continuing to raise the remaining \$ 3 000 to continue our **Internship Project**, with the goal of offering a service opportunity to one of our graduates in the year 2009-2010. I invite you to use the enclosed coupon to contribute to one or the other of these needs. Thank you in advance.