



2018 Jubilarians

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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.

Alma! is published by the Mission Advancement office of the Sisters of Divine Providence. We welcome your feedback at missionadvancement@cdpsisters.org or 412.635.5428.



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Sister Kathleen Matz

Sister Kathy vividly recalls the day she entered religious life from St. Martin (now St. Phillip) parish in Pittsburgh. "It was Sunday, September 8, 1968, at 3:07 p.m. in Allison Park." When reflecting on her years of dedicated service as a Sister of Divine Providence, she quotes Hildegard of Bingen, "Be not lax in celebrating. Be not lazy in the festive service of God. Be ablaze with enthusiasm." She continues, "My heart is filled with gratitude and the festive joy that Hildegard of Bingen refers to in her writings. I love the vocation the Lord has given me. It has been a rewarding, joyful and challenging 50 years."



Sister Donna Marie Gribschaw

Sister Donna Marie entered religious life from St. Cecilia (now Queen of the Holy Rosary) parish in Glassport, PA. When reflecting on her journey as a woman of Providence, she says, "I can truly say that these 50 years have all been rewarding for me. As I reflect on our Vision, I have been blessed by God's indiscriminate graciousness. I truly live in the abundance of God's loving Providence and I am continually strengthened by the bonds of an inclusive and international community. I pray that I can continue being a woman of Providence and reflect the Mission and Vision of my Community to all I meet and serve."

Congratulations to all 21 of our 2018 Jubilarians who celebrate 1,315 combined years of ministry to God's people. To read more about these Sisters, visit cdpsisters.org/jubilarians/2018.

FALL 2018



A NEWSLETTER OF THE SISTERS OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE
Marie de la Roche Province

Called to Generosity

Providence
ON THE PERIPHERY



Sister Michele Bisbey
Provincial Director

Even though it was more than 15 years ago, I often still think about the time when we had to transition Shawn, a medically fragile foster baby, to an adoptive home. We loved him and cared for him for 10 months before the courts determined that his birth mother would not be able to parent him. His new home would be with a mature, single mom of adult children living in low-income housing. Since this woman no longer worked outside of the home, she would be able to be a full-time parent to a needy child like Shawn. There was no doubt that she would do all that she could to provide him with a loving home, but the financial burden that it would

require was obvious. So, as we packed his clothes and toys, feeling somewhat sad at losing him, we decided to send a car seat, stroller, high chair, cans of formula, boxes of cereal and assorted jars of baby food. I felt somewhat magnanimous about the way we were sending off Shawn, certain that we were being more than generous.

However, when I told the adoptive mom all that we were bringing for her, she responded, "Do you have any diapers that you can give me?" I was stunned and a little unsettled by her question. I wondered if she realized all that we were giving her. I had expected her to be grateful for our generosity. After some reflection, though, I understood that she had the right to ask for what she needed. She was entitled to all that we had to give because we had it and she didn't. She needed it and we didn't. We could easily afford to give her all that she needed for Shawn's welfare; it was a matter of justice for us to do so.

Like our Provident God, who indiscriminately cares for all of us but is the special Protector of those who are poor and vulnerable, Providence people like you—our readers, as well as our Sisters and Associates—are called to be especially generous to those who need it most. The articles in this issue reflect the truth that our generosity toward others is not just our choice to do acts of charity, but rather, one way we fulfill our call to Christian discipleship. We are very grateful to you who partner with us in making God's Providence more visible in this way.



GIVING ALL



IN SERVICE TO OTHERS

The late Sister Mary Paul Doyle had an overwhelming love for life. This was evidenced in her connections to the people she met during her life and to whom she remained a faithful friend to the end. Through her family, she had strong ties with the Pittsburgh Pirates and was a confidant to the coaches, players and staff. One of her most cherished connections was baseball great Roberto Clemente, whom she mentored in the English language. In a 1992 reunion video for All Saints School in Etna, Pennsylvania, Sister Mary Paul told a story about Clemente: “The students would say, ‘Sister, why don’t you have Clemente come?’ and I said, ‘Well, he’s not always available.’ But here when I was (teaching at St. Mary Assumption) in Herman (Pennsylvania), didn’t he come to Herman. And he stayed there four hours. He went over to (St. Fidelis College and Seminary) where they had many Puerto Rican fellows that were studying to be priests. ... (The seminarians) were so thrilled to see (Roberto).”

On December 31, 1972, Clemente died in a plane crash shortly after takeoff from Puerto Rico—his birthplace—to deliver humanitarian aid to Nicaraguan earthquake victims. Our Sisters treasured Sister Mary Paul’s friendship with Clemente and continued the connection with his family, with whom Clemente’s generous spirit lives on. In May 2018, Roberto Clemente Jr. graciously delivered the commencement address at La Roche College—a ministry which we founded and continue to sponsor. In speaking about his father and helping others, Clemente Jr. said, “My father’s words: ‘Any time you have an opportunity to make a difference in this world and you don’t then you are wasting your time on earth.’ He lived and died by his quote. That day baseball lost a great superstar, a great humanitarian. However, that same day a legend was born. ... Being the oldest it put a burden on me, but the only thing that kept me going was helping others. ... I didn’t know it so clearly then, but I was going to spend most of my days from then on giving my all to help others. ... No one in the world can match your fingerprint. So make sure that whatever you touch, you touch in a positive way as you leave your name behind... just like my father did.”

Like the Clementes, we commit ourselves to provide help to those who need it most. It is through this spirit of generosity that we see the face of our Provident God in our world today.

(clockwise from top)
Clemente’s sons Roberto Jr. and Luis
in 1993 with Sisters who ministered in
Puerto Rico; Sisters with Clemente in 1960;
Sisters with Clemente Jr. at La Roche College’s
graduation ceremony in 2018; and Sister Mary
Paul Doyle with Dick Stuart in 1960.

**“I WANT TO BE REMEMBERED AS A BALLPLAYER WHO GAVE ALL HE HAD TO GIVE.”
—ROBERTO CLEMENTE**

In Puerto Rico, You Make the Difference

Your generosity continues to significantly and positively impact the lives of our Sisters living and ministering in Puerto Rico, following the devastation from Hurricane Maria in September 2017. Your financial contributions have provided the following for our Sisters and their neighbors: a generator, cleaning supplies, construction materials for house repairs, gasoline, water, food, appliances, furniture, solar lights, school uniforms, school supplies and presents to share on Three Kings Day. We appreciate your continued partnership and prayers as our recovery continues.



Let Beggars Be Choosers!

After
WORDS



Sister Mary Ellen Ruffi

The anecdote in this issue about Sister Michele giving many gifts to the new adoptive mother of a baby whom she fostered, reminded me of the terrible quotation, “Beggars Can’t Be Choosers.” That mother was definitely not a beggar, but even if she was, shouldn’t she still have the right to choose what she needed for her child? Should only the rich be able to make choices?

Several years ago, I had the opportunity to visit a mission of our Sisters in the Dominican Republic. Their convent was in a very poor section of Santo Domingo. I learned a lot about “beggars” and “choices” in my few days there. One image that has stayed with me through the years is that of a little boy sitting on the ground holding a broken cup to the edge of a rusty pipe poking out of the dirt. I didn’t ask “why” he was doing that since I knew the difficulty of getting potable water there. What choice did the little boy have?

One evening while I was there, one of our Sisters suggested that we walk down a hill to the river. On the way, we saw an elderly man sitting on a wooden chair very close to the edge of a cliff. Behind him was a small, rickety-looking hut, which I learned later, housed seven people. When the Sister with me asked if he felt safe sleeping in that chair so close to the cliff edge, he replied that he had no choice because there were too many people in the hut; he didn’t fit inside. I felt anxious on his behalf as we walked further down the hill to the river. What we saw there were children and adults walking in the dirty, muddy water which was filled with garbage of every kind. They were surely in danger of illness as they looked for anything salvageable in the water, but where else could the people put their garbage? They had no other choice.

One problem all over the world, but especially in poorer countries, is that many people believe the quote that “beggars can’t be choosers.” As a result, people who are poor often are given very few choices in their lives. Without help, they’re stuck where they are. It’s hardly a realistic expectation that they can improve their status on their own! Imagine what would change if the opposite of the quote became a law that said: “Beggars and all who are poor always get first choice.” As Providence people, eager to care for those most in need, we can act as though such a law existed; we can tell everyone about it and encourage others to do the same. What a wonderful new way to make God’s Providence more visible! We trust that you, our friends and readers, will, as always, be with us in our efforts to give those most in need the first choice.

In
MEMORY



Sister Natalie Marchetti departed this life on June 28, 2018, in the 71st year of her religious life. She gave her many talents to the Community she loved and served as a sacristan in her last years. She was a courageous woman to be present to others with a compassionate heart and loyal friendship not to be forgotten.



Sister Rosemary Micka (formerly Sister Mary Bernard) departed this life on May 20, 2018, in the 76th year of her religious life. She spent 56 years in education as a teacher, principal and later a school secretary. Sisters found her to be a good mentor and companion, always willing to roll up her sleeves, pitch in and do whatever was necessary.

To read the entire memorial letters for these Sisters, visit cdpsisters.org/in-memory

We also remember Associates Jimmy Dunn (7/21/18) and Mary Bittner (8/22/18)