

CDP Associate News

SUMMER 2019



Sisters and Associates enjoy each others' company at the ice cream social, a popular Assembly event. Pictured at the table are Nuala Filberg, Diane Bailey, Colleen Price, Amanda, Sr. Mary Traupman, Peggy Santelli, Sr. Pat Baker, and Ann Moberg.

Connection, Consensus, and Celebration

Like past CDP Assemblies, Assembly 2019 — Celebrating New Possibilities — was a joyful “family reunion,” a time to reconnect with old friends and meet new ones, to share, pray, and celebrate together. It was also a time to honor where we've been, assess where we are, and plan for our communal future.

Sr. Colleen Gibson, SSJ, gave the keynote address. Then, in a process facilitated by Sr. Connie Gilder, SSJ, Sisters and Associates entered into a time of deep communal discernment to define who we are now and what is important to each of us individually, and all of us as a community, going forward with the resources we have. This process resulted in a consensus statement summarizing the values agreed upon by Sisters and Associates who participated.

Other presentations included a Campus Master Plan overview of proposed changes to the property on Babcock Boulevard; an excellent presentation by Pat Montgomery on a new kind of

membership in religious congregations called “Agregree,” based on research done by Pat, Nancy Robinson and Paula Gilchrist; and a Town Hall including current financial considerations.

This year's Ketteler Award for Social Justice went to five women who have ministered at La Posada Providencia: CDP Srs. Hilary Hooks, Zita Telkamp, and Margaret Mertens; Therese Cunningham, SHSp; and Associate Marlene McClain. The award event was followed by a lively cocktail party reception.

Special services included a moving ritual for deceased Sisters and Associates, a beautiful Jubilee Liturgy, and a meaningful Commissioning service. The four-day Assembly event closed with a joyful Intercultural Fiesta, with live music and food from the various cultures represented in our Congregation.

As we did last year, the Communication Committee asked Sisters and Associates who attended Assembly to share their experiences. **Turn to page 3 to read their comments.**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Assembly 2019: Celebrating New Possibilities
- St. Louis Welcomes New Associate
- Blessing of Pittsburgh Inquirers
- New England Associate's Garden Shows Providence

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

Welcome to the 2019 Assembly edition of the Associate newsletter and to "Celebrating New Possibilities!" Last year everyone enjoyed the photos highlighting the "event of the year" for all of us. We wanted to be sure everyone who was present or with us in spirit gets to relish the wonderful liturgies, prayer moments, and celebrations we shared. Special thanks go to all the Sisters and Associates who were on the planning committee or who contributed in so many individual ways to Assembly.

In those four days, there were many highlights. But for me, the Commissioning Service was an empowering moment of "being SALT" to flavor and to serve the world around us, which needs the love of Christ. I thought about my experiences of parish life and wish that the leadership there would empower men and women in that same way to "Go Make a Difference," as we sang that day. We are fortunate to be Associates in a community that believes in us and empowers us to be Providence to all we meet. That is the gift we have to share with the world!

Over 30 persons attended the Annual Associates Meeting on Sunday, August 4. Many moments of moving onward and upward were part of the conversation, and minutes will be made available to all. One item discussed is that this will be "The Year of Invitation" for Associates to reach out and ask those you meet to consider the calling to become an Associate. It is a message we need to share often, and a simple tool was created by the Communications Committee — an Associate business card that includes community information, mission statement, and website details. I am asking each Associate to give out three of these cards this year as you live and work and play. I am confident that the Holy Spirit will guide you as to who might be the recipients of those cards — those whom Providence might be calling to the Associate Relationship. In the week after Assembly I received via email three inquiries about becoming an Associate, so someone is busy sharing their cards!

Go and BE SALT and BE SENT! And continue to savor the beauty of "Celebrating New Possibilities" whenever you need some inspiration. I will too.



Meet an Associate — Pat Schneider

by Sally Shamalla

Making God's Providence visible in our world is clearly exemplified in the life of Associate Pat Schneider. I first met Pat in 2012 when I was received as an Associate. But because I live in the North Hills and she in the South Hills we saw each other infrequently.

On my first Associate retreat, I encountered Pat in the Kearns lounge area, where she was waiting for Sr. Mary Weatherly. Pat told me the story of how she had become acquainted with Sr. Mary Weatherly years ago when Pat was president of the Ladies of Charity at St. Anne's in Castle Shannon. Sister was organizing a parish nursery there, and among the items needed was a rocking chair. Pat went on a mission to provide one. I won't even attempt to relate all the contacts and machinations involved in Pat's getting that rocking chair. There was no doubt in her mind that she would get a lovely rocking chair, and she did.

Sr. Mary Weatherly was instrumental in Pat's becoming an Associate more than 20 years ago, and now both Pat and Sister are part of the South Hills Associate small prayer group.

Pat's philosophy of taking the time to assist people, combined with her positive attitude and trust in God's Providence, are present to her always. I asked if she was kind as a child, and she told me about a childhood experience. She was selected by a Sister to be in a Christmas play titled "The Gifts of Christmas." Pat was to be the gift of Happiness. This made her feel very special. She was grateful for

(Continued on page 5)



Mary Rose Hensel, Nancy Robinson, Sr. Elsa Medina Rivera, Tish Donze, Pat Montgomery, and Sr. Ana Lydia Sonera Matos.



Standing: Linda Hoefflin, Sr. Maria Patterson, Sr. Margaret Mertens, Linda Reynolds; seated: Sylvia Resha, Diane Bailey.



Mary Perez, Sr. Juanita Torres Acevedo, Sr. Sally Vega Alvarado, Sr. Betsa Palomino Montalvo, Sr. Wendolyn López Santos, Sr. Carmen González Arias, and Sr. Ann Catherine Fuchs.



Julia Lynn, Ginny Hoffman, Denise Champe, and Ellie Field clap joyfully at the Jubilee Liturgy.

Here's what Sisters and Associates said about their Assembly 2019 experiences:

The 2019 Assembly lived up to its promise: it delivered new possibilities and it celebrated big time. The Fiesta was superb with its live music and dancing and partying. We are getting so good at that.

— **Pat Montgomery**

As always, the rituals and prayer services were exceptionally good. This year's Assembly was well-organized and challenging as we move forward in our Associate relationship with Providence.

— **Sylvia Resha**

At the meetings, both in receiving information and sharing thoughts, ideas, and feelings, I sensed a connection among the members, an openness to speaking and listening, and overall a sense of "Let's move on together, we can do this" that I have not felt in the past assemblies I have attended.

— **Julia Lynn**

I particularly appreciated the process we had the first day and a half. I was a facilitator and got to hear and discuss with eight other Sisters and Associates about their aspirations, feelings, and dreams regarding the possibilities of the future in the Congregation. I appreciated also all the daily reminders we received by email prior to the Assembly with the sayings and quotes about keeping the door open.

— **Sr. Betty Sundry**

I enjoyed the opportunity to meet the broader Community, the prayer times together, and the vibrant liturgies. — **Linda Reynolds**

The process on days 1 and 2 was so well done. I also appreciated the Agreee and Formation presentations — each one was informative and pushed the envelope. — **Sr. Sandra DeNardis**

The camaraderie among Sisters and Associates is so important — I enjoyed meeting new Sisters and hearing their stories. I also liked the ice cream social and the fun cocktail party reception Friday night.

— **Ginny Hoffman**

The liturgical gatherings were especially meaningful. The sharing and caring during the table talks was heartfelt and respectful, and the liturgical gatherings were especially meaningful. — **Diane Bailey**

(Continued on page 4.)

Assembly 2019 *(continued from page 3.)*

The communal discernment process the first two days of Assembly was very fruitful. The outcome piece gives us a "how to" when added to our 2016 Direction Statement. This is our opportunity to generate a culture of radical hospitality in our community. — **Sr. Lisa Paffrath**

The Assembly this year for me was very energizing. What struck me was the number of Associates present and very active at the table discussions that took place. I was extremely pleased to see Associates as facilitators. Indeed, this is a leap into the future of religious congregations. However, what really energized me was the presentation on the alternative membership, Agregees. This is something I want to see in our community.

— **Sr. Jeanne Morris**

I enjoyed being able to voice my opinion during the Town Meeting. The assembly has me looking at the community in a new way.

— **Denise Champe**

Anticipation for each event was the underlying connection that carried all the days so smoothly. Great planning.... A bit sorry to say good-bye to all my friends. Carrying home some new ideas to think about. — **Sr. Emma Jean Middendorf**

I loved the whole Assembly! Among my favorite events were the presentations by Sr. Connie and the excellent presentation by Pat Montgomery. And the La Posada evening was very special.

— **Nuala Filberg**

I enjoyed the opportunity to meet more and more Sisters — I didn't know there were so many!

— **Cathy Lenehan**

I always enjoy coming to Pittsburgh for Assemblies or Chapters every year. It's always like a big family reunion. I particularly enjoy the prayer services for the deceased and the Jubilee celebration honoring years of service for these Sisters. Both services are very touching.

— **Sr. Stephanie Turck**



Sincere thanks to all those who so generously and thoughtfully shared their reflections on Assembly 2019.



The 2019 Ketteler Award was presented to Srs. Hilary Hooks, Margaret Mertens, Zita Telkamp, Therese Cunningham, and Associate Marlene McClain for their ministry at La Posada.



Francis Adamson, Erin Middleton, and Sr. Emma Jean Middendorf .



Maryann D'Alessandro, Sr. Marian Senish, Sandy Stevenson, Ginny Hoffman, and Colleen Higbee.



Sisters and Associates who passed away within the past year were honored at Assembly. Shown are photos of Associates Jimmy Dunn, Mary Bittner, Agnes Fernandes, and Christopher Curran.

Santo Domingo Associates: "We Are Family"



In August, Associate Local Coordinator Sr. Myriam Colón Cruz made her annual journey from Santo Domingo to Providence Heights to attend Assembly 2019. In her words, "I never want to miss Assembly. I love being with my CDP community! These are my

people. Coming to Assembly gives me what I need to take home."

Originally from Puerto Rico, Sr. Myriam has been a CDP for 46 years and has ministered in Santo Domingo for 26 years. She and her "family" of about 25 Associates "get together every month religiously." Their monthly meetings begin with a half-hour of prayer, followed by a business meeting. Meetings always involve food and celebration as well. "We take every opportunity to celebrate!" says Sr. Myriam.

Sr. Myriam and her Associates work together in their parish as well. Their ministries include working in the school (some as teachers), serving as Eucharistic ministers, singing in the choir, and other ministries. "They are good, good people," says Sr. Myriam. "They are family. We love each other and help each other."

Meet an Associate *(continued from page 2)*

this unexpected opportunity, even though she felt a bit daunted to have to play a part before a large audience. However, she realized that she could share this gift with others. "Everyone has talents," she says. "You just need to use them."

Pat admits that she loves to talk. "I am a real people person," Pat says of herself. This is a talent that allows her to reach out to anyone and everyone. Often she will make a comment to complete strangers, which then evolves into a conversation in which they may unburden a worry. She listens patiently and tells them that adversities are a part of life. Trusting in our Provident God will see us through.

This attitude resonates as she goes about visiting the homebound, providing transportation, sending greeting cards, and making contact by phone any time she is needed, whether day or night.

"I love people from the bottom of my heart. Demonstrating love is my life's work," says Pat.



Local Coordinator Sr. Elena Almendárez; Inquirers Francis Adamson, Lisa Toomey, Peggy Santelli, and Michele Yotz; and Local Coordinator Maryann D'Alessandro.

Blessing of Inquirers

On Sunday, July 7, at the 9 a.m. Mass at Providence Heights' Mother of Providence Chapel, four Associate Inquirers were introduced and blessed as they begin their journey to become Associates of the Sisters of Divine Providence. The Pittsburgh Associate Inquirers are: Francis Adamson, Peggy Santelli, Lisa Toomey, and Michele Yotz. Our Inquirers will now begin a period of study and discernment as well as attending Associate events as they continue their journey.

The first Inquirer study session will be held on September 22. Sr. Donna Marie Gribshaw and Associate Tish Donze will give a presentation on Mission and Charism.

New Associate Welcomed



On August 24, St. Louis area Associates welcomed new member Kathy Cunningham. Kathy resides in Troy, IL, with her husband and three children. Sr. Barbara McMullen was Kathy's teacher in second grade. They reconnected

recently, and Sr. Barbara asked her to consider becoming an Associate.

Kathy chose "To Be a Peace Pioneer" as her theme because she is very interested in peace and justice issues. The gospel she chose was the beatitudes. In her reflection, Sr. Barbara said: "To be a peace pioneer is to live each of the beatitudes, to see them with new eyes; they are the path Jesus gave us. Like Ketteler and Mother Marie we are called to confront the troubles and anxieties of our age with the spirit and love of Jesus."

Associate's Garden Manifests God's Providence

by Sr. Emma Jean Middendorf

When I visited Anna Mae Perrault recently, in July, she showed me her lovely garden, which is a natural combination of wild flowers, perennials, and abundant milkweed plants. But Anna Mae's garden is more than just a beautiful site. She has transformed her yard into an official Monarch Waystation, certified and registered by the Monarch Watch organization.

This means her garden provides milkweeds, nectar sources, and shelter needed to sustain Monarch butterflies as they migrate through North America. These butterflies, whose numbers are at an all-time low, may be headed for extinction.



Anna Mae Perrault's daughter Cheryl, Sr. Emma Jean Middendorf, and Anna Mae in her Monarch Waystation.

In July the Monarchs were migrating and using Anna Mae's abundant plot of milkweed to feed and rest on their journey. Since preserving our beautiful earth is an aspect of our Providence spirituality, we decided to share these images with you. Here, in Plymouth, MA, is our contribution to saving the earth.



Keeping in Touch with Associates

by Julia Lynn

Here's a question that frequently comes up for discussion among Associates in our committee meetings and our leadership team meetings: How are we keeping in touch with our Associates who can no longer actively participate in community events and celebrations or on committees and in community ministries? How can we help them to realize that they are still a vital part of the Associate Relationship?

Members of the Communications Committee decided to find out if and how we keep in touch with our Associates who are in care facilities, are homebound, or can no longer travel independently. We know that all Associates receive this Associate newsletter quarterly with news of the Associate Relationship and CDP community events either by

email or U.S. mail, but is that all that is happening?

In the Pittsburgh area, we found that some small faith-sharing groups ensure that their homebound members continue to feel part of the community in the following ways. The South Hills group makes calls to homebound members every other week, and makes sure those who can't drive get to Associate celebrations at Providence Heights. They also drive members to church and medical appointments when needed, and have visited members in nursing homes. Other small groups report staying in touch by email with homebound Associates, making monthly phone calls and visiting Associates in nursing homes and the hospital.

But what about those Associates who are not in small groups?

Do they feel part of the relationship when they cannot participate in community celebrations and events? We know that some of our Associates have generously taken it upon themselves to visit, send cards, and make phone calls, but at present there is no consistent way to be sure that this is happening.

The Communications Committee has discussed the possibility of a "companion" or "buddy" system where an active Associate would companion a homebound or out-of-area Associate and keep them more connected to what is going on in the CDP community. Would each of us be willing to become a "buddy"?

The committee will continue to search out a practical way to implement this idea.

Kvell & Tell



Associate **Mary Dieter** retired from Sisters Place in April after almost 17 years there. She had been the Chief Financial Officer there and at La Roche College (now University), the Sisters of Divine Providence, and the Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God for over 35 years. "It has been my ministry to treasure the resources — the people, places and funds to enable each of them to accomplish their mission," says Mary. Congratulations, Mary! We wish you joy and peace in your retirement.



The Kingston Associates Annual Tea Party was held in June at Providence House. The event began with a prayer led by **Sr. Emma Jean Middendorf** and **Sr. Mary Michael McCulla**. The group shared tea, banana bread, cookies, and cucumber sandwiches lovingly made by Sr. Emma Jean. Sporting fancy hats in the photos above (left to right) are **Ruthanne Curran**, **Sr. Mary Michael**, **Ann Moberg**, and **Anna Mae Perrault**.

*Among the most popular events of Assembly 2019 were the ice cream social and the cocktail party reception following the Ketteler Award ceremony. Both events were the inspirations of recently deceased Associate **Paula Gilchrist**, who would have loved to be there as host, but was surely there in spirit.*



Pictured at the **ice cream social** (left to right): **Maryann D'Alessandro**, **Terri Liberto**, and **Julia Lynn** are ready to scoop; **Lisa Toomey**, **Sr. Loretta Jean Schorr**, and **Tish Donze** enjoy their last spoonful; keynote speaker **Sr. Colleen Gibson, SSJ**, and facilitator **Sr. Connie Gilder, SSJ**, share a "sisterly" pose.



Pictured at the **cocktail party reception** (left to right): **Francis Adamson** plays the piano while **Sr. Michele Bisbey**, **Pat Montgomery**, and **Ellie Field** sing along; **Sr. Mary Weatherly** and **Cathy Lenehan** enjoy the party.

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

Committee Annual Reports

Governance. The Governance Committee was asked to look at the term of the Director of Associates and to make recommendations. This has been a paid, part-time (20 hours per week) position for a period of two years with the possibility of a further two-year extension. At that point, a new Director is hired.

The Governance Committee considered this arrangement and found: It takes a long time for a new Director to become acquainted with all the Associates from the various regions; Director must also learn about the Sisters and the Community, customs of each region, and the operation of the Associates' office; after four years, all of that experience and understanding is lost to Associate leadership. In many other communities, the Director of Associates serves for an unspecified period.

The Governance Committee proposed that the Director of Associates position be changed from its original construct, and that now the duration of the Director's employment should not be limited. This proposal was accepted and passed by those present.

Finance. Ann Moberg completed her tenure as Chairperson and Tish Donze accepted that responsibility. The committee revised their task list and created a Fundraising Sub-Committee. (This sub-committee is looking to have others join.)

The committee also oversaw the Annual Appeal Letter with Erin's expertise. As a follow-up to the Appeal Letter, committee members phoned all Associates and thanked them, updated information, and got insights from all Associates. All were happy for the calls, and those not able to be active said how valuable the Associate Relationship is to them.

The committee determined the need to provide Associates and Inquirers more information on the value of

giving, especially setting up a sustaining gift; created a few drafts of a trifold brochure, including one to share at Annual Associate Meeting so we can finalize and print. Ideas for fundraising are in the works, but need a little more time and assistance from other Associates.

REMINDER: We still have the beautiful Associate logo earrings available to purchase.

Communications. The Associate newsletter, continues to be the largest project of the committee. The newsletter is published four times a year.

Annamarie Sullivan and Annette Ray, ex-officio members of the committee, are working on a pictorial directory that will be in the form of binder pages that feature each Associate.

Business cards for Associates to hand out to people they know or might come in contact with who express interest in the Associates were distributed at Assembly. Associates can contact Erin Middleton for cards.

The committee has been working to identify members who are not in touch with anyone and discussing how we might create organized ways of reaching out to them on a regular basis.

It is urgent that Associates who have email capability and have not set up their cdpsisters.org email account do so as soon as possible. Every communication coming from the CDP and Associate Leadership are sent only to cdpsisters.org email. We are also asking Associates to consider donating laptops, tablets, or smart phones. (see Notes & Reminders on Page 9). Associates who need help to access their cdpsisters.org email are invited to contact Sr. Margie Walsh at mwalsh@cdpsisters.org or 412-290-5526.



The Annual Associates Meeting was held on Sunday, August 4. More than 30 persons attended, including Sisters who are Local Coordinators. The meeting included annual reports from the active committees followed by questions and discussion, as well as other announcements. (This photo will be sent to homebound Associates who do not receive Facebook updates.)

May She Rest in Peace



Dr. Paula Lizak Gilchrist,

born January 13, 1953, passed peacefully on August 16, 2019, after a brief battle with cancer. She was preceded in death by her loving husband, Joseph A. Gilchrist, and is survived by her daughters Lauren Gilchrist and Bethany Gilchrist (married to Martin Rozenberg on September 1, 2019), her mother, Romona Lizak, sister Rona Dane, brother Greg Lizak, nephews Jonathan Dane and Gregory Lizak, niece Krystyn Lizak, and many wonderful friends who were as close as family.

Paula became an Associate in 1996. She shared God's Provident love in an incredibly deep and dedicated way with her daughters, family members, CDP Sisters and Associates, friends, patients, and anyone else God would bring her way. She was a servant and healer to many through her practice as a podiatrist and physical therapist. Paula touched so many lives in her wonderful life by her living faith and loving service.

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A funeral Mass was celebrated for Paula in the Mother of Divine Providence Chapel at Providence Heights.

Mark Your Calendar

September

- 17-20 WPC Associate Leadership Gathering**
Melbourne, Kentucky
- 22 Inquiry Gathering**
(Inquiry Team and Inquirers)
Providence Heights Community Room
- 29 Associate Renewal**
Kingston, MA

October

- 19 Turning Leaf Party**
Engelbert Hall, Madison IL

November

- 15-17 Associate Retreat ***
Kearns Spirituality Center

January 2020

- 3-5 Women's Christmas**
Kearns Spirituality Center
- 5 Christmas Celebration**
Providence Heights

August 2020

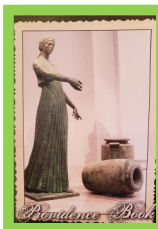
- 2-4 Assembly 2020**
Providence Heights

* *See flier that came in the email or postal mail along with this newsletter for information about the Associate Retreat. Call Maryann D'Alessandro at 412-760-3449 with questions.*

Semper Fi Group Plans Memorial for Paula

The Semper Fi Associates small faith group will be purchasing a memorial brick in Paula Gilchrist's honor which hopefully will be placed next to or near her husband's brick at Providence Heights.

CDP Memorial Cards Available



Enrollment in the Providence Book is a way to remember a loved one, friend, or Associate who has died, or to honor a birth, graduation, marriage, anniversary, or healing intention for someone who is ill. Enrollees are remembered on the second Sunday of each month in

the Mother of Divine Providence Chapel and are held in prayer by CDP Sisters throughout the Marie de la Roche Province. Enrollment cards are available from the Mission Advancement Office or online at cdpsisters.org. **If you are sending a check, please write "Associate Relationship" on the memo line.**

Notes & Reminders

- * **You can become a sustaining contributor** by making monthly recurring donations to the Associate Relationship. To set up your monthly gift, use the donation form at cdpsisters.org or call 412-635-5401.
- * **Do you have a smartphone, laptop, or tablet you are no longer using?** Consider donating it for an Associate who may not have one but needs to access CDP email. Call Erin at 724-594-4606.
- * **It is urgent that Associates with email set up their cdpsisters.org email account as soon as possible** to prevent hacking. Contact Sr. Margie Walsh at mwalsh@cdpsisters.org or 412-290-5526.

Special Thanks

Layout Assistance: Mary Seljak

Photos: Cathy Lenehan, Sr. Emma Jean Middendorf, Erin Middleton, Sally Shamalla