

## From the Archives: 1918 Pandemic

In the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, we are grateful to connect with you through this newsletter. Sisters and employees remain vigilant in following all safety protocols including wearing masks, social distancing, working remotely and connecting through video and audio conferencing. As we continue to face the unknown in 2020, we looked to our archives to find what impact the 1918 influenza pandemic had on our community. May our Provident God sustain all of us.

In September of this year, 1918, a terrible epidemic called influenza which had been raging in Europe was carried into the United States and spread rapidly over cities and villages alike. It brought death and claimed thousands and thousands of victims of all ages and situations in life. The schools were not opened in September. The Sisters, instead, went among the poor victims of the dread disease to nurse and care for them. Most fervently did the entire Community pray and plead that the good God might spare the Sisters from contagion. He heard their prayers, but He required one great sacrifice of the Community. That was the life of Sister Bernadette Semmler, from St. Mary's, McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania, who was only 26 years of age... She had been teaching at St. Mary's, Sharpsburg, in the middle grades, where she worked assiduously, not only to impart natural sciences, but especially was she zealous in bringing her charges nearer to the Heart of Jesus by fervent daily Communion. During this epidemic, she was employed in works of mercy for the poor and needy, stricken with this deadly malady. Very soon the disease seized her; and, after a few hours of intense suffering, she yielded her soul into the hands of its Creator and Redeemer. ... Humanly speaking, her death was a great loss to the Community... Only eleven years had she been in the Lord's service in the convent. ... Sister Bernadette was the only one who fell a victim to the dreadful epidemic, for which the Community was ever grateful to God's Fatherly Providence, Who watched over them so lovingly.



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SAVING LIVES**

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# Save the DATE

### HEART OF THE MATTER Benefits Sisters Place

Online Silent Auction and Virtual Event  
September 25-October 2, 2020 | 412.716.2259 for more info

### FEAST FOR FAMILIES Benefits Providence Connections

Virtual Live Stream from The LeMont Restaurant | Pittsburgh  
October 23, 2020 | 7-8 p.m. | 412.766.3860 Ext 321 for more info

### MASS OF REMEMBRANCE

Providence Heights | Allison Park, PA  
November 8, 2020 | 9 a.m. | 412.635.5437 for more info

### 2021 LUCKY NUMBER Benefits Sisters of Divine Providence

\$25/ticket | Based on PA Lottery Games | Great Gift Idea!  
Available now at [cdpsisters.org/LuckyNumber](http://cdpsisters.org/LuckyNumber) or 412.635.5401

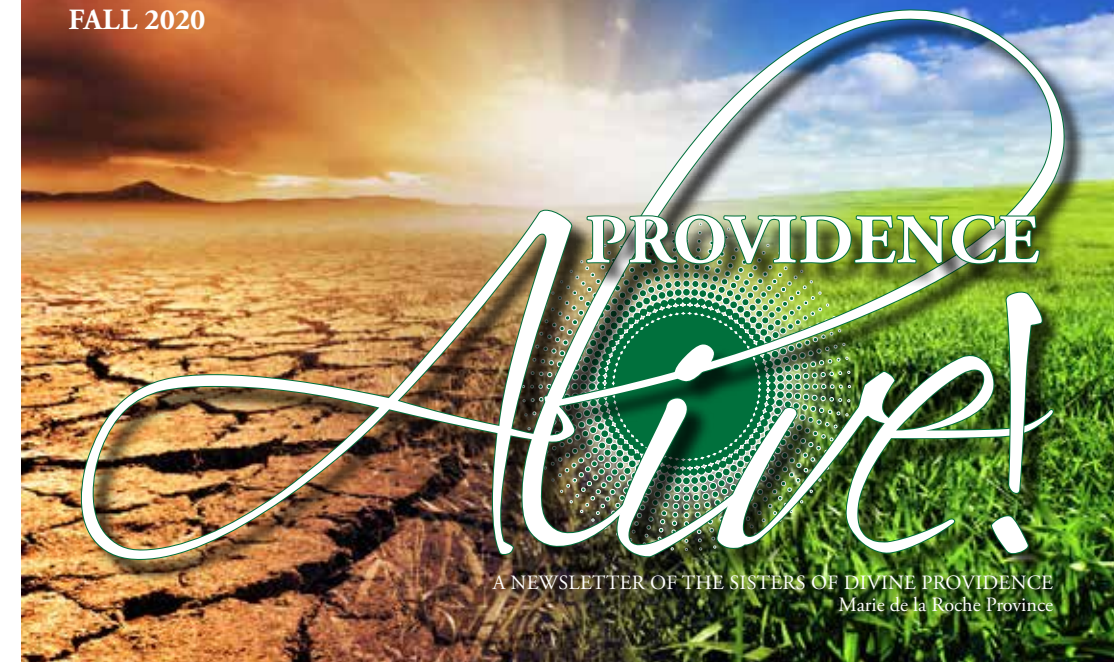
Mission Statement: *We, the Congregation of Divine Providence, impelled by the Spirit of Jesus, commit ourselves to co-create a world of compassion, justice and peace. Guided by the legacy of Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler and Marie de la Roche, we nurture in ourselves and in others a trust and confidence in God's faithful presence. We further commit ourselves to making God's Providence more visible in our world.*

*Aline!* is published by the Mission Advancement office of the Sisters of Divine Providence. We welcome your feedback at 412.635.5428. To schedule a tour of Providence Heights in Allison Park, PA, contact [missionadvancement@cdpsisters.org](mailto:missionadvancement@cdpsisters.org).



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FALL 2020



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

## Presence in the Darkness

*Providence*  
ON THE PERIPHERY



Sister Michele Bisbey  
Provincial Director

My dad died on February 29. I awake each morning, so grateful that we were able to wake and bury him before the onslaught of COVID-19, this global pandemic that has upended our world. Our sisters went into lockdown on March 15. As so many of you, we have winced as the sharp edges of quarantine pierce the comfort of our routines. We have been deprived of our cherished liturgical life and sacraments. We have also faced loss of employment, dwindling financial reserves, closures of our ministries. We have watched in dismay the escalating violence in our streets. And have decried the ongoing evil of racism. Through these long months, I have tried to find meaning and to articulate it. For I am certain there is a Providential and abiding Presence in even the most troubling darkness. As I have searched for my own words, I have found comfort in "Blessing for the Interim Time" from the book, "To Bless the Space Between Us" by the late Irish theologian and poet John O'Donohue:

*You are in this time of the interim  
Where everything seems withheld.  
The path you took to get here has washed out;  
The way forward is still concealed from you ...*

*You cannot lay claim to anything;  
In this place of dusk,  
Your eyes are blurred;  
And there is no mirror ...*

*As far as you can, hold your confidence.  
Do not allow your confusion to squander  
This call which is loosening  
Your roots in false ground,  
That you might become free  
From all you have outgrown ...*

*The more faithfully you can endure here,  
The more refined your heart will become  
For your arrival in the new dawn.*

I don't have answers. I sense shapes in the lingering fog. Yet I remain grateful. So... I will keep sitting in the silence even when nothing changes. I will keep listening and waiting and watching. I will keep accepting the invitation of our Provident God to be present without an agenda. We are in this together.



## Ketteler Award for Social Justice



“The instinct for eventual justice cannot be eradicated from the human spirit.”

On August 3, 2020, the Sisters of Divine Providence presented the Ketteler Award for Social Justice to the Rev. James Martin, S.J.—Jesuit priest, author, editor at large at America, the national Catholic review, and a Consultor to the Vatican’s Dicastery for Communication. Father Martin was recognized for his extensive and ongoing commitment to social justice and his advocacy for and ministry with LGBTQ persons. This award is named for Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler, Bishop of Mainz, Germany, co-founder of the Congregation of the Sisters of Divine Providence and tireless fighter for the rights of the working class and the marginalized. He was bishop from 1850 until 1877. To read more about Rev. James Martin, visit: [cdpsisters.org/2020KettelerAward](http://cdpsisters.org/2020KettelerAward).



## MEMORY



**Sister Clarice Carlson** departed this life on July 14, 2020, in the 71st year of her religious life. In her 47 years of ministry in education, she taught seven years in elementary school and 20 years in high school in the dioceses of Pittsburgh and Altoona. Then she began as a full time adjunct faculty member, teacher and academic counselor for Project Achievement/Act 101 Program at La Roche University. Sister Clarice was the definition of kindness. She took a personal interest in each student and encouraged them to do their best.



**Sister Audrey Sagan** departed this life on May 17, 2020, in the 81st year of her religious life. With her inimitable unassuming manner, she ministered as a teacher for 51 years, companioning her beloved “little ones” in Grades 1 and 2 for 45 of those years. She was a Gospel witness of Jesus’ love to everyone she met along the way.



**Sister Marise Hrabosky** departed this life on May 16, 2020, in the 67th year of her religious life. She was an unabashed cheering section for just about everyone she knew and had a keen interest in their lives. Many in the parishes and schools where she ministered, and in the CDP community, as well, experienced that friendship through one of her encouraging notes or letters. She loved to share her joy and her trust in Divine Providence by writing.

To read the entire memorial letters for these Sisters, visit [cdpsisters.org/in-memory](http://cdpsisters.org/in-memory)

We also remember Associates Catherine Wronkovich (5/18/20), Jo-Anne Bryan Welch (6/22/20) and Mary Hassler (8/10/20)



Sr. Emma Jean Middendorf | 75



Sr. Lucille Qualters | 75



Sr. Celine Maasen | 70



Sr. Wilma McKee | 70



Sr. Ann Martin Schmidt | 70



Sr. Anne Arnold | 65

## 2020 JUBILARIANS



Sr. Nancy Schnur | 65



Sr. Loretta Jean Schorr | 65



Sr. Julia Hillary | 65



Sr. Rochelle Holly | 65



Sr. Theresa Stegman | 65



Sr. Lorraine Zappala | 65



Sr. Marilyn Bergt | 60



Sr. Maria Fest | 60



Sr. Janet Folkl | 60



Sr. Margareta Nussbaumer | 60



Sr. Jean René Seiler | 60



Sr. Carmen González Arias | 50



Sr. Linda Hylła | 40



Sr. Ana Lydía Sonera Matos | 40

In the tradition of the Catholic Church, the word Jubilee designates a milestone anniversary of religious life. Congratulations to all 20 of our 2020 Jubilarians who celebrate 1,245 combined years of ministry to God’s people. To read more about these Sisters, visit [cdpsisters.org/jubilarians/2020](http://cdpsisters.org/jubilarians/2020).



365 DAYS TO WIN  
\$25, \$50, \$100 OR \$150  
GREAT GIFT IDEA

The 2021 Lucky Number fundraiser is based on the Pick 3 Day and Evening PA Lottery games. Each \$25 number is valid from January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021—yours for the entire year. Daily winners receive a minimum of \$25 up to \$150 on select days throughout the year when their 3-digit number is selected. Gift orders available.

Visit [cdpsisters.org/LuckyNumber](http://cdpsisters.org/LuckyNumber) to participate!