

# Living in tune with God

*The presence of the unconditional love of God is so embedded in the Universe and within the Earth that to live in tune with the Earth is to live in tune with the reign of God.*

—Cletus Wessels in *Jesus in the New Universe Story*

**Growing up, Eleanor MacLellan, RSCJ, spent summers in a house on the ocean.** Some of her earliest memories are of sitting on the front porch, marveling at the beauty of the sunlight sparkling on the waves, and sitting in the window seat of her bedroom at night, watching the moon cast its light over the water. Seventy years later, she recalls the sheer joy of those moments. They inspired a love of nature and the desire to preserve it. Today, as a naturalist and educator on a farm in Massachusetts, Sister MacLellan is making good on her early commitment to God's Creation.

For more than twenty years, Sister MacLellan has worked at Drumlin Farm in Lincoln, Massachusetts, about twenty miles outside Boston. She works primarily with elementary school children who visit the farm with their classes. Owned by the Massachusetts Audubon Society, the organic farm is also a refuge for injured and orphaned wildlife. It offers a variety of programs that allow students to learn about nature and farming. With some guidance from Sister MacLellan, visitors can assist with farm chores, get to know the animals, explore ponds, forests and fields, and examine insects, seeds and plants.

The programs are fun and educational, but the emphasis is on relationships – between the animals and their habitats, between animals and humans and between humans and Earth. Sister MacLellan's role at the farm is not simply a job, it is the way she lives

the mission of the Society of the Sacred Heart. "Everything depends on everything else, everything is important, and everything is a revelation of the Love of God," Sister MacLellan explains. "Therefore to destroy anything is to destroy a revelation of God. So in this light, what is important is to teach people to respect every aspect of creation, to know that they depend on it and to value it for what it is in itself."

So when Sister MacLellan shows off a snake skin, or a barred owl or the complex ecosystem in a cup of pond water, she is, in her own way, revealing God's love in our world. Children and adults alike are drawn by her passion. When she describes the risks of pesticides, both to the Earth and to farm workers, they know that the danger is real. When she urges her visitors to buy organic and buy local, they hear the message in a new way – because it comes from a place of love.

Sister Eleanor MacLellan has worked in the service of education on the same 200 acres for twenty years. She teaches about nature: animals, insects and farming, but her real lesson is relationships. Her foremost message is love. ❖



Top: Eleanor MacLellan, RSCJ, shows off a barred owl, just one of the creatures she works with at Drumlin Farm.

Below: Ponding is always a popular activity at Drumlin Farm, especially with Sister MacLellan leading the way.