

Dear Friend,

I was introduced recently as one of the Sisters of Divine Providence who has also been a foster parent for over 25 years. As has often happened in the past, that introduction was greeted with: “I could *never* do that. I would get too attached.” While well intentioned, that remark troubles me on several levels.

Without a doubt, we have become attached to the children whose lives we have shared. Whether they have moved on to adoptive homes or have returned to their biological families, each one has left holes in our hearts. But, how empty and shallow our lives would have been if we had decided not to attach, not to love—just because we feared the pain of loss. In truth, everything and everyone we cherish will one day be taken from us—just as we will one day be taken from them.

This truism seems so appropriate for our Lenten reflection, for Lent is the Church’s springtime. It is a time of hope, of promise and renewal. Lent calls us to remember that we are an Easter people. One of the Easter gospels (John 20:1-23) recalls the meeting of the Risen Jesus with Mary Magdalen. He calls her by name, stirring her recognition of him. Then Jesus tells her not to cling to him, perhaps coaxing her to embrace the new life—one that is possible only when we let go of whatever ties us to the past.

During these days of Lenten reflection, I am ever grateful for those who have blessed and enriched the corners of my life. They have broadened my understanding and experience of family, community and God. Yet, I must admit that if I had been shown the path of my life’s journey, I fear I wouldn’t have had the courage to take the first step. You see, I get too attached! I don’t let go easily. I would have said, “I could *never* do that.”

As women and men of Providence, the essence of our call is to love well—with our whole hearts, our whole souls and our whole minds. Loving well is not about holding tightly. It is mostly about letting go—of our fears, our hesitations and our biases. It is about embracing the people and the promises God places along the path of our life’s journey. Love is letting God coax us to a new life, one with unimaginable rewards.

In every ministry of the Sisters of Divine Providence, people and programs are in need of your talent and your treasure. We are hoping that you will be open to answering the call. This Lent, why not pledge to be open to God’s grace and coaxing? Why not take that first step... to join with us on the journey that our Provident God has set before us?

For me—indeed, for all of us—the experience of loving well by letting go is not defined by personal courage. Rather, it is guided by God’s grace and a willingness to love well. My prayer for you this Lenten season is that God’s abundant grace will embolden you to let go, to love anew... wherever that might lead you.

In God’s abundant Providence,

Sister Michele

Sister Michele Bisbey, CDP | Provincial Director

P.S. We are grateful for the way our provident God touches your heart to be a part of our work through your faithful financial gifts. Thank you for your continued support.





**Jesus said to her,
“Stop holding on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father.”**

John 20:17

We invite you to pray with us by visiting our interactive blog: cdpsisters.wordpress.com