



(Pictured left to right) Associate Maryann D'Alessandro, Sr. Janet Schaffran, Sr. Elena Almendárez, and Associate Sandy Stevenson.

Sr. Janet Reflects on 29 Years as Associate Coordinator by Pat Montgomery

Sr. Janet Schaffran's eyes light up when she talks about her 29 years of ministering to Pittsburgh area Associates. She recounts the individuals — Sisters who served in this role before her and many, many Inquirers and Associates — with whom she developed the program over the years:

"I felt so gifted to be able to work with lay people who had an interest in learning the spirit and charism of the Sisters of Divine Providence. We were commissioned by Vatican II to develop such relationships. Sr. Mary Glenn was particularly interested in following through to make Providence alive for all, and I shared her sentiments. Of course, we made it up as we went along, changing titles and descriptors along the way.

"I worked half-time as a hospice chaplain all along, but adding the Associate ministry was as natural to me as breathing. I learned to listen to the Associates and Inquirers to discover what is important to them. This was so enriching to me in my

own life; it spurred my own spiritual growth and development so much to share our faith and lives together."

Pittsburgh-based Associates coupled their November 2017 Enrichment Day with a surprise party to honor Sr. Janet as she passes the baton of leadership to Sr. Elena Almendárez. Many gave or sent cards and donations as a token of their appreciation for all that Sr. Janet has meant to them. Naturally, she submitted all the donations to the Sisters of Divine Providence Associate Relationship fund!

Messages on those cards and notes show that Sr. Janet has made a deep and lasting impression on the lives of so many. "You gave a gift of time and endless love to us," says one. "You are firm but gentle in your counseling and observations," says another. "You have brought out the best in me."

God bless you, Sr. Janet, for including Associates in your ministry and for sharing your journey.



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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

Did you ever feel like you were part of a God-moment when Spirit was clearly present in the room? I had one of these moments recently at Providence Heights. For me, the auditorium was filled with light, and the Spirit impressed on me to "Listen! Listen! This is something very important."

There were over 40 people in the room and many more connected via Zoom, and we were guests of the Ketteler Legacy for Justice (Strategic Intent 7) Committee. After two years of diligent and creative work, and armed with the words of our Mission Statement and the decisions of our 2016 Chapter meeting, committee members were sharing what they had discovered about the life, times, and sermons of our Founder, Bishop Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler. As I listened, my heart was deeply impressed that the same "words of exhortation" were currently being discussed by two other Strategic Action Committees that I have the privilege to serve on—Partnering as Sisters and Associates and Fostering Communal Relations. After that day, several others mentioned that they felt the resonance too. It was clear to me that all three groups are being led by the Spirit to help us make Providence more visible in our world in a new and vital way.

I encourage you to make every effort to attend the presentations of our Strategic Action Committees over the next few months and years. These groups have labored long and hard doing this wonderful work, and the Spirit is surely speaking to us through all of them. If you cannot attend in person, consider attending via Zoom or watching the videos on the website. May our hearts and minds be open to this fresh calling of Providence. It's too good to miss.



*(Pictured left to right)
Associate Erin Middleton, Sr.
Stephanie Turck and Associate
Cathy Cassy*

Meet an Associate: Cathy Cassy by Erin Middleton

I first met Cathy Cassy at the April 2015 Associate Gathering in Pittsburgh. My fiancé, Frank, was playing classical music and old favorites on the piano, along with some of his original music. One brave woman offered to try to sing the words he wrote to "Sheila's Song"—my very favorite. It had a B flat that was quite a jump, and the brave soul to give it a try was Cathy Cassy. We were quite impressed and went home singing her praises! (Note to self...she is up for every challenge!)

The next time I would "meet" Cathy was during the phone conference where I was interviewed for my current position. "Here is that woman who dared to sing that high B flat—she steps up to the plate every time," I thought.

In February 2017, just weeks after I started as Director of Associates, we were in need of a chairperson for our Mission Committee. I took out my notes and called that woman from St. Louis who loves a challenge. Cathy had just completed five years as a Local Coordinator in St. Louis, and I saw in her a real dedication to our whole province. She said yes, and I have been "singing her praises" ever since.

I have learned that Cathy LOVES music and LOVES her faith, and the Associate relationship is a big part of that. She recently retired from 38 years of teaching and administration work in local public schools. While she taught, she juggled her roles as music director at her church and an active Associate since 2004. Cathy followed in her mother's footsteps as church organist and choir director at St. Elizabeth Parish in Granite City, IL. Our own Sr. Stephanie Turck serves as a cantor at St. E's, and they make a "dynamic duo" in their music ministry as well as in their work with Associates.

When I visited St. Louis last year, I attended Mass at their parish, and after Mass we took some time to enjoy a meal and some real St. Louis cuisine—fried ravioli! The whole dining room lit up when Sr. Stephanie and Cathy came in—everyone knew them! It seemed other people were "singing her praises" too. I thank our Provident God for Cathy's willingness to make Providence visible to our world in so many ways.

Around the Province

Associates Share Providence Spirituality—Part 2

In the December 2017 *CDP Associate News*, we featured general information about the Associate faith-sharing groups in the Marie de la Roche Province, along with contact information for each of the active groups. The article included a photo of the Providence Peace Group in Pittsburgh. Below are photos and descriptions of three more small groups. If your group has not yet been featured, please send a clear photo and information to [ksnyder@cdpsisters.org](mailto:k snyder@cdpsisters.org) — we would like to include every group!



Marysville Group (St. Louis Area)

For more than 20 years, this group of Associates has gathered to share faith on a monthly basis. Each member takes a turn leading prayer and group discussion. The leader is also responsible for bringing a treat or dessert. The group's sharing has often revolved around books and DVDs, and they are currently delving into a new book by Brene Brown, "Braving the Wilderness: The Quest for True Belonging and the Courage to Stand." Linda Hoefflin says "Our faith-sharing provides an important Providence connection to which each of us looks forward." (Pictured left to right) Sheila Poiter, Linda Hoefflin, Mary Hassler (seated), Judy Unger, Sr. Barbara McMullen, Gil Weyhaupt, Bev Camper. Member not in photo: Linda Reynolds.



Sophia Group (Pittsburgh)

Group members gather at Kearns Spirituality Center once a month to share a spiritual book discussion, prayer, and a "Breads and Spreads" snack. Members take turns leading the sessions. (Pictured left to right) seated: Marge Weber, Anne Plant, Sr. Carolyn Winschel; standing: Erin Middleton, Shelley Johnsen, Sr. Sandra DeNardis, Bernice Bastin. Members not in photo: Mary Bittner, Teresa DeLuca, Jean Feid, Sr. Maria Fest, Sr. Donna Marie Gribschaw, Elaine Lafayette, Sally Shamalla, Gloria Virostek.



Images of Providence (Pittsburgh)

This group meets monthly, and the meeting begins and ends with prayer. Members discuss a spiritual book or article and share thoughts on how it applies to them. They recently finished reading Sr. Barbara McMullen's book "Soul Stretching: The Inner Landscape of an Ordinary Life." Sr. Donna Marie Dorfner says the group's sharing "enriches our prayer and our lives." (Pictured left to right) standing: Eileen McMonigal, Ginny Hoffman, Sr. Donna Marie Dorfner; seated: Jimmy Dunn. Members not in photo: Jane Kerr, Theresa Kinzer, Ruth Mills, Helene Mukankusi.

Around the Province

Pilgrimage to Germany

Congratulations to the 10 Associates who joined Erin Middleton, our Director of Associates, in representing our province April 20-26, 2018, in Frankfurt and Darmstadt, Germany. They met 20 additional Associates and the two Directors of Associates from our provinces in Korea and Germany.

The Associate Pilgrimage was a wonderful opportunity to learn more about our founders and the beginnings of our congregation, as well as to meet many of our German Sisters and experience their gracious and welcoming hospitality.

The Associates from our province who made the pilgrimage are Cathy Cassy, Joan Fabisher, Linda Hoefflin, Mary Ann Kreutzman, Shelley Johnsen, Cathy Lenehan, Pat Montgomery, Ileana Nuñez Sánchez, Sandy Stevenson, and Annamarie Sullivan.

Our Associates were commissioned to bring their Germany experience back to our province in a creative and lasting way, using technology, photography, and creative arts. We all look forward to their presentations.



A group of our Associate pilgrims in Darmstadt, Germany. Back row: Pat Montgomery, Cathy Cassy, Annamarie Sullivan, Erin Middleton; front row: Joan Fabisher, Shelley Johnsen, Mary Ann Kreutzman, Linda Hoefflin, Cathy Lenehan.

What Could “True Partnership” Mean for Our Community?

The Strategic Action Committee “Intent #6, Create a true partnership between Divine Providence Sisters and Associates,” has as its first objective the developing of a process for Sisters and Associates to engage in mutual conversation to explore deeper relationships.

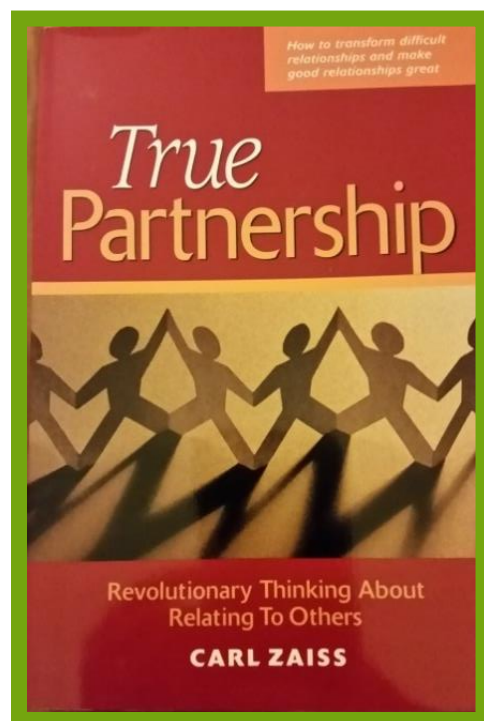
As committee members researched published information about “true partnership,” we came upon the book “True Partnership: Revolutionary Thinking about Relating to Others” by Carl Zaiss. This book started an enthusiastic discussion among committee members as to how “true partnership,” as clearly described in this book, might be useful in conversation about relationship in our community. After reading the book, the committee agreed it was a valuable source of ideas for strengthening and enriching many kinds of relationships and interactions, and we are working on a method to share major points in the book with the entire community.

What if a successful relationship is one in which individuals operate FROM true partnership rather than IN partnership? We invite you to join us in exploring this important question and the insights offered by the author into how we relate to each other.

More information will be forthcoming to the community in the next few months, and our hope is that these concepts of true partnership might be used in faith-sharing groups and other discussion venues. The book will be made available to groups and individuals who are interested, along with questions and points for discussion.

Committee Members:

Julia Lynn, Chair, Sr. Rita Adams, Erin Middleton, Pat Montgomery, Karen Snyder, Sandy Stevenson and Sr. Stephanie Turck



Kvell & Tell



"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

↑ In February 2018, Santo Domingo Sisters and Associates celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the presence of the Sisters of Divine Providence in the Dominican Republic.

← At our annual meeting in August 2017, Associates donated funds for a much-needed audio microphone system for our community in Santo Domingo.

← Associate **Helen Lorinc** enjoys a game of Bingo with **Sr. Natalie Marchetti** and **Sr. Ann Catherine Fuchs** at the annual Mardi Gras party at Providence Heights, hosted by the Pittsburgh Associates.

← At the Kingston Associates' annual Epiphany Baby Shower for Friends of the Unborn on January 14, Sisters and Associates donated many beautiful and useful baby gifts. Associate **Ruthanne Curran** (right) delivered the gifts to the shelter; with her are shelter staff members JoAnn Rice (left) and Debbie Iskra.

← Associate **Sylvia Resha**'s January 10 PET scan showed no signs of cancer remaining. She writes: "Thank God over and over with me. ... There are no words to express my thanks for your many prayers."

→ Associate **Linda Hoefflin** and other pilgrims share a meal in Jaffa, Israel; Linda spent 10 days in Israel in January.



↑ Associate **Diane Bailey** volunteered to have her head shaved for sponsorships by others. Donations go to Pediatric Cancer Research.



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

May They Rest in Peace



Joyce Burkhardt

Associate Joyce Burkhardt of New Baltimore, MI, passed away on December 9, 2017. Joyce was a born nurse; earning a degree was simply an extension of who she had been all along — a caring, nurturing, attentive, loving person. She had an uncanny ability to “read” people, and her assessments were always right on the mark. Her trust in Providence was her guiding light. She was the ultimate woman of faith, welcoming and kind. She was fond of telling the story of how Associates were invited by Sr. Janet Schaffran to volunteer time in CDP missions — Providence Connections, La Roche, the Villa. It effected as much of a change in her as it must have in the recipients of her services.



Anna Wagner

Associate Anna Wagner of Pittsburgh passed away on January 11, 2018. Anna was a kind person whose faithful participation with the Sisters of Divine Providence at St Anne's School and Parish were a constant in her younger years. She was a member of Christian Mothers and served as an usher at St. Anne's until age 85. Her published obituary notes that she would “unabashedly hug a person with AIDS, or entertain recovering addicts at her table without judgment.” She “read mail to a blind neighbor and checked on neighbors that were ill.” She delighted in performing the Works of Mercy and all the social and service opportunities the Associate relationship provided her.



Peggy Hensel Michaels

Margaret F. “Peggy” Michaels, 52, passed away on January 27, 2018, following a brief illness. She was the sister of Pittsburgh Associate and former CDP Sister Mary Rose Hensel. Peggy was one of our early co-members in the 1980's and was close to the Sisters of Divine Providence throughout her life. According to her sister Mary Rose, Peggy enjoyed being a part of the Providence community and considered it to be her “second home.” She was a member of Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament Church, Natrona Heights, PA, where she was an usher. She loved children, especially her nieces and nephews, and worked in daycare for much of her life. She was married to her husband, Timothy, for 25 years.



Dorothy Webb

Pittsburgh Associate Dorothy Donnelly Webb passed away on March 16, 2018. Dorothy was an active Associate for 21 years. She especially enjoyed being a leader for the Semper Fidelis faith-sharing group for many years. Dorothy loved a party. She never missed celebrating with the Sisters at the Associates Spring Fling every year, and she loved dressing up as St. Nicholas at the Associates St. Nick parties for the Sisters. Dorothy was also an active and devoted member of Madonna del Castello Church in Swissvale. There she taught CCD, sang in the choir, and collected money at the fried dough stand at the Parish Festival. She was also known for being a lunch lady for the Woodland Hills School District.

To make a contribution in memory of an Associate, visit cdpsisters.org/donate



Committee Updates



Communications
Karen Snyder

With this first issue of the *CDP Associate News* for 2018, we are transitioning to a new format. The committee also decided to make the newsletter articles shorter for easier readability and the pictures smaller to conserve on costs for printing and mailing to Associates who do not have email. Let us know what you think of the new look and length. Send comments and newsletter submissions to ksnyder@cdpsisters.org. Also, if you know of anyone who knows desktop publishing and might be willing to volunteer their services to help with this newsletter, I would be most grateful for a referral. Thank you!

We again offer our gratitude to David Lavender for his many years of volunteer service as designer and publisher of this newsletter. Thank you, David!



Finance
Ann Moberg

The Finance Committee has sent out the Annual Appeal Letter by mail to all Associates. We plan to follow-up by personal phone call to clarify any questions that anyone has in a few months. We encourage you to respond by sending your financial gift to the Associate Relationship by adding that to the comment line on your check. We thank you for your consideration.

From July 1, 2017, through April 13, 2018, the "Associate Relationship" raised \$14,662 of our \$35,537 goal to become self-sustaining and offsetting the community's need to financially support the Associates. Of the \$14,662, \$1,146 was designated for scholarships for the Associate pilgrimage to Germany.

Special Thanks

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CDP Communications Manager

Photos: Linda Hoefflin, Sr. Emma Jean Middendorf
and Erin Middleton

Mark Your Calendar

St. Louis

April 28: Strategic Intent 7: Ketteler's 5th and 6th Sermons—Providence Center

May 20: Strategic Intent 3: Enhancing the Well-Being of our Members/Associates—Villa Meeting Rooms

Pittsburgh

November 10: Associates Enrichment Day—Providence Heights

Province-Wide

June 9,10,11: Annual Assembly—Providence Heights

Other

June 15,16,17: WPC Providence Event

June 15: WPC Commuter-only Invitation to Megan McKenna Presentation & Lunch-\$95 (optional dinner add \$12). Call Sr. Barbara McMullen at 314-209-9181 for more information.

Reminders

- **Have you activated your @cdpsisters.org email account?** Your @cdpsisters.org account is ready and waiting for you to claim it! Using this account will ensure secure and private delivery of the Sisters' latest news, information and documents. If you need help to login, contact Sr. Margie Walsh at 412-290-5526.
- **Sign up for the CDP Associates Facebook page!** If you haven't signed up yet, don't delay! Keep up with your Associate friends and view pictures of the latest Associate events. For help accessing our Facebook page, contact Shelley Johnsen at 412-366-1124.

Associate Birthdays

For a complete list of birthdays, please visit cdpsisters.org/AssociateBirthDeathAnniversaries. If you wish to receive a paper copy of the list, you may call Erin Middleton at 724-594-4606.