

CDP Associate News

SPRING 2019



Sr. Connie Gilder, SSJ, will be our facilitator for the 2019 CDP Assembly. Sr. Connie has been working with our CDP community since September 2017.

Assembly 2019: Come, Celebrate Our Future

by Pat Montgomery

The theme of this year's Assembly is "Celebrating New Possibilities." As the planning committee meets, the strains of John Foley's well-known song play like an endless loop through my mind:

"O, let all who thirst, let them come to the water.
And let all who have nothing let them come to the Lord..."

Our CDP Assemblies provide a time for Associates to share with those who put theology into practice in their daily lives. We come together hoping to hone right relationship. We come striving to partner with the Sisters and with one another in authentic, holy ways. We gather all of the reasons why we chose to become Associates in the first place and share these out loud during the four days. And significantly, in 2019, we come to help shape the future of this community.

Connie Gilder, SSJ, has worked with us — Sisters and Associates — since September 2017, when she

spearheaded a series of meetings with the Strategic Intent Committees resulting from our "Choose Life 2024" initiative. So valuable has her leadership been that she was invited to exercise it again as facilitator of Assembly 2019. Sr. Connie is a listener, and she utilizes that skill so expertly that one might easily come away with the notion that we led ourselves to such and such a line of thinking or this/that decision.

Our keynote speaker will be Colleen Gibson, SSJ, who completed her novitiate in 2014 and will soon make her final profession as a Sister of St. Joseph. She is a regular contributor to the Global Sisters Report and numerous other periodicals. She wrote:

"Religious life is changing, and our processes of formation need to change with it. After all, formation for an individual is much different than for more than a hundred. Just as women religious have always done, we need to read the signs of the

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Mission Statement

We, as Associates, proclaim to be a part of the international Community of Divine Providence (CDP). Our participation calls us to live in a spirit of unbounded trust in, and openness to, the Providence of God. We challenge ourselves to an ongoing discovery of the richness of the charism entrusted to us by Mother Marie and Bishop Ketteler. We support each other in our diversity of lifestyles while we strive to creatively confront the problems and issues of our time. As prophetic witnesses, we respond in compassion, holding all life sacred.



From the Director

Erin Middleton

A bright pink redbud tree popped out this spring outside my back door, and it has been the nicest gift to me. It has been a long winter in many ways, and this year I have enjoyed the hopeful signs of spring like no other. I also love daffodils, and the lilies of the valley are blooming and sending their lovely scent toward the front door as I walk out to get the paper or the mail. But that pink tree just took my breath away when I first saw its blooms, and it continues to lift my spirits. Spring blossoms are one of God's "markers" to help me look forward to the future and take note of the gifts God lavishes on us along the way.

Our annual CDP Assembly is one of those "markers" in our community life that help us take note of all God has done and point us to the future where more gifts await us. I have only had the opportunity to attend two Assemblies thus far, and both had themes that helped us take stock of the past and see what God has done. When this year's Assembly takes place on August 1-4, 2019, the focus will be on the FUTURE, and "Celebrating New Possibilities" will be the theme. The presentations will be exciting signs of HOPE for all of us, and I want you to be there. You can attend in person or via Zoom. (Please note Pat Montgomery's page 1 article on the Assembly.)

I especially encourage you to participate in the first two days of facilitated communal discernment for our future, so your voice will be a part of the chorus.

Sr. Connie Gilder, SSJ, will be the facilitator, and I have the privilege of working with her on the planning committee. There will also be a presentation on the future master plan for the campus, the upcoming program for a new level of community membership called Agregee, our annual Associates meeting, and much more. As noted in our last newsletter, Local Coordinator Paula Gilchrist graciously invites you all to an ice cream social and a cocktail party during those first two days, and she is planning a grand celebration.

Make sure to RSVP by June 14, and make it a week of your life to renew your spirit and vision in our charism of Divine Providence. I hope to see you there!



Meet an Associate — Julia Lynn

by Erin Middleton

Born in Louisville, KY, and raised in Ohio, Julia Lynn enjoyed a happy childhood with her siblings in an area where the kids roamed free to play and explore and have fun being children. The only thing that interrupted that childlike play was her desire to sit with a good book for hours and hours. To this day, between walks with her Cairn Terrier, Sukey, and all the meetings and volunteer commitments she regularly keeps, Julia reads several books at a time, enjoying both fiction and books on spirituality.

Besides being a prolific reader and passionate about Centering Prayer and spirituality, Julia has volunteered as a nurse at the Catholic Charities Clinic in Pittsburgh for 10 years and served as a volunteer with Birthright and with the Ladies of Charity at Word of God Parish in Swissvale. During my own career at Good Samaritan Hospice, Julia also became one of my favorite volunteers. Julia said "yes" many a time to my frantic, last-minute phone requests. At the same time, she was also faithfully visiting a patient in a nursing home near her home. For over a year, she lovingly visited each week a woman who was very hard of hearing. Julia found a long-neglected listening device to communicate with her and read to her weekly from a book about growing up on a farm, helping this former farm girl to feel right at home.

Julia's dedication to her patients was sincere and personal, born out of the years she enjoyed giving one-on-one patient care as a nurse. During her

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Assembly 2019 *(continued from page 1)*

times, meet interested women where they are at, and hold true to the values and charisms that make us who we are. If novitiate has taught me anything, it is that being refined is a process of integrity. It requires brutal honesty and vulnerability; it means being true to who you are and who God is calling you to be." [Global Sisters Report, April 2014]

After 168 years, what "new possibilities" remain for CDPs to celebrate? Is there anything "new" under the sun? YES! YES! YES! Attend and see.

Save the Date!
Assembly 2019 — August 1-4
"Celebrating New Possibilities"



Assembly 2019 Planning Committee: (standing) Sr. Margie Walsh, Sr. Sandra DeNardis, Nancy Robinson, Sr. Betty Sundry, Sr. Bernie Duman; (seated) Srs. Veronica Kim, Ana Lydia Sonera Matos, and Alice Marie Lyon. Not pictured: Associates Erin Middleton, Pat Montgomery, and Denise Champe.

Meet an Associate *(continued from page 2)*

nursing career, she worked as a hospital nurse, including 25 years as director of cardiac care at Mercy Hospital; and as a parish nurse, which was her favorite job. After retiring in 2006, Julia pursued her lifelong wish of joining an intentional community. At the suggestion of a spiritual director, Maryann Nicholson, Julia joined the Divine Providence Sisters as an Associate.

During her time as an Associate, Julia has served the CDP community in many ways, including a term as a Local Coordinator, and for the last two years, as chair of the Strategic Intent committee on Partnering as Sisters and Associates. When the committee was surveying community members and Associates several years ago, the idea of "true partnership" kept coming up as something we should desire to define. While researching this on the net, Julia found a book by Carl Zaiss with that exact title and ordered a copy. She found the contents of the book to be...providential! She guided the committee to make this the main focus of their work, and book discussion groups have been popping up over the last year to explore this topic. "I would like to encourage everyone to read the book and consider 'True Partnership' as a way of being, as a world view, as a state of mind, along with our charism of Divine Providence," says Julia. She sees this as a core value as we plan for the future of our community, learning to be true partners as Sisters and Associates, together sharing God's Providence with the world.

Sisters and Associates Talk About "True Partnership"

In April, Associates and Sisters met at Kearns Spirituality Center in Allison Park, PA, to discuss the book "True Partnership: Revolutionary Thinking About Relating to Others," by Carl Zaiss. The discussion was sponsored by the Strategic Intent Committee on Partnering as Sisters and Associates and was facilitated by Sandy Stevenson. This was just one of several conversations that have taken place among Sisters and Associates over the past 6 months to discover the value of the True Partnership world view for relationships in our community. Conversation Guides are posted on the community website, www.cdpsisters.org.



Book discussion at Kearns. Left to right: Sr. Ana Lydia Sonera Matos, Betty Sypien, Julia Lynn, Sally Shamalla, Robbie Campbell, Sr. Donna Marie Gribshaw, Sandy Stevenson, Ginny Hoffman, Erin Middleton (taking photo).



Linda Hoefflin, Annamarie Sullivan, Sr. Barbara McMullen, Terry Southerland

New Leadership in St. Louis

by Linda Hoefflin

A farewell to our past leadership was held in March. For the last two years, Annamarie Sullivan has served as Local Coordinator and Terry Southerland as Secretary. A blessing was given in thanksgiving for their leadership. Linda Hoefflin served as Communications Liaison for the past two years, and she agreed to serve a second term. A small gift of appreciation was given to each member by Sr. Barbara McMullen. Sr. Stephanie Turck, who was not present, was thanked and blessings were asked for the success of her new endeavors. She will be missed.



Linda Hoefflin, Gil Weyhaupt, Linda Reynolds

An affirmation ceremony was held for the new Associate leadership. Linda Reynolds was affirmed as the new Local Coordinator, Gil Weyhaupt as the new Secretary, and Linda Hoefflin as the Communications Liaison. The other Associates who attended offered blessings and congratulations to the new team.

Linda Reynolds is a relatively new Associate, a former member of the CDP community, and a UCC minister. She brings multiple gifts to the Associates.

Gil Weyhaupt is currently retired. In his previous life, he worked for Shell Oil, but in more recent years was

the grant writer for La Posada. Both Linda and Gil are very active Associates. Their talents and leadership skills will be a great asset.

As for me, I agreed to serve another term to have some continuity on the leadership team. I look forward to working as a team with Linda and Gil.

Associate Retreat Inspires "Wonder"

by Linda Hoefflin

The annual retreat for St. Louis Associates was held in March, with Sr. Barbara McMullen as presenter. The theme of her series of talks was "From Wilderness to Wonder." Each participant was asked to describe what "wilderness" meant to him or her: arid, scary, beautiful, lonely, and desolate were just some of the comments. The group also described "wonder" and what caused wonder: forests, nature, the ocean, babies.

Author Brené Brown was cited in some of the talks. Brené recommends "rubbing elbows," or getting close, in order to know our "neighbors." Learning about others and their cultures can diminish our fear of them.

The retreat closed with three stories led by Sr. Barbara. The moral of the stories was left to the interpretation of each individual and the group.

"From Wilderness..." because it was pouring down rain most of the day; "...to Wonder," as we ended the day, warm and safe, surrounded by the love of our fellow Associates.



Left to right: Linda Hoefflin, Terry Southerland, Bev Camper, Ron Peyton, Sr. Barbara, Gil Weyhaupt, Diane Bailey, Kathy Rogers, Rose Vierdag

Community Day: Embracing Our Shadow

by Sally Shamalla

On Saturday, April 6, approximately 55 Sisters and Associates gathered in the Providence Heights auditorium in Allison Park, PA, for a Community Day presentation on "Embracing Our Collective Shadow and Dancing into the Light." Eight Sisters from St. Louis also attended via Zoom. Members of the Strategic Intent Committee on Fostering Communal Relations — Sr. Linda Hylla, Sr. Patty Baker, Sr. Margie Modro, Erin Middleton, Sr. Anne Winschel, and Colleen Higbee (see photo at right) — alternated in leading various parts of the presentation.

The day's program began with an interpretive dance by Srs. Elena Almendárez and Janet Folkl, followed by a prayer ritual reflecting on our external relationship to others and the transcendent energy of "where the Christ lives, in God and in one another." [From "The Emergent Christ" by Ilia Delio]

The initial presentation reflected on our foundress Mother Marie's experience with the shadow side when being appointed as the first major superior. Participants were invited to discuss the reflection at their table and then distill their "table talk" into several sentences to be shared with the larger group. In several subsequent table talk sessions, we named aspects of our communal shadow, the ways past shadows have been perpetuated, and what happens when we fail to acknowledge the shadow and its negative implications.

Time was provided for quiet personal reflection, followed by an open-microphone session for individual comments. Hard questions were posed throughout the day to help us discover and acknowledge our collective shadow so we could collectively walk into the light. The program closed with expressions of acceptance and gratitude for our time together and the discoveries we had shared.



Strategic Intent Committee on Fostering Communal Relations



Sr. Margaretta Nussbaumer, Pat Montgomery, Mary Dieter, Sr. Donna Marie Gribshaw, and Helen Lorinc



Jane Kerr, Julia Lynn, Tish Donze, Sally Shamalla, and Sr. Marlene Luffy



Love in Action... a Thank-You

from Peggy Schramm

When I attended my first CDP Associate inquiry meeting, I had no idea how up close and personal the mission and ministry of the Associates would become to my own life.

One year after joining the Associates, I was living alone and about to have a complex surgery that would limit my independence for several months. I didn't know how I would find and/or afford the care that was required post-surgery. I talked to Erin Middleton about it and the problem was solved. She spread the word of my situation to the Associates, and the outpouring of help was truly amazing. For several months Associates that I knew casually (many from the Peace prayer group) came to help me in every way that they could — physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Six months later I found myself needing another surgery that would limit my independence short term. Once again, Associates volunteered to be there. Associates take the mission to heart and practice it to its fullest. I am truly grateful for their love, kindness, support, and, as an extra blessing, friendships that blossomed. And a big thank-you for all the prayers and cards that I received from Sisters and Associates.

Special thanks to my Earth Angels: Erin Middleton, Julia Lynn, Karen Snyder, Tish Donze, Mary Seljak, Peggy Huwe, Gloria Virostek, Sandy Stevenson, Ellie Field, Pat Schneider, Elaine Lafayette, and Karen Lutz.



Left: Sr. Emma Jean tutored this mother in basic English; she is holding her newborn baby. Right: Five-year-old refugee boy, just beginning to learn.



Young legal refugees from Somalia, Cuba, Pakistan, and Honduras



Sr. Emma Jean and Noor

“Once a teacher, always a teacher...”

So says Sr. Emma Jean Middendorf, a Local Coordinator for our Kingston Associates. After 40 years of teaching German to high school students, she has continued teaching into her “retirement.” In more recent years, many of her students have been refugees wishing to learn English.

“I have been a tutor for students who needed to learn self-confidence and who realized it was possible to study and get decent marks,” explains Sr. Emma Jean. “A young Brazilian woman who is studying to become a U.S. citizen and wants to improve her English by studying ESL with me; a young mother who needs her ‘green card’ for permanent status and needs help in reading documents; and just recently, a young mother of two boys who is beginning to study for her GED, having only completed the 9th grade. She is homeless and resides at the Plymouth Coalition for the homeless.”

Sr. Emma Jean’s career as a language teacher of German for so many years has provided a strong background for teaching ESL. “I have had to learn many techniques and strategies to build vocabularies. I spent two summers teaching English to our CDP Sisters in Suwon, South Korea. It was a joy to listen to their vocabulary develop. I also learned to love sushi. I didn’t, however, learn any Korean! I also volunteered to spend some weeks at La Posada teaching English to Somali, Ethiopian, and other African men. What a feeling of accomplishment to see grown men learn to navigate the intricacies of our difficult English. I admire their perseverance after the extreme hardships they endured to come to the U.S.”

“Always a teacher,” Sr. Emma Jean continues to seek out opportunities to use her expertise to make a difference — to make Providence more visible in the lives of many. Some of Sr. Emma Jean’s students are pictured at left.

May She Rest in Peace — Judith Montgomery

Pittsburgh Associate Judith Montgomery passed away on May 15, 2019. Judy was a graduate of Duquesne University with a Bachelor’s degree in Education. She was a former Sister of Divine Providence and an Associate of the community for many years. Judy remained dedicated to the Divine Providence Sisters and attended as many Associate and CDP community events as her illness allowed, including the funerals of the Sisters.

Judy shared God’s Providence in every corner of her world, and those around her felt God’s loving presence. Her dear friend, Sr. Wilma McKee, describes Judy as a woman of great generosity, steadfast prayer, and deep devotion to Our Lady. Judy retired as a social worker for the state of Pennsylvania. She was a member of St. Bonaventure Ladies of Charity and a Eucharistic Minister.





← The Sisters and Associates at Assumption want to thank all of those who so kindly embraced us with meals and loving reminders of God's provident love. We certainly felt you all walking with us on this faith journey as Paula begins her treatment. We are so grateful for your prayers and presence with us in our community. Love, Ellen, Erin, Janet, Paula, Rita, and Libby too!

"Kvell" is an ancient Yiddish word that describes how one feels when someone she loves achieves success in an important endeavor.

—Sister Mary Ellen Rufft



← When Ruthanne Curran (center) turned 80 in February, her children gave her a surprise birthday party with over 100 guests. And Ruthy's brother-in-law Seathrun delighted her by sending 80 roses to her home. Ruthy gave a vase full of her roses to decorate the chapel altar at Our Lady of Lourdes Church.



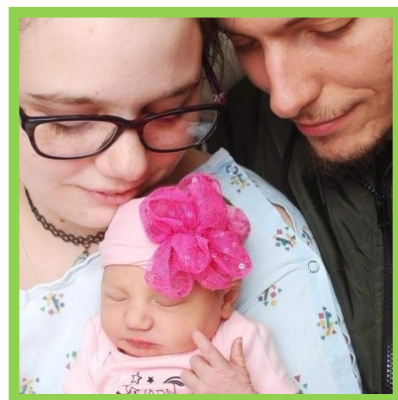
← Sr. Barbara McMullen celebrated her 70th birthday in February with an open house at her home in Granite City. Many Sisters, Associates, and family members attended this milestone birthday. We also discovered other milestone birthdays for 2019: Linda Reynolds (70), Sr. Maria Patterson (70), and Linda Hoefflin (70). 1949 was a great year! Pictured are the 3 Barbara's in the St. Louis community: Srs. Barbara Horenkamp, Barbara McMullen, and Barbara Mulnik. Tami Stoneburner will also celebrate her 40th this year. She recently moved from an apartment to a new home.



← The Pittsburgh Associates hosted a Mardi Gras celebration in March for the Sisters at Providence Heights. Guests wore Mardi Gras beads and played games of chance to win prizes. They also enjoyed root beer floats and a sing-along to piano accompaniment by Francis Adamson. Photos: Ruth Rittler and Sr. Carolyn Winschel have fun with their Mardi Gras masks; as she opens her prize, Sr. Marise Hrabosky shares a laugh with her 101-year-old mother, Mary (right), and Maryann D'Alessandro.



↑ Associate Gil Weyhaupt celebrated the birth of his new grandson, Jackson Robert, in February.



↑ Associate Linda Reynolds celebrated the birth of her new grandchild, Luna Naomi, in March. Luna is shown with her parents, Bailey (Linda's granddaughter) and husband, Charles.

Please send your news—births, weddings, growth, new positions or places—to Karen Snyder at ksnyder@cdpsisters.org

Finance Committee Update

Our February Appeal has gone very well, and this year we instituted a new emphasis. Besides sending Associates the Annual Appeal letter, committee members divided the names of all our mainland Associates and reached out by phone to touch base with each person. I hope you have received your letter and phone call and enjoyed your contact with your committee member! We are open to your ideas for improving our outreach to the Associate Relationship. All of us found the time spent calling Associates to be an enjoyable experience. Each person is unique and very special, and we would not be "us" if it were not for each and every one of "you." Thank you for welcoming us via phone!

Each month we receive a report from the Finance office and Mission Advancement about spending and giving. As of March 31, 2019, Associates have given \$10,354 toward the Associate Relationship. We still have a month left to reach our goal of \$30,000 by June 30, 2019. On another positive note, our cost center budget spending is down, so we are saving dollars with very careful spending. Thank you everyone for your conscientious care in supporting the Associate Relationship.

The committee believes that the next step toward our goal of being self-sustaining would be for all members to consider making a monthly gift of any size to the Associate Relationship, instead of writing a check each February during the Appeal. This type of sustaining gift makes it easier to budget monthly than a one-time gift after the holiday season when many of us are facing the reality of tighter household budgets. While we understand that each Associate situation is unique, a general estimate is that it would take an average annual amount of \$165 (about \$15 a month) from each Associate to make this sustainable. Please pray about how you can creatively support the community monthly to reach our goal of being self-sustaining as a group, and contact the Finance Committee member you know to speak about how you can participate.

✉ **Erin Middleton, Director of Associates, on behalf of your Finance Committee Members: Tish Donze, Chair; Sr. Stephanie Turck; Colleen Higbee, Linda Hoefflin; Cathy Cassy; and Paula Gilchrist**

Mark Your Calendar

July

13 Ketteler Day Party
Englebert Hall, Madison, IL

August

1-4 Assembly
Providence Heights
24 Associate Renewal
St. Elizabeth Church/Hall, Granite City, IL

September

7-8 OPAL Retreat
Kearns Spirituality Center
15 Associate Business Meeting
St. Mary's, Madison IL
17-20 WPC Associate Leadership Gathering
Melbourne, KY

October

19 Turning Leaf Party
Englebert Hall, Madison IL

November

16-18 Associate Retreat
Kearns Spirituality Center
23 Thanksgiving Party
Englebert Hall, Madison IL

Open Invitation to Associates

by Shelley Johnsen

Have you ever desired a deeper engagement with Christ in silence and stillness?

You may want to consider a week-long retreat at Kearns Spirituality Center with the Sisters. There are still a few retreat openings available for June, July, and September. The beautiful surroundings and grounds at Kearns and Providence Heights provide a peaceful setting to unwind and find deeper meaning. All three retreats include daily Mass, a private room, and all meals. You can also schedule a massage or a Reiki treatment for a nominal fee. Give yourself the gift of embracing silence for a week. You will leave with your spirit refreshed and renewed. For more information, call Martha Lubynsky, Program and Hospitality Coordinator, at 412-366-1124.

Special Thanks

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