

Reflection from Sr. Myra Rodgers' Memorial Mass

Over these weeks since Myra's wake and funeral, every conversation I've had with members of the Community has one common theme—Myra's passion for the mission and charism.

When she accepted La Roche University's "woman of providence" award, in 2015, she said, "I believe in the mission of our congregation—to be the face of God's Providence. The strength and enthusiasm of my Sisters as they strive to live our mission, sustains and challenges me."

Her enthusiasm for the charism, as well as the excitement, she found in living that charism creatively for the people of God, was poured out in word, in music, and in each of her varied ministries.

The first reading that we heard in today's liturgy was written by Myra in 1984. I would imagine that she never thought that it would be read at her own memorial liturgy or, that for many, those words written almost 40 years ago seem prescient and an apt description of Myra, herself.

I've always thought of that reading as a summation of a person's life. But that's not the way Myra intended it.

It was the conclusion of an article where she characterized the essential qualities of one who calls God Providence. It wasn't a description of a past life well lived. It wasn't future oriented or a destination. It was about the way to be in the present. This is who we are to be now!

She often said that our charism is the life-blood of our Congregation, our community DNA, and the gift of our congregation to the world. It is the song which sings through our lives – sometimes loudly, sometimes only as a vague memory!

The charism is dynamic, it's a grace, it must be lived, deepened, and constantly developed and reframed. And Myra knew the courage required to truly embrace that evolving charism. As she noted in an article written in 2014: "We say we 'trust in' and are 'open to' God's Providential love, to the Provident God's very self. With great audacity, we say over and over that we are to be the visible face of God's Providence to the world; not just to each other, not just to our country, but to the world. How audacious is that!! She concludes with this challenge and promise: "living the charism of Providence compels each of us to give ourselves away as best we can by entering into the passion and cries of the people of this day and age. Then the charism, will continue to carry the community forward in our time and culture.

We are grateful for Myra who was gifted and given and now remembered as Providence. May we walk in her foot steps.

Sr. Michele Bisbey
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