

Québec. December 1st, 1976

My first encounter with Claude goes back to 1973 at a symposium at the CEGEP of Sherbrooke of which the theme was « Is life worth the effort of being lived? » Both of us were brought together on the same panel before the dazzled eyes of hundreds of persons and before the cameras of the community television.

A person in good health hardly reflects on what would happen if he were obliged to live and to work without arms, without legs. But thousands of persons, diminished following a war wound, a congenital ailment or an accident, know this sad lot. The danger threatens in an equal fashion intelligent people and those who are less so.

The catastrophe of Friedreich's Ataxia made what the dangers are which threaten the person afflicted with this disease felt and demonstrated that the individual is not capable of solving this problem.

Claude, although he is afflicted with this cruel disease in his deepest flesh, perseveres to live fully, and, thanks to his relentless work and his team whom he hounds ceaselessly, will certainly succeed in obtaining fruitful results, if not for himself, at least for those who are also afflicted with this disease.

Here is a very nice young man who gives the entire world a fine example of determination and persistence.

I was given the opportunity, in the course of these last years, of meeting thousands of different people. Claude St-Jean is one of those who want to educate the masses that we are not handicapped, even if the name implies it. We are like everyone, total people, with a handicap.

Hats off to this young man full of dynamism, vitality and gifted with an incomparable sense of humour.

May success always accompany him...

Rosanne Laflamme

Taken from <<Le défi de Claude St-Jean>> (Claude St-Jean's Challenge)  
Les Éditions Héritage Inc. 1977