

PROVIDENCE

We continue to live and serve others in ways that can help to bring

greater unity, that all may be one!

Celebrating Consecrated Life:

Fifty Years after Vatican Council II

by Mary Francis Fletcher, CDP, Provincial Director

Beginning in November 2014, and continuing to the World Day of Consecrated Life in February 2016, the Church will celebrate the Year of Consecrated Life. In announcing this celebration, the Church indicated three objectives: to remember the past with gratitude, to live the present with passion, and to embrace the future with hope.

You may be well aware of the radical changes that have taken place in our religious community and other communities of consecrated women and men during the past fifty years. These were a direct result of the Vatican Council document on religious life titled *Perfectae Caritatis* (Perfect Charity). This document directed religious communities to adapt to the modern world, and communities of men and women religious responded wholeheartedly.

You may be less aware that religious life has been evolving since the time of Jesus. To give an extremely limited overview, we'll first look back with gratitude, as the Holy Father has asked, to the many ways individuals have totally dedicated their lives

to God for the sake of the Gospel. Throughout the past 2,000 years, men and women have responded to the call to be a disciple of Jesus under the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit, adapting to new and changing societal needs with courage, creativity, wisdom, and faithfulness.

Remembering the Past with

Gratitude. After Jesus' death and resurrection, many thousands were baptized. Persecutions began and Jesus' followers were martyred. We know from the Acts of the Apostles that the earliest followers of Jesus shared everything in common, sold what they had, sharing what they had to benefit all. The believers dispersed far beyond Jerusalem into Jewish and Gentile lands, continuing to speak and witness to all that Jesus had done and taught. They sacrificed everything to live the Good News faithfully and to fulfill Jesus' command to "go and make disciples of all nations ... know that I

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From left, standing: Sisters Ana Lydia Sonera Matos, Maria Fest, Mary Francis Fletcher, Donna Marie Gribschaw; seated, Sister Mary Traupman

Marie de la Roche Province **LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Mary Francis Fletcher, CDP **Provincial Director**

> Maria Fest, CDP Asst. to the Provincial

COUNCILLORS

Donna Marie Gribschaw, CDP Ana Lydia Sonera Matos, CDP Mary Traupman, CDP

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EDITOR

Susan Rohm Director, Mission Advancement

Providence Heights 9000 Babcock Boulevard Allison Park, PA 15101-2713 412-635-5428 srohm@cdpsisters.org

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A Future Full of Hope

by Maria Fest, CDP, Assistant to the Provincial

``I know well the plans I have in mind for you," says our God, "plans for your welfare \dots plans to give you a future full of hope." (Jeremiah 29:11)

We are moving into a new season—leaving the season of *full bloom* behind and welcoming a season marked by transformation, even as the landscape visibly changes before our eves.

As we, the Sisters of Divine Providence, anticipate our Community's transformation, we are actively engaged in a planning process for our future. Our contemplative approach requires ardent listening and unrestrained reflection at a deep level. By listening to God and discerning God's plans for us, we hope for a future of both personal and community transformations.

As we began our process, we spent time connecting with our *deep story*, told through the lives of our founder, Bishop Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler, and our foundress, Marie de la Roche. Of equal importance to us were the six founding members of our U.S. Province who answered a call from God to leave Germany and come to the United States. Over the 163 years since our founding, both internal Community circumstances and external societal and Church influences have changed significantly, effectively altering the ways in which we carry out our mission.

A commitment to ongoing discernment is necessary to fully understand the continual impact these changes have on our Community's membership and our ministries. To ensure a future full of hope, we are committed to purposefully addressing the needs of our members while boldly advancing our Congregation's mission. Commitment to a hopeful future ushers in this season of transformation!

Our vision statement helps us to align our mission with our resources: *Inspired by* Mother Marie, who in response to the lure of Providence, sacrificed her religion, family, and culture, we, as Sisters and Associates of Divine Providence, called to a prophetic life and compelled to make God's providence visible, choose a future characterized by justice and compassion.

We are energized by the life of Bishop Ketteler, who made God's providence visible as he confronted those in civil and ecclesiastical authority, who risked his status and reputation in the pursuit of justice, who opened his home to the poor in the name of compassion. We are blessed by God's indiscriminate graciousness, we live in the abundance of God's loving providence, and we are strengthened by the bonds of inclusive community.

Therefore, we will cherish our intercultural and international ties; we will strive for right relationships with all; we will courageously risk being marginalized; we will live and promote every form of nonviolence; we will generously share even in the midst of scarcity.

Responding to current challenges affords opportunities to discover new ways of making God's love and providence more visible in our world. We invite you, our family and friends, to journey with us through prayer and support as we create a *future full of hope*.

Celebrating Consecrated Life

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am with you always until the end of the world." (Mt. 28:19–20)

After the conversion of Constantine the Great in 312, Christianity became a state religion, and women and men seeking the total commitment of their lives went into the desert, living as solitary ascetics and facing difficult circumstances that tested their faith and commitment. The Roman Empire fell in 476 after a hundred years of wars against the Barbarian hordes. The chaos and loss of civilization that followed birthed a new type of religious life. The desert solitaries came together in the first monasteries, forming communities of stability. They kept the Gospel alive, welcomed travelers with open hospitality, and educated those who sought it. It took more than 200 years before the Church embraced this new way of religious life.

As cities began to rise, mobility and outreach to the poor became more needed than monastic stability. This reality gave rise in the thirteenth century to the mendicant orders of Saints Francis and Dominic, which were a new way for vowed religious to live in fidelity and generosity for the sake of the promised Reign of God and reach out to the poor through preaching and service. These orders also gave thousands of the laity new ways of holiness, even in the midst of family and society. In the sixteenth century, the political power and unity of the Church declined as the Protestant Reformation spread. The apostolic orders arose to strengthen the Church and support Catholics trying to be faithful to Jesus' teachings. In the nineteenth century, during the enlightenment and emergence of new nations, teaching

congregations were established to educate the people, free the poor from oppression, and empower the people to develop and use their own gifts for the good of the world.

In every new era, major social shifts brought forth new needs in the Church and society. These, in turn, brought radical adaptations in the ways of living religious life. Each new understanding for vowed religious was questioned and challenged by the Church. Often, clergy and Church leaders made every effort to redirect those who felt called to the new way, to choose a way of living as religious that was already approved. Men and women called into religious life were, and are, always seeking a deeper relationship with God, a deep sense of God's call to them in their own day, and fidelity in their witness and service to those in need.

Living the present with passion. The changes that came through Perfectae Caritatis have been unfolding, layer by layer, for the past fifty years. Through the Second Vatican Council, the Church directed religious women and men to renew their lives by focusing on the Gospels, by returning to the original spirit of their institutes, by seeking adequate knowledge of the social conditions of their times, and by adapting to meet the needs recognized in those new conditions. Communities immersed themselves in reading and reflecting on the Vatican documents. Filled with new possibilities, they took one step after the other, making the changes envisioned as they responded to new needs and rejoiced in the emerging understandings of religious life, of God, and the Church. Ultimately,

no one could foresee that the newly opened windows of the Church, the renewal of our lives, would introduce the next major period of transition for religious life.

The new vision sees religious life as a caring presence, a leaven in society, called to be a prophetic witness to the Gospel, rather than a labor force within the institutional church. The new vision sees religious vows, flowing from a deep and dynamic relationship with Christ, as creative ways to be open, free, and responsive to the forgotten, those on the margins of society, and ways to develop and use God-given talents in generous service, compassion, and justice. The new vision calls religious to continue life's journey, with all the "people of God," in the conversion that brings growth, that offers a sign that the Gospel is possible, joyful, and other-centered, and which leads to the witness that, like Christ, religious are to be in the world, while not of it. Those who have lived through these changes found new energy, a passion for justice, and were blessed with glimpses of the divine and experiences of Jesus as they stood in solidarity with the poor.

In the past fifty years, flowing from those understandings and insights, as well as from the guidance of the Spirit of God, everything visible, and much that's invisible about our way of life, changed dramatically: our religious dress, the ways of community living, prayer and faith sharing, using our gifts in new ministries where we can offer

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our presence in solidarity with those people most in need. Religious have grown in maturity, have developed, and have claimed the gifts of God to offer them to the marginalized and oppressed of our world, and have deepened in their relationships with the God who called them to this way of life in the midst of community.

The journey thus far has been long, challenging, graced, difficult, and has brought countless blessings and much joy. With our founder, Bishop Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler, we continue to live and serve others in ways that can help to bring greater unity, that all may be one!

Embracing the future with hope.

In the past, when we've considered previous major periods of transition of religious life, it seemed clear and uncomplicated. Actually, our experience is that the direction is unclear, and future ways in which we will be called to continue changing are ambiguous at best; however, as religious women and men, we live in trust and hope in the God who calls us to this life. Now we have a deeper sense of our identity, which is grounded in prayer, discernment, and community, and which overflows in our ministry of presence and peace, compassion and justice. We are committed to the ongoing renewal and adaptation of our life to respond to the needs of the global society in which we live and the evolving world of tomorrow.

Sandra M. Schneiders, IHM, in a recent presentation to the Conference of Religious of Ireland, said, "Pope Francis has validated our best insights

about the nature of religious life as a prophetic vocation in the Church, charged to preach the Gospel in season and out of season, when we are approved of and when we are not, in the world that God so loved." She goes on to say how deeply affirming it is to have the pope validate our most profound convictions that religious life is a prophetic life form in the Church and that our mission is to promote the Reign of God.

Resources: Joan Chittister OSB, "Making the Future Possible" (1977), Spiritual Leadership for Challenging Times: Presidential Addresses from the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, edited by Annmarie Sanders IHM, Orbis Books, 2014.

Sandra Schneiders IHM, "The Ongoing Challenge of Renewal," Conference of Religious of Ireland (CORI) website

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- Aaptability

by Susan Rohm, Director, Mission Advancement

Say "Yes!"

This is a word that Sister Emma Jean Middendorf lives by. Whether asked to teach elementary school pupils, provide guidance to high school students, tutor Cambodian and Vietnamese children, welcome African asylum seekers, or instruct Korean Sisters, Sister Emma Jean has always said "Yes." She answered her calling to be a teacher early in life, welcoming the challenge and responsibility to positively influence the lives of children by helping them to develop confidence, courage, and a belief in God's presence in their lives.

Sister Emma Jean Middendorf currently teaches German at Sacred Heart High School in Kingston, MA, where she heads the World Language Department and offers one-on-one tutorial help to international students through the International Student Support program.

Sister Emma Jean's ability to adapt, along with her confidence to offer help and to work with new ministries, is apparent as she discusses how, for more than 60 years of religious life, she has changed her ministries, working in various locations, as needs required. Sister Emma Jean has always welcomed

new opportunities.

"Change can be a good thing," says Sister Emma Jean, explaining that, "being open to change affords us the chance to open our minds and to be a more useful person. By believing in ourselves and keeping in tune with what God wants of us, we will receive the grace to help us acknowledge and accept change."

change by reaching out, responding to and adapting to

Sister Emma Jean believes in the need to pray for God's grace so we are not only aware of new opportunities when they present themselves, but that we also seek them out. By having the confidence to say "yes," we will find more ways to share God's love.

Sister Emma Jean Middendorf

Assembly Celebration 2014



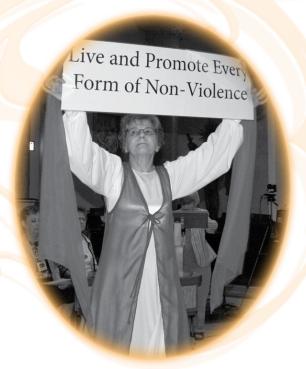
Sister Joan Wolf takes up the wine during the Offertory.



(I–r) Sisters Veronica Gumja Kim, Mary Providence Kriley, Jacklyn Pritchard, and Agnes Marie Geringer sing at the service for deceased Sisters and Associates.



(I–r) Sisters Jean René Seiler, Paulita Kuzy, Marilyn Bergt, and Maureen Grabowski enjoy some time together before an Assembly service.



Sister Margaretta Nussbaumer dances with one of the commitments in the Sisters' vision statement.



(I-r) Sisters Maria Fest and Barbara Horenkamp catch up during Assembly.



Sister Anita Green celebrates her 65th Jubilee.



Sister Zita Telkamp blesses her fellow Sisters with water. Seated is Sister Dolores Elizabeth Werling, who celebrated her 85th jubilee.



Celebrating their 60th jubilee are (I–r) Sisters Grace Babuscio, Patricia Milko, Alice Gotti, Melanie Kambic, Bernadette Duman, and Carolyn Winschel.



(I–r) Sisters Marietta Ruhe, Mary Jane Beatty, Emily Gezich, and Jeanine Ruhe at an Assembly liturgy.



Sister Robin Nordyke listens to one of the Assembly sessions.

Sister Wendolyn Professes Perpetual Vows

During the Annual Assembly of the Sisters of Divine Providence (July 31–August 3), the Community welcomed a new vowed member. Sister Wendolyn López Santos professed perpetual vows on August 3 in the Mother of Divine Providence Chapel in Pittsburgh. Sister Wendolyn came to the Marie de la Roche Province from Las Cañitas, Santo Domingo. She



Sister Wendolyn at her August profession of Perpetual Vows with Provincial Director Sister Mary Francis Fletcher

has served as a volunteer campus minister at La Roche College in Allison Park, PA, and as a parish minister at St. Regis, located in the Oakland section of Pittsburgh, PA.

Sister Wendolyn is currently studying religious education at El Centro de Estudios de los Dominicos del Caribe in Puerto Rico, where she is also working with Sister Elsa Medina Rivera in vocations and youth ministry.

Reflecting on her personal journey to making her final vows, Sister Wendolyn says, "I made my first vows in February 2010 in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, and on that day, I felt that I did it forever. During my time in temporary vows, I grew spiritually and personally, and my calling to religious life became stronger. With time, I knew that I would be able to start my process for final vows as soon as I completed the time that my

congregation allows. And I did it! As part of my preparation program, I made a 30-day retreat in Santo Domingo. It was a great time with Jesus and I felt so much peace. I felt the prayers from my Sisters. The time flew by, and I did not notice that 30 days had passed so quickly.

"After I finished my retreat, three weeks later, I went to Dayton, Ohio, to participate in the Life Commitment Program. The participants, all from different congregations, were preparing to make their final vows. It was a multicultural and international program that helped me get to know more people who were in the same process for making final vows. Sharing stories with each other about our congregations was very enriching.

"I give thanks to God for my call to religious life, especially being a Sister of the Divine Providence. Also, I give thanks to Sister Mary Francis Fletcher, the Provincial Leadership Team, the Vowed Membership Team, my mentor, Sister Anne Winschel, and all my Sisters who supported me and journeyed with me during the years of my initial formation.

"Thank you so much. I am very grateful for all that God has done in me through all of you, my dear Sisters. I love you and always remember you in my prayers."

Love, Hna. Wendolyn

Remembering THE SISTERS OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE

Thanks to generous supporters like you, our drive to create a world of compassion, justice and peace is possible. You can be an integral part of ensuring the mission of Providence continues by including a charitable gift to the Sisters in your overall estate and financial plans.

The simplest way to remember the Sisters is in your will. Just a few sentences are all that is needed for you to designate a dollar amount or a percentage of your estate. After your lifetime, the Sisters of Divine Providence receive your gift.

Other ways to partner with the Sisters include gifts of stock, life insurance, and retirement funds. We invite you to choose the gift option that works best for you. Please consult your financial advisor to determine your gift plan.



Room at the Inn's First Annual Charity Golf Outing

Monday, October 6, 2014 Westborough Country Club St. Louis, MO For more information: 314-209-9181 or roomstl.org

Sisters of Divine Providence Mass of Remembrance

Sunday, November 2, 2014, 9 a.m.

Mother of Divine Providence Chapel
9000 Babcock Boulevard
Allison Park, PA
Join us in remembering your
deceased loved ones.
Brunch follows Mass.
Reservations due by Oct. 22
RSVP to 412-635-5401 or
visit our website

La Posada Providencia's Hands & Hearts Gala

Saturday, February 7, 2015 For more information: LPPshelter.org

Sisters of Divine Providence Lenten Breakfast

Tuesday, February 17, 2015, 7–9 a.m.

Kearns Spirituality Center
9000 Babcock Boulevard
Allison Park, PA
Speaker Anne Kertz Kernion presents
"No Time to Think: From Mindlessness
to Mindfulness"
\$30 includes breakfast & presentation
For more information:
412-635-5437

Room at the Inn's Breakfast with the INN Crowd

Friday, April 24, 2015 For more information: 314-209-9181 or roomstl.org

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Do you have a fond memory of one of the Sisters of Divine Providence that you would like to share? If so, please contact Pam Greer at 412-318-3329 or pgreer@cdpsisters.org.

Province Happenings

La Posada Providencia

As the lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas continues to be a major thoroughfare of entry for indigent immigrants and asylum seekers, the number of clients *La Posada Providencia* serves has more than quadrupled over the past several years. This summer, the shelter welcomed its 8,000th client, a gentleman from East Africa. For this man, being granted political asylum status rescued him from his country's rebels, its lawlessness and chaos, and saved his life. The current surge of immigrants crossing the border, particularly the thousands of families and unaccompanied children, has been declared by Immigration Custom Enforcement Officers as an "urgent humanitarian situation." *La Posada Providencia* answers the Gospel call to "welcome the stranger" by providing a safe and nurturing environment to immigrants, asylees, and asylum seekers. Visit LPPshelter.org to read more.

PUERTO RICO

Sister Bertshabé Palomino Montalvo recently traveled to Puerto Rico, where she discovered a beautiful and hospitable place with abundant nature and diverse cuisine. More importantly, her visit confirmed the importance of the Sisters of

Divine Providence's ministries on the island, both in the past and continuing today. Of particular note is the work done over the past 22 years by the Office for the Promotion of Human Development (OPHD), founded by Sister Roberta Grzelak. In response to the community's needs, OPHD has developed programs to help parents learn appropriate parenting skills, to prevent child abuse and substance abuse, and to eliminate spousal abuse. The Sisters' commitment to their work, as well as their identification with the local community, is visible to all who benefit from these ministries. Read more about our Sisters who are living and ministering in Puerto Rico on our website by clicking About Us/Locations/Puerto Rico.



(I–r) Sisters Bertshabé Palomino Montalvo and Elsa Medina Rivera

Province Happenings

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SACRED HEART SCHOOL

As another successful Camp Morning Star season ends in Kingston, MA, attention is now turned to the new school year for Sacred Heart students. Through the generosity of a donor, a new high resolution telescope has been installed in the newly improved Kohout-Dingley Observatory, along with renovations to the high school physical sciences and biology labs. These new state-of-the-art facilities, including large screen monitors with Internet access and a fully functioning greenhouse, will provide student enrichment opportunities that range from watching the growth of the smallest of seeds to viewing the vastness of the universe. Visit sacredheartkingston.com for more school news.



Kohout-Dingley Observatory



Sister Marcelina Theophila Watua

PROVIDENCE HEIGHTS

On August 19, the Sisters living at Providence Heights welcomed Sister Marcelina Theophila Watua, from Tanzania, into their home. Sister Marcelina has been a Sister of St. Gemma for 34 years, working as a registered nurse at the national hospital in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. The community of St. Gemma has more than 300 Sisters working in various parishes and different ministries. Sister Marcelina is pursuing studies at La Roche College, as she and many of the Sisters in her community are seeking ways to be more professionally prepared for their ministries. Sister Veronica Kim, assistant director of International Student Services at La Roche, worked with Sister Marcelina to arrange her program. Sister Marcelina is grateful to live in community and share prayer and spiritual life while studying at La Roche. The Sisters of Divine Providence are happy to offer our hospitality and welcome Sister Marcelina to share life with us as she works to continue serving people in need.

Meet Our Mission Advancement Team

by Susan Rohm, Director, Mission Advancement

We are pleased to announce our newly aligned Mission Advancement Team. Mission Advancement oversees all development and communications for the Sisters of Divine Providence in support of the charism and mission. Thanks for letting us bring the good news of the Sisters to you through our revised *Providence Alive!* newsletter. This new, more economical format allows us to enhance our commitment of stewardship to you, our donors. Through the words and photos in each issue, we hope to share our mission of creating a world of compassion, justice and peace, nurturing a trust and confidence in God's faithful presence.

Thank you for your continued financial and prayerful support.



(I–r) Development Specialist Pat Serafini, Office Coordinator Sue Smith, Director Susan Rohm, Communications Coordinator Pam Greer (not pictured, Community Engagement Coordinator)

Feeling Lucky?

A limited number of 2015 lottery tickets (\$25 each) based on the PA Daily number (evening drawing) will be available after October 5. To choose your lucky number(s), contact Sue Smith at 412-635-5437 or ssmith@cdpsisters.org. Daily winners receive a minimum of \$25, with a chance to win as much as \$150. Proceeds benefit the ministries and mission of the Sisters of Divine Providence.



201 Aubilarians

50 years



Sister Juliana Frisoli



Sister Josephine Macias



Sister Lois Spinnenweber



Sister Lydia Steele



Sister Juanita Torres Acevedo

75 years



Sister Margaret Boes



Sister Antonia Cvetan



Sister Audrey Sagan

Also celebrating...

60 years

Sister Grace Babuscio Sister Frances DeSalle Sister Bernadette Duman Sister Alice Gotti Sister Melanie Kambic Sister Zita Kessler Sister Patricia Milko Sister Gabriella Rogenski Sister Carolyn Winschel

70 years

Sister John Francis Danko
Sister Danella Hyland
Sister Dorothy Kiel
Sister Mary Providence Kriley
Sister Rose Marie Lipke
Sister Anna Marie Muck
Sister Mary Catherine Roth
Sister Constance Marie Waltman

65 years

Sister Clarice Carlson
Sister Rosemonde Deck
Sister Roseann DeNardis
Sister Lorraine Giel
Sister Anita Green
Sister Marguerite Luddon
Sister Maura Luffy
Sister Ida Mary Lutz
Sister Jacqueline Meyer
Sister Mary Margaret Paliotte
Sister Agnes Raible
Sister Jeanine Ruhe
Sister Zita Telkamp
Sister Joan Wolf

85 years



Sister Dolores Elizabeth Werling

Ketteler Award for Social Justice

The Sisters of Divine Providence presented their annual Ketteler Award for Social Justice to Simone Campbell, SSS, on Saturday, August 2. This award is named in honor of Bishop Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler, known as the "social justice bishop," and founder of the Congregation in Mainz, Germany, in 1861. Sister Simone, a Sister of Social

Service, is a religious leader, attorney, and poet, with extensive experience in public policy and advocacy for systemic change. As executive director of NETWORK, a global movement that educates, lobbies, and organizes for economic and social transformation, Sister Simone was instrumental in organizing the 2012 *Nuns on the Bus* tour to oppose a budget that would decimate funding for programs meant to help people in need. In 2013, she led a new cross-country *Nuns on*

the Bus tour focused on immigration reform. Through her teachings, advocacy, and witness, Sister Simone emulates Bishop Ketteler by responding to the needs

of today with courage and compassion, and by being a driving force for programs and policies that support faith, family, and fairness.

Sister Simone is the author of *A Nun on the Bus: How All of Us Can Create Hope, Change, and Community.* To learn more about her, visit networklobby.org.

Mission Statement

We, the Congregation of Divine Providence, impelled by the Spirit of Jesus, commit ourselves to co-create a world of compassion, justice and peace.

Guided by the legacy of Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler and Marie de la Roche, we nurture in ourselves and in others a trust and confidence in God's faithful presence.

We further commit ourselves to making God's Providence more visible in our world.

The Sisters of Divine Providence is an international congregation of three provinces (Germany, American-Caribbean, Korea) and one region (Peru), with approximately 500 vowed members and 200 Associates. Since its founding in Finthen, Germany, in 1851, the Congregation has expanded its ministries to meet the needs of the times in education, health care, pastoral care, social work, campus ministry, work among those who are poor or homeless, and peace and justice concerns.

In Memory



Sister Geraldine Thiel April 27, 2014



Sister Agnes Schmidt May 26, 2014



Sister Victorine Verosky June 15, 2014



Sister Marie Luraghi June 18, 2014

The Sisters of Divine Providence also remember Associate ...

Juan Campis

June 13, 2014

Your memorial contributions for Sisters and Associates can be sent to Sisters of Divine Providence, Mission Advancement, 9000 Babcock Boulevard, Allison Park, PA 15101. For online contributions, visit cdpsisters.org.

To read more about our deceased Sisters, visit our website and click Sisters/In Memory.

A Providence Woman lives forever in the hearts of those who remember ...



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We also welcome your prayer request at cdpsisters.org. Simply click on Prayer Requests.



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