

Collaboration

Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province

The mission continues . . .

Sisters Put Their Efforts Into Advocacy

What do Sisters of Providence in Mother Joseph Province do today now that they no longer are running hospitals or schools? The answer is: Plenty!

Even the most elderly sisters are engaged in a ministry of prayer and presence. For others who remain active in the community, the ministry of advocacy – meeting needs and influencing policy – puts them at the forefront of a host of issues related to their central focus of social justice, reclaiming Earth, women and children in need and much more.

Every single day, Sisters of Providence are somewhere, striving to improve the lives of the most poor and vulnerable among us. Prayer, discernment and dialogue prepare them to act.

On March 16, Catholic Advocacy Day in Olympia, WA, four of the sisters from Mother Joseph Province were among 500 Catholics who descended on the Washington State Capitol to meet with officeholders in 49 legislative districts. They were in good company at this annual event sponsored by the Washington State Catholic



Sisters of Providence and Providence Associates gathered in Olympia, Wash., to prepare for individual meetings with Washington State legislators on Catholic Advocacy Day.

Conference, the Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center, the Archdiocese of Seattle, Catholic Community Services/ Catholic Housing Services (CCS/CHS), and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The day began at St. Michael Church in Olympia, WA, with briefings on legislative priorities identified by the state’s Catholic bishops, including criminal justice, housing, economic justice, and life and dignity issues. After Mass celebrated by Archbishop J. Peter Sartain, participants headed for meetings with individual legislators.

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From the director

Sister Barbara McMullen, CDP
WPC executive director



*“Hope is the thing with feathers, that perches
in the soul and sings the tune
without the words, and
never stops at all.” --Emily Dickinson*

Hope is one of our deepest Christian virtues and yet is one of the hardest to pin down or explain. It's part of the triad—faith, hope and love. In the Scriptures, it seems, we are to be a hopeful people. We are to find joy in hope, overflow with hope, boast in hope, and hold firmly to hope. We can endure trials because we have hope!

For us providence people, **hope** is not some wishy-washy feeling we are holding out for another day. It's more than simple optimism. It's even more than the proverbial half-full glass. **Hope** is trusting God and trusting what God has promised. One of my favorite Scripture passages is from Jeremiah 29: 11-14. It says in part: “I know well the plans I have in mind for you—plans for your welfare, not for woe—plans to give you hope and a future.” Then Jeremiah goes on to tell us what we must do on our part: “Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.” (vs. 12-13)

Hope is real, true, alive, a belief that all things work together for good. It awakens our faith that whatever

happens, God will be there. Actually, **God is already there** just waiting for us to step into that space still unknown to us. **Hope** is letting go and believing in the impossible. **Hope** accepts whatever happens because God is in charge! The spiritual life is to feed hope so we can bear the struggles and difficulties that life sometimes sends us and emerge the better—become what God intends for us. **Hope** involves dreams, visions, creativity. It's often the antidote to discouragement. If we believe that all things are possible with God, then hope can be a life-giving power in us. Joan Chittister, OSB, says: The spiritual task of life is to feed hope. It is not to be found outside of us. **Hope** lies in the spiritual life we cultivate within.”

The stories in this issue of Collaboration give witness to the tremendous hope of our Women of Providence congregations and the wonderful ministries they perform. They give credence to God's reality and power at work among us, in the church and in our world. Enjoy the great testimony to **hope** that shines through the articles. For our Sisters and Associates, faith and hope keep us going in the direction God is leading. We might not know what the future will bring, but we do know who's bringing it.

Happy spring and summering! Alleluia!

Barbara

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Sisters of Providence were well-prepared to discuss some heavy topics, among them the Housing Trust Fund, homeless housing and assistance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and the related Work First program, legal financial obligations of released prisoners, the Fair Chance Act, relieving former prisoners of having to disclose their previous incarceration on job forms; the Safe Surrender of Newborn Children law; and a law that would require posting of public notices in languages other than English.

As eager as the sisters were to interact with their legislators, they were especially delighted to find a group of seventh- and eighth-graders from St. Joseph School in Chehalis, WA, among their group. It is never too early to start thinking about the needs of others and trying to make a difference.

That was the aim of a faithful group of Sisters of Providence and Providence Associates who joined a group in downtown Seattle's Westlake Mall on Sunday, April 2, for a vigil to raise awareness about human trafficking. The monthly vigil, held from 1:30 to 2 p.m. on the first Sunday of each month, is one of many sponsored by the Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center, which provided a toolkit with signs and outreach suggestions. All that's needed to pull off a successful anti-trafficking vigil is informed minds and open hearts. Sisters of Providence who cannot make the outdoor vigil are happy to join in one at the same time at St. Joseph Residence in West Seattle.

There is even more social justice advocacy practiced by sisters who disseminate information and rally support for initiatives against the death penalty. Letter writing campaigns, petitions, speakers and participation in meetings and rallies keep sisters and others up to date on what is happening in this fast-changing arena. Mother Joseph Province has had a corporate stance against the death penalty since 2013.

Another corporate stance the sisters of the province adopted, in 2015, is in favor of comprehensive immigra-

tion reform. The action was taken "in response to the current crisis of refugees coming into our country from homelands racked by social unrest and extreme danger to their lives".

The sisters have experienced the scope of the crisis and the resulting trauma it inflicts on families firsthand. Two sisters assisted women and children who flooded the border between the United States and Mexico, fleeing from the threat of violence in Central American countries in 2015. As immigration issues have become

intensely focused on the southern border of the United States, sisters and associates who are part of the Peace Community and once made an annual pilgrimage to join the School of the Americas Watch at Fort Benning, GA, now find themselves going to the border at Nogales, AZ, to stand in support of refugees from Central America. Other sisters administer a scholarship program in El Salvador that for two decades has given young people in the Bajo Lempa region of

the Usulután an alternative to joining gangs or becoming gang victims.

Immigration remains a hot-button issue as the impact of a change in leadership in Washington, DC, begins to take shape. In addition to social media campaigns calling for 100 Days of Prayer for the new administration and a social media campaign calling for "Kindness," the sisters recently spoke out to denounce anti-Muslim immigration policies. Their words were:

The Sisters of Providence join their voices to those of the many U.S. faith groups that have spoken out in support of the humane treatment of refugees fleeing from violence in their homelands. The recent presidential ban on Muslim refugees ignores and contradicts basic human rights, as described in Catholic social teachings. The ban also violates the principles outlined in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed by the United Nations General



Sister Beverly Dunn (right) talks with a couple from South Carolina at the monthly anti-human trafficking vigil in downtown Seattle.

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New Leadership Team Sets Goals and Visits

At the General Chapter in July 2016, a new Congregational Leadership Team of four members was elected. The team envisioned intensifying their living of charism, internationality and unity for mission. Since 1975, the congregation has had three-member leadership teams. At this Chapter, the delegates affirmed electing a larger leadership team of four members so that together they would assume responsibility for the intercultural programs and international efforts which could build relationships, provide international experiences, and strengthen unity among us, as preparation for our future in a global world. Our Chapter delegates believed, “We live in the abundance of God’s Providence. This reality calls us to gratitude and to risk sharing with those in need.” Furthermore, a commitment was made to create “new ways of connecting with each other relationally and culturally.”

Soon after the transfer of office in November, 2016, the leadership team made trips to some areas of the congregation – a pilgrimage to Rome and Germany, visits with our Sisters in Germany, the country of our origin, and to significant places in our foundation, and also visits with our Sisters in Peru, one of the mission countries where our Sisters began in ministry in the early 1960’s. Other visits with Sisters in the U.S. and South Korea are planned.

We are beginning three major endeavors in order to share more information with all our Sisters and Associates. The first one is a strong focus on Communications, including: design of a congregational website, which will have links to each provinces’ website; an increase in dissemination of a congregational newsletter from two



***Congregational Leadership Team (left to right):
Sister Liberata Ricker - Germany, Sister Maria Fest.
Congregational Leader – US, Sister Mary Francis Fletcher -
US, Sister Rosa Eunsoon Kim – South Korea.***

to four issues per year, and publication of a monthly congregational e-news to provide regular updates.

The second focus is on Involvement, broadening participation and improving consultation within the community by: increasing the frequency of international board meetings, initiating planning groups to share in the exploration of changes needed for a viable future, as noted below, and planning ways to engage community members in discussion and feedback related to our shared congregational efforts to carry out our General Chapter directions.

Third, and by far the largest undertaking, is the estab-

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Meeting of Congregational Leadership with German Leadership

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Assembly in 1948 and setting out, for the first time, “fundamental human rights to be universally protected”. The right to asylum is among these rights.

As Sisters of Providence, we cannot stand in silence when government policies violate our beliefs about the dignity and rights of each human person. Instead, we stand in solidarity with refugees and people of faith who denounce such discriminatory policies as those banning refugees from predominantly Muslim countries.

Sisters of Mother Joseph Province also have taken a stand on protection of the environment. In 2006 they endorsed the Earth Charter and in 2009 they endorsed water as a basic human right. The sisters know that climate change is real and that it is a perilous threat to all and to the planet Earth. The sisters’ advocacy through the Reclaiming Earth Committee begins with sharing information through a weekly broadcast email called “Wednesday Earth Wisdom” and educating themselves about *Laudato Si’*, the encyclical by Pope Francis that intensified discussion of climate change worldwide. The sisters also have given their support to Native American tribes fighting fossil fuel transport.

In everything they do, the sisters of Mother Joseph Province are extremely conscious of the fact that those who are most harmed by the problems they advocate against

are those least likely to have a voice in what is happening to them: women and children in poverty. It is on behalf of them that the sisters actively support Jubilee Women’s Center in Seattle, which now includes the Providence sisters’ Sojourner Place ministry, and the intercommunity Transitions ministry in Spokane. These programs allow the sisters to help ensure the health, safety and security of the population that their foundress, Blessed Emilie Gamelin, first set out to serve in Montreal in 1848. The sisters are proud to carry on her tradition and legacy in this way.

These are some of the works of the sisters’ hands and their hearts, but they also actively use their voices for advocacy as members of a host of boards, a few of which follow:

- Catholic Legal Immigration Network
- Women of Providence in Collaboration
- Leadership Conference of Women Religious
- Providence Health International
- Mercy Housing Northwest
- Northwest Coalition for Responsible Investment
- UNANIMA International

As you can see, though the sisters of Mother Joseph Province are fewer in number and older in age than in years past, their commitment to and enthusiasm for their mission continues. Providence of God, we thank you for all!

New Leadership Team

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ishment of four international commissions, seeking an intergenerational and intercultural mix of members, with a hope of participation by some younger members and deepening involvement in leadership, while addressing issues related to: Finance, Formation, Governance, and Mission & Internationality. The commissions are being formed at this time; participants have been identified and an initial meeting with the chairs is planned in Rome in June; the areas of each one’s responsibility have, at least initially, been defined. The work of the commissions will be reviewed by

individuals and/or small groups before requesting feedback from all the members in processes which could lead us toward new models of communal living, lives of consecration, prayer and service.

We believe that together with all our Sisters and Associates we experience the abundance of God’s Providence in our lives, both personal and communal, and in our ministries every day. Our visits and meetings, conversations and exploration throughout the congregation have great potential to connect us relationally and culturally, to integrate our spirituality, our witness, and internationality, in ways which bring greater unity in diversity for the sake of Mission.

Mission Trip to Belize Sets Twin Relationship

Recently Sr. Paula Gohs, CDP and ten representatives of Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish in Solomons, Maryland, where Sr. Paula is pastoral associate, traveled to St. Peter Claver Catholic Church in Punta Gorda, Belize as a Mission Trip to establish a twinning relationship between the two parishes. They went as members of their parish Social Justice Committee to see firsthand what the needs are there and to report back to the parish. They came home with eyes open wide to the reality of our brothers and sisters in Be-

elize, as changed people who can in no way dismiss the people of other languages, cultures and traditions, because they were touched in a very personal manner. Sr. Paula said, "Once we know, we cannot live like we do not know."



Sister Paula and a representative of St. Peter Claver

Muslim Women Share Their Experiences in U.S.



On Saturday, April 3rd Sisters and Associates were blessed to listen to and dialogue with three gifted women who shared their experience and perspective on life in our country as a Muslim, an African-American and as an immigrant. "From Another View", the topic of the workshop, fulfilled its goal! The workshop was a result of a congregation wide focus on Racism, as a result of the call of the General Chapter: "Today in this world thirsty for justice, in search of hope, hungry for love, plunge into the ongoing creative plan of God; grapple with the ways of Providence. Be partners in the work of justice, challenging the systems that dominate and exclude."

Great Famine in Ireland - The Canadian Component

Kevin Moynihan produced a documentary on the great famine that devastated Ireland between 1845 and 1849. During that period, the deaths of more than one million were directly caused by the shortage of food, especially potatoes, and at least 800,000 others immigrated to Canada.

This documentary highlights the welcome that was given to the immigrants in Canada and the historical sites that bear witness to this massive disaster. A section is reserved for first responders: doctors, nurses, clergy and religious communities, including the Sisters of Providence guided by our foundress Emilie Tavernier-Gamelin. The role they played was paramount and is described as "heroic". They took care of thousands of Irish people suffering from typhus, endangering their own lives, and hosting hundreds of orphans. This was the first major arrival of refugees on Canadian soil. Here are some important landmarks to follow the viewing.

Historic Sites:

The Celtic Cross is located on Grosse Île, the Irish Memorial National Historic Site of Canada. This monument, as well as the entire park, honors the memory of the Irish immigrant victims of typhus of 1847-1848, recalling their tragic fate during the Great Famine. On this island of the St. Lawrence River, Quebec, where immigrants were quarantined on arrival in Canada, there are more than 6,000 people of Irish origin buried;

all were typhus victims. During the summer of 1847, a number

of Irish immigrants arrived in Montreal. Several were also suffering from the typhus epidemic.

The Black Rock is dedicated to the memory of over 6,000 men, women and children victims and to Montrealers who died of typhus trying to help them. This place of remembrance is located at the Montreal end of the Victoria Bridge linking the island to the South Shore of the St. Lawrence River.

The Arrival sculptural ensemble is located in Ireland Park on the shores of Lake Ontario, across from downtown Toronto. This site was erected in memory of more of 38,000 Irish who in 1847 fled the famine and moved to Toronto in search of a better life. Among them, more than 1,200 died of typhus.

First Responders:

The painting "Le Typhus" by Théophile Hamel illustrates the great devotion of religious communities during the typhus epidemic. A Grey Sister, a Sister of Providence and a Sister Hospitaller of Saint Joseph are depicted showing their dedication in caring for the sick at the risk of their own lives. Doctors, nurses, and priests also lost their lives in the battle against this terrible disease.

Here is the link to view the documentary:

English: <https://youtube/ZuKPBaUCq2E>

French: <https://youtube/173zQdXPzjY>

To learn more: View a video on our Facebook page about the dedication of the Sisters of Providence during the great typhus epidemic in Montreal, in English, French and Spanish: <https://www.facebook.com/Providenceintl1843/>



Le Typhus



*The
Black
Rock*



The Arrival

Public Prayerful Rally for Immigrants Opens Chapter

By Sister Guadalupe Ramirez, MCDP, Assoc. Professor of Pastoral Theology, Mexican-American Catholic College

Our community, the Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence, opened Chapter unlike any other in the past by inviting the people of San Antonio, TX, to join us in a public and prayerful rally for immigrants on the morning of March 21st in the city's downtown main plaza.

The inspiration came from the Holy Spirit as our Chapter Planning Committee members shared the heartfelt anguish held in common regarding the impact the President's proposed "ban" is having on immigrant families. In our various ministries, our community serves and supports causes for the poor, however, we had never ventured to initiate and sponsor an event with the participation of every member present. With only eleven days before Chapter, we succeeded in securing presenters, equipment, and all the necessary permits that people said would take a month to obtain. Providence provided!

The rally took place at the Main Plaza in front of San Fernando Cathedral in the center of downtown. There were many providential moments in the short time of preparation that made the event possible, proof that

the Spirit was leading our work. Through the generosity of several religious orders and the laity, all committed to the same cause, everything fell into place!

Over a hundred people responded to our invitation to stand in solidarity with immigrants, especially our closest neighbors, the Hispanic people who are being considered enemies and a threat to our national security. While some of the attendees marched in silence for several blocks with a police escort, those unable to walk remained at the plaza praying and singing.

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Over a hundred people marched in silence for several blocks with a police escort.



The rally took place at the Main Plaza in front of San Fernando Cathedral in the center of downtown.

Chapter Opens with Public Prayerful Rally

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When the march was over, several dynamic speakers took the stage. According to their profession, each gave a 7 minute presentation on the impact the recent mandates being enforced are having on families; especially on mothers and their children and young adults who are fleeing their countries because of poverty, hunger, and the cartels.

Willie Hernandez, immigration attorney, offered information on the availability of legal assistance. Sister Denise La Rock, D.C., who volunteers at the detention center, described how help is needed on any given late night to offer temporary lodging to mothers with children left at the bus station after being released from the center; individuals and groups were encouraged to donate backpacks with toiletries for the bus journey. Regina Martinez, a college student,



spoke about her friends who fear that their DACA status will be canceled and will no longer be allowed to study in this country. Catholic Charities of San Antonio was represented by Jose Antonio Fernandez, CEO, who described the various collaborative services available for undocumented refugees.

The rally was a concrete way for our community to address its desire to recommit to its Mission, Community and Stewardship in today's times, a desire which was formalized at our last Chapter when we embarked on a Transformational Journey a little over 3 years ago with facilitators, Ted Dunn, PhD and Beth Lipsmeyer, PhD.

The fact that we were physically side by side at the rally as a community flamed the hot embers in our hearts as we reconnected to the charism of our foundress, Sr. Benitia Vermeersch, CDP. Her love for the Mexican refugees, who fled Mexico into Houston in the 1920's during the revolution, compelled her to solicit food, clothing and shelter for these families. She invited young women to join her not only in responding to the material needs of the poor, but also their spiritual need

for catechetical instruction and reception of the Sacraments. She would often remind her catechists that one cannot catechize children about God if their stomachs are empty.

Needless to say, the rest of our week in Chapter was not routine. As we reflected on our experience, we became more determined than before to be part of the change for immigration reform and vowed not be silent as a congregation or in our places of ministry. We will collaborate more earnestly with the efforts already in place by other groups and take our own initiatives as well as we are led by the Spirit.

When we meet for the second of our four Chapter ses-



sions in July, the first day will begin with a gathering of people we invited a few days after the rally: Religious, lay community leaders, rally participants, and people who have expressed interest in partnering with each other in this cause. We trust Providence will provide as we accompany families who have undertaken treacherous journeys to seek safe and dignified lives. Our trust is also in our loving Mother under the title of Guadalupe, Patroness of our congregation, who left her image on St. Juan Diego's tilma (cloak) over 500 years ago as an everlasting reminder that the poorest of the poor are favored by God.

Province Receives First Associates in Dominican Republic

During an installation service on March 12, 2017—the feast of the Transfiguration—the Marie de la Roche Province received 21 women and 5 men as the first Associates in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

These Associates completed 11 months of preparation and participated in a day of retreat as their final inquiry program activity. During the retreat, the group reflected on the theology of Providence and the ways in which God can be present through their acts of justice and compassion and inclusive, hospitable presence; identified how they can be Providence made visible in their solidarity with the marginalized as they work for just salaries, the right to education, equal

treatment for women, the creation of new jobs and the sustainability of the earth's resources; and also reflected on their compassion for people in need, caring for children by providing them with security and stability, and welcoming strangers and those who are different. A deep sense of commitment to taking time for prayer and group work was evident among the participants. This group of new Associates includes individuals who were children when the Sisters arrived in Las Cañitas, Santo Domingo, 24 years ago; neighbors and leaders committed to the Church and the local community; and Sister Wendolyn Lopez Santos' mother Lelén and brother Deivy. They are hard workers, respectful people and faithful partners of the Sisters.



At the Associate reception ceremony, Juana Rodriguez Garcia, Camelita Gonzalez Tabarez, Ana Antonia Rosario Checo light Providence candles in front of pictures of Mother Marie and Bishop Kettler, and the group presents their petitions in prayer

The love these Associates received from Sisters Myriam Colon Cruz, Mary Providence Kriley and Monika Mrosek during their months of preparation created a strong bond.

At a reception following the installation service, all of the new Associates proclaimed together, “*Somos Providencia* (We are Providence).” It was a Tabor moment—a reference to the Transfiguration—where the glory of God was shining on their faces, and they understood that they are called to be close to the people of God; to be Providence in the midst of the people.



The new Associates shout “Somos Providencia”...“We are Providence!”

Sisters Add Voice to Immigration Support

One of the first actions of the newly elected Marie de la Roche Leadership team was its statement of disagreement with the President's January 27, 2017, Executive Order: Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States.

The Marie de la Roche Province of the international Congregation of the Sisters of Divine Providence is a community of more than 400 women religious and Associates in the United States and the Caribbean. They are committed to: cherishing intercultural and international ties; striving for right relationships with all; living and promoting every form of non-violence; courageously risking being marginalized; and generously sharing even in the midst of scarcity.

The Leadership Team and the Peace and Justice Committee joined with other members of the community to publicly add their voices to those of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, The Catholic Sisters of Western Pennsylvania, the U.S. Catholic Bishops and Bishop David Zubik of the Pittsburgh Diocese. They are compelled to proclaim their strong disagreement and opposition to the executive order concerning immigration and refugee resettlement.

The sisters came to this country as immigrants to min-

ister to immigrants in health care and education. For more than 140 years they have been, in the words of their founder Bishop Emmanuel von Ketteler, "ever ready to aid our suffering, needy neighbors."



Sister Zita Telkamp and infant at La Posada

One of the community's sponsored institutions, La Posada Providencia in San Benito, TX, is a refuge for asylum seekers to the United States. Working with Homeland Security, La Posada has helped over 8,600 people be resettled in the U.S. The Province has sisters ministering in Clinton, NC, striving to enable young people, who were brought to this country as children, to obtain documentation through the DACA legislation. The current executive order to ban people from selected countries with Muslim majority populations and indefinitely suspend resettlement of Syrian refugees, goes counter to all the sisters believe in as Christians and as women religious, who remain committed to the biblical mandate to "welcome the stranger in our midst."

The sisters will continue to welcome refugees and aid immigrants at La Posada Providencia and work to end unnecessary deportations, especially for the children brought to this country. The sisters also pledge to support legislation that remedies the current flawed immigration system.

Sisters Participate in Storytelling Event

Standup Sisters: Border Crossings, a storytelling event held at La Roche College in Pittsburgh on March 14 as part of National Catholic Sisters Week, featured Sisters Betty Sundry and Nélica Naveros Cordova, along with Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill, St. Joseph of Baden, and Sinsinawa (WI) Dominicans. The inspiring evening featured the personal stories of these courageous women working with people across global borders.



Sister Betty Sundry, right, and Sister Nélica Naveros Cordova

"One of the most pressing issues of our time is how we support our neighbors in need here and abroad to become the best they can be," said Standup Sisters producer Jennifer Szweda Jordan. "The women who spoke at Standup Sisters have lived with the most vulnerable people within and outside of our borders. Their stories provide a more holistic view of the challenges and the joys of being one human family."

De Paul Center Major Renovation Project Completed

The Sisters of Providence officially welcomed with a ribbon cutting ceremony this past December 16 Mercy Care Alliance (MCA), a care management program, and the administrative offices of Mercy Continuing Care Network as the most recent tenants in their de Paul Center. Located in West Springfield, Mass., the de Paul Center is part of The Hillside at Providence, a campus being redeveloped by the Sisters of Providence to serve the needs of elders.

The most recent renovations to the de Paul Center included new plumbing, wiring and painting, the addition of a kitchen and break room, a redesign of bathrooms and reconfiguration of the various offices, workspaces and more.

Sister Kathleen Popko, SP president, commented that “The completion of this renovation project means that two thirds of the de Paul Center is now renovated and occupied; we are now planning to move forward with the leasing of the second floor. The full development of the de Paul Center,” she noted, “is part of our larger vision to redevelop the entire The Hillside at Providence campus into a comprehensive resource for elders, including the building of a new 36-unit affordable elder housing complex.”

Debra Marquis, director of MCA, her staff of 24, and Christopher McLaughlin, COO of the Sisters of Providence Health System’s Mercy Continuing Care Network and Vera Postell, senior administrative assistant, took occupancy of their new offices in mid-November.

Since their arrival, both offices are in immediate proximity to colleagues in four additional network programs offering elder health services at the de Paul Center: Mercy Home Care, Mercy Hospice, and Mercy Companions on the other half of the first floor, and Mercy LIFE, a PACE program (Programs of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly). MCA works closely with these other programs to provide assistance to elder clients.

Now on site, MCA staff can work face-to-face with their colleagues in these other programs instead of over the phone or through e-mail messages.

According to Marquis, being under the same roof improves the quality of care they can offer patients. “We do a much better job for the patient being at the same location, being able to collaborate. Now we can go down the hall, sit down with colleagues and formulate a care plan for a patient. It’s a good fit,” said Marquis.



Taking part in the ribbon cutting for the newest offices in the de Paul Center are (from left): John Wesolowski, SP CFO; Christopher McLaughlin, Senior VP and COO, Mercy Continuing Care Network; Randy Locklin, general contractor; Debra Marquis, Director, MCA; Sister Kathleen Popko; Roger Korell, director of facilities operations, Providence Place; and Dr. Scott Wolf, Sisters of Providence Health System president.

Breaking Chains of Discrimination— Three Congregations Cosponsor Presentation

Shannen Dee Williams, Ph.D. gave a riveting account of the history of the nation's black Catholic Sisters on February 12 in the Mont Marie Chapel, Holyoke. The event was cosponsored by the Daughters of the Heart of Mary (DHM), the Sisters of St. Joseph (SSJ), and the Sisters of Providence (SP) for the Sisters and Associates in their respective communities.

Dr. Williams is currently a distinguished lecturer for the Organization of American Historians; and a scholar-in-residence at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York City, where she is working to complete *Subversive Habits: Black Nuns and the Long Struggle to Desegregate Catholic America*, a book laying bare the harsh realities of black Sisters' religious lives.

Yet, if the book mirrors Dr. Williams' presentation, it will include a message of hope. For despite the indignities black Sisters endured—at the hands of the Church they loved and, more often than not, by the religious communities they served—they persevered in both their faith and their calls to religious life.

Dr. Williams spoke on her book's subject at the 2016 LCWR Assembly (Leadership Conference of Women

Religious) last August. Prior to her delivery, the LCWR set the context for her talk by drafting a resolution on racism that commits LCWR members "...to examine the root causes of injustice, particularly racism, and our own complicity as congregations, and to work to effect systemic change as we struggle to establish economic justice, abolish modern-day slavery, ensure immigrant rights, promote nonviolence, and protect Earth and its biosphere. We...commit to using our collective voice, resources, and power in collaboration with others to establish justice which reflects God's abundant love and desire that all may have life."



Dr. Shannen Dee Williams, PhD

Assembly's participants also took part in a planned social justice action by writing how they, as individuals, had not been welcoming to women of color in the past. They then wove their responses together to create a paper chain, reminiscent of the chains of black slavery. Then, blessing each other with forgiveness and mercy, they symbolically broke through those chains. And, in an impromptu social justice action, a group of LCWR leaders organized a peace walk to Atlanta's Centennial Olympic Park in front of the National Center for Civil and Human Rights.

Sister Kathleen Popko, SP president, expressed her gratitude to Anita Baird, DHM "for engaging us and the SSJs in collectively sponsoring Dr. Williams' presentation on the powerful, untold story of black women religious in the U.S. We need to bring this history to light and examine our role in their segregation and exclusion."



Sister Miriam Najimy, DHM (at podium) led a ritual honoring 12 black women religious who suffered racial discrimination. Taking part were (from left) Sisters Anita Baird, DHM, Maxyne Schneider, SSJ and Kathleen Popko, SP.

Committee Work is Mission Work

Sister Ruth McGoldrick is firm in her belief that committee and board work are critically important to the success of an organization. That said, she has an impressive history of saying “Yes” to invitations to serve on both. Among her commitments is her nearly 25 years of board service for the Sisters of Providence Health System, where she currently chairs the System’s Mission Committee. And, her local position as chairperson results in her additional service on the Regional Mission Committee for Trinity Health–New England. Sister Ruth says, “Both Committees are kept abreast of what is happening in health care nationally and on the local level. And, their members are dedicated to enabling and sustaining Catholic health care, its mission and values, and are committed to addressing the needs of the poor and vulnerable.”

Sister Ruth enjoys committee work, and in particular, service on the Program Committee for Genesis Spiritual Life and Conference Center in Westfield. “I have contributed to Genesis since its founding in 1976,” Sister Ruth noted, “and am always eager to learn of and introduce new trends in theology and spirituality to Genesis.”

She has fostered a keen interest in BioSpiritual Focusing since 1976. That was the year she met Dr. Eugene Gendlin, founder of the International Focusing Institute, and was able to work and travel with Fathers Ed McMahon and Peter Campbell who saw in Gendlin’s work implications for Christian spirituality.

“Focusing has to do with the experiencing process itself,” Sister Ruth explained, “and how meaning unfolds within us through gaining access to our own bodily wisdom. Of all I have studied or taught this is my favorite as people, through BioSpiritual Focusing, move more deeply and quickly in their spiritual lives through its practice. Most people who come to me for retreats or spiritual direction are into BioSpiritual Focusing.” She also has a strong penchant for writing about that subject and on Providence spirituality. Several of her articles on these topics appear in periodicals previously



Sister Ruth McGoldrick seated at her alcove work station in her apartment at Providence Place.

produced by the Women of Providence in Collaboration (WPC). Next she will have a reflection in WPC’s spring 2017 publication that will highlight compassion and Providence themes.

That publication will also include a contribution from the Congregation’s late Sister Joan Mullen.

Outside of her committee, board and writing work, Sister Ruth says, “I am just happy being a Sister of Providence for the past 62 years. I am grateful for God’s loving Providence to me, and I try to be a provident presence to others.”

Designing for Life: 7th Annual Convocation of the Associates of the Congregation of Divine Providence

By CDP Associate Mary Francine Danis

“Dragging a corpse around is not an example of viability!” With that statement, Ann Gotfryd led Associates and Sisters into the material of the 2017 ACDP Convocation. The corpse in question was a character (if you can call him that) in the 1989 comedy *Weekend at Bernie’s*. In contrast to the image of the corpse, Ann offered insights into a key feature of life—namely, metabolism, the process by which we take in substances and convert them into energy.

Ann Gotfryd, a citizen of Canada, is an associate of the *Congrégation de Notre-Dame*. A retired educator, she serves on the Board of Directors for the North American Conference of Associates and Religious (NACAR). She drew parallels between the work of Father Pierre Fourier and Sister Alix Le Clerc in the late 1590s and that of Father Jean Martin Moye in the mid-1700s. In both cases, the founders set out to establish groups of laywomen who could go into the villages of France, providing free education for girls. In time, these groups of educators became new religious congregations (in the case of Fourier and Le Clerc, the *Canonesses of St. Augustine*, which gave rise in the 17th century to the *Congrégation de Notre-Dame* in Canada; and in the case of Moye, the *Congregation of Divine Providence*, which sent Sisters to the United States in the mid-19th century). These congregations eventually shared their charisms with lay people through Associate programs.

Ann used the image of forsythia to illustrate the process of growth. Where the weight of its branches pulls it to the ground, forsythia can form new roots. Likewise, the weight of social and economic circumstances impelled founders such as Fourier, Le Clerc, and Moye to imagine new possibilities. (For further reflection on the forsythia image, see Ann’s posting to the NA-

CAR website on April 1, 2017 at <http://www.nacar.org/nacarneews/nacar-board-messages/230-ann-gotfryd-shares-the-hope-of-spring.html>.)

The process of imagining is actually the second step in the cycle of energy production as Ann described it. The whole cycle involves four steps: awareness, dreaming, building, and sharing. Through awareness, we increase our consciousness of our history and its implications for the present. By dreaming, we develop a shared vision of possibilities. Through building, we turn vision into reality, working to fulfill our mission. Finally, we engage in sharing, offering witness and strengthening the bonds of community. Because sharing engenders new awareness of both joys and challenges, the cycle can become a constantly-renewing spiral.

By connecting the cycle of metabolism with the 2017-2023 Chapter Statement, Ann challenged us with many questions: How do we tell stories of our heritage in a way that makes sense to people today? How does our current reality affirm life? Where do we feel the most intense pressures? How do we foster a passion for the future?



Associate Karen Koller, Sister Anna Rose Bezner and Ana Maria De La Portilla, Director of the Office of Associates, work on their Chapter Statement responses.

As we design ways to bridge the past and the future, Ann suggested that we honor the contributions of various types of leaders. For this part of her presentation, she drew on a book by Judi Neal, *Edgewalkers: People and Organizations That Take Risks, Build*

Bridges, and Break New Ground. Neal says that some people are edge-walkers (envisioning possibilities and taking on great risks); some are flame-keepers (tending the original vision); others are hearth-tenders (carrying out the day-to-day work of maintaining the group); still others are place-holders (keeping us aware of our heritage and reminding us of our limits); and finally, some are “doom-sayers” (making us aware of one an-

Continued on page 17

Richness in Poverty

By Sister Rose Ann Blair, CDP

Over 35 years ago I was invited to South Texas by Fr. Horacio Chavarria to minister with him at the three churches that cover the southern part of Willacy County: Prince of Peace, St. Martin of Tours and Santa Monica. I was to be the parish minister who traveled among the three churches to coordinate all the religious education programs, youth ministry and Eucharistic minister training, a taxing yet rewarding mission I fully embraced.

Upon my arrival I quickly noticed the divide within the community: those who lived in nicer, brick houses and those who lived in cinder block houses and lacked a proper sewage system. I felt called to truly experience the poverty of these communities and chose to live in a cinder block home. As the only non-Hispanic in the community, I felt this was the first step toward gaining trust.

My home was at St. Martin in Sebastian, Texas – the home of field and day laborers. Sebastian had one paved street and a make-shift sewer system. The reality of this community included having to use a sump pump to pump the septic tanks when there was a heavy rain. This was necessary to survive the rains that came down to Sebastian from Raymondville and other towns located on a higher plateau. I joined the people in these efforts that started as an ordeal and became a normal way of life. The trust blossomed, friendships bloomed and our ministries flourished.

I was blessed to have members of the community reach out to help me as a sign of gratitude and respect for my work. The feeling was mutual indeed. On the weekends, I would cook a pot of beans to last a week. An elderly lady named Rosa would bring me two tortillas with huevos con chorizo (eggs with Mexican style

sausage); such a simple contribution, yet it tasted like a feast. Another elder from the community, Chamina, took care of my laundry on a weekly basis. She used a scrub board, under a tree in her yard to wash my clothes. Although this took a toll on my apparel, the effort, love and dedication touched my heart. One family at Prince of Peace took me under their wings and provided for my other needs. The biggest challenge I had was the language. Most families only spoke Spanish, so I had to learn the language to relate to the people.

When it was my turn to give the homily, Chamina would teach me four sentences in Spanish for the Gospel message. This experience really humbled me and I was grateful.

Among the many examples of how we lived below the poverty level, the most poignant experience of this reality was during the burial services of family members. One particular burial touched me deeply. This family asked me to bury their baby infant and I remember it vividly to this day. The

services of a funeral home were impossible to obtain. The grandfather made a wooden box that was covered in soft pink fabric. This box was used as the coffin. The services were held at their home by their altar (a site found in every home.) When it was time to leave to the cemetery, the grandfather came and placed the cover on the little pink coffin and nailed it shut. To me, this was another sign of stark poverty. They placed the coffin in an old station wagon and drove to the humble cemetery. The father got into the grave and received the little coffin and placed it down into the gravesite. Elder men stood by, holding their shovels, and when it was time, began to shovel the dirt on top of the grave. All stood and watched as a beautiful mound was created over the gravesite. After the family recited the Hail Mary, Our Father and Glory Be in Spanish, I closed with a prayer,



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Designing for Life: Convocation of the Associates

Continued from page 15

other's fears and grounding us in the reality of personal life). We need all kinds of leaders, Ann reminded us, as we carry out the designs of Providence.

No matter how we participate in our shared mission, we need to make our participation visible. Ann provided one more image to emphasize this point. She mentioned that she used to enjoy camping with her family, and they learned that a safety kit for campers should include a bright ribbon to tie to a branch if they got lost. The point was to make the lost camper's part of the forest look "not like the forest." In other words, by standing out in a positive way, we can provide a shining witness that our world needs.

After lunch, Sister Ann Petrus offered a "state of the Congregation" overview, and she introduced Sister Pearl Cesar, who will take office as Superior General in June 2017. Sister Pearl, originally from Alexandria, Louisiana, has worked for many years in community

organizing with the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF); she is currently the Executive Director of the job-training program Project Quest.

To help us see how we can make the leap from dreaming to building, we saw videos and heard presentations by representatives of several Congregational ministries: Madonna Neighborhood Center, McCullough Hall Nursing Center, Moye Retreat Center, and Mobile Ministry. Each group suggested possibilities for participating in their work and their spirit.

Finally, we reviewed the Chapter Statement and attempted a creative response. Using colored markers on four-inch squares of paper, we wrote phrases and/or images that resonated for us. The planning group assembled these squares by weaving yarn through holes punched in the squares. This mini-quilt, placed in a window, presented a visual summary of our day's reflections on the "designs of Providence."

Richness in Poverty

Continued from page 16

also in Spanish. I left after serving them for seven years, yet this experience remains in my heart.

After my departure, many years of collecting nickels, dimes and quarters followed until enough money was raised to build the new mission church of St. Martin. I was invited to participate in the dedication ceremony that took place on January 22, 2017. It was so wonderful to be with the community. Memories of Rosa who brought me my daily meals returned. Visiting with Chamina who washed my laundry and taught me the four sentences in Spanish renewed our deep love and respect for one another. It was a joyful time to see the church filled to capacity. I learned that the building of the new church had awakened many souls to come back to Mass.

This was one of my happiest missions; they sincerely loved me and they recognized and trusted me because I had no hidden agenda. I walked in their shoes....

I chose to live among the people and like the people. Although by all human measure I was living in poverty and among the poor, I must say we were rich. The richness was founded on the strong faith of the community and their deep love for the sacraments and their total dependence on God. They truly followed our founder, Blessed Jean-Martin Moye's example to expect everything from God. I can now say I answered the call of Pope Francis to live among the poor. It is truly worth answering this call because it is in giving that you receive.

Statue Dedication Marks 175th Anniversary of the First SP Mission School

The Sisters of Providence opened their first mission school, St. Joseph School, in Jasper, IN, in 1842. In March, St. Joseph Catholic Church celebrated the 175th anniversary of the school's opening by dedicating a statue of Saint Mother Theodore Guerin, foundress of the SPs. The statue was created by Nick Ring, a Jasper native who attended the school and was taught by the sisters.

More than 20 SPs and Associates attended the celebration, which also included a dramatic presentation based on "The Journals and Letters of Mother Theodore," by Providence Associate Sandra Hartlieb, Mass celebrated by Most Reverend Bishop Charles Thompson, D.D., JCL, of Evansville, and a reception followed the statue blessing/dedication.

A total of 218 SPs have ministered at St. Joseph Parish, as well as Precious Blood, Holy Family, 5th Street School, 10th Street School and Jasper Middle School. More than 708 SPs are from Dubois County, where Jasper is located, or its neighbor, Spencer County. Sixty-five



of those sisters were from St. Joseph Parish. The school has since closed and the last academic year an SP ministered there was 2001-2002. Sister Carolyn Bouchard currently serves as the director of the healing ministry at the Church.

Eight Women Attend Come and See Event

Women in various stages of discernment attend the Come and See vocation retreat so it's important that the Sisters of Providence can tailor the event to meet their individual spiritual needs.

Nine women registered and eight attended on March 31-April 2 at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, IN, and each found a stepping stone to the next part of their journey.



Sister Editha Ben

Vocation Director Sister Editha Ben, SP, said, "The group as a whole was very engaged. The women in formation said the quality of questions that the guests asked were really mature and serious questions." Some of the women said that talking with

the sisters and hearing what they went through was very helpful to them in their own discernment journey.

Sister Editha facilitates the weekend but other sisters, many who are in formation themselves, help plan specific activities. After a the women register, Sister Editha contacts them to find out more about them. Saturday afternoon is designed so the women can choose three activities from a list, such as taking a campus tour, visiting White Violet Center for Eco-Justice, walking the labyrinth or cosmic walk, talking one-on-one with the New Membership Team, Eucharistic adoration or spending quiet time by themselves. "We try to respond to the individual woman's level of discernment," said Sister Editha. For Mass and lunch, the women are given a sister companion so they can get to know as many sisters as possible.

Sisters Paula Modaff and Patty Fillenwarth shared their personal discernment journeys and one woman

Continued on page 19

Fall Program Schedule Announced

Bringing people together to exchange ideas and see the world from a different perspective has never been more important than it is now. The stresses of everyday life coupled with the all the conflict in the world have people feeling scared, unsure, and disconnected. It was with this in mind that the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods have crafted their 2017-2018 programming schedule which begins in September. Two new programs this fall were chosen to give people an opportunity to experience an awakening of the senses and spirit and find comfort in knowing that we all are in this together.

Writer, storyteller and facilitator, Jan Phillips, will present her workshop, "No Time for Ordinary", September 29-30 at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods where she will connect the dots between creativity, spirituality and inspired action. She is the co-founder and Executive Director of the Livingkindness Foundation, co-founder of Syracuse Cultural Workers, and producer of the art and activism symposium Women's Voices for (a) Change. Jan is the author of eight award-winning books and has presented



workshops around the world on a one-woman peace pilgrimage. She has performed with Pete Seeger, taught with Jane Goodall, worked with Mother Teresa. She is a performing artist with three CDs of original music

and several DVDs that provoke original thinking and prophetic action.

Racism. Hate crimes. Love. Islam. Culture. Language. Life. On October 27, *Unveiled*, a one woman play written and performed by critically acclaimed Chicago playwright and solo performance artist Rohina Malik, will be performed at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. Five Muslim women in a post-9/11 world serve tea and uncover what lies beneath the veil in this critically acclaimed one-woman show.



Rohina Malik was born and raised in London, England, of South Asian heritage. Her one-woman play *Unveiled* was developed and had its world premiere at the 16th Street Theater, where it received critical acclaim. *Unveiled* has been presented at theaters in the United States, Canada and in the summer of 2016, South Africa. Rohina is a proud member of the Dramatists Guild of America.

For more information on attending programs at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods you can call 812-535-2952 or email jfrost@spsmw.org. Registration for these and all 2017-2018 programs will be available online at Events.SistersofProvidence.org.

Eight Women Attend Come and See Event

Continued from page 18

mentioned that when she heard Sister Paula's story, she "felt as if God was talking through her to me." The women who attended the weekend felt the "welcoming spirit of the all the sisters."

Women had the opportunity to meet informally with some of the newest members, ask questions about what it's really like to join a religious community, get to know the spirituality and mission of the Congregation,

learn more about the life and legacy of Saint Mother Theodore Guerin and meet other women seeking a joy-filled life.

The fall discernment weekend date is November 3-5 in case you know of any young women considering religious life and who share in the charism of Providence.

WPC Board Meets

On a sunny and beautiful spring day the WPC board met in early April at the CDP motherhouse in San Antonio, TX. Eleven members of the board were present for the two day meeting, some for the very first time. The meeting began with prayer and then the chair, Karin Dufault, SP, called the meeting to order.

The full board meets annually and the Executive Committee of the board also meets in the Fall each year. The business of the meeting days includes a review of past minutes, previous board tasks, many reports from the Executive Director on the status of all WPC projects, sub-group meetings, publications, and financial reports by the Treasurer, as well as a performance review of the Executive Director. All board members are asked to give feedback on Sr. Barbara's performance to the Board Chair. Then the Executive Committee prepares a report, given orally to Barbara, and during the meeting the whole board hears the report given and is free to add anything to it.

Topics of greatest discussion at this meeting included the two new publications WPC is getting ready to publish. Members were shown each of the books:



WPC board members

First row: Ann Petrus, CDP, Judith Desmarais, SP, Esther Guerrero, MCDP;

Second row: Karin Dufault, SP, Sandra Shannon, SP, Barbara McMullen, CDP;

Third row: Kathleen Popko, SP, Alice Gerdeman, CDP, Alice Marie Lyon, CDP;

Top row: Dawn Tomaszewski, SP and Maria Fest, CDP



New Executive Committee

front: Dawn Tomaszewski, SP and Judith Desmarais, SP; back: Sandra Shannon, SP and Esther Guerrero, MCDP

Providence and Compassion: a collection of personal reflections from multiple disciplines; and The Art of Providence, a 165-page resource of original poetry, prayers, rituals, music, reflections and artwork that speak to our common charism of "providence." Order forms are included in the spring/summer issue of Collaboration, pages 21 and 23.

The other topic that had much discussion was the upcoming Providence Event scheduled for June 15-17, 2018. The Core Team has been busy planning and Sr. Barbara was excited to show the board all the work that has already been done. Look for the registration materials to be sent in the Fall. Be sure and put this event on your calendar. In our world today, we are in much need of peace, so the theme of this event is: Echoing the Providence of Peace in an Intercultural World. Megan McKenna and Bishop Thomas Gumbleton are featured speakers.

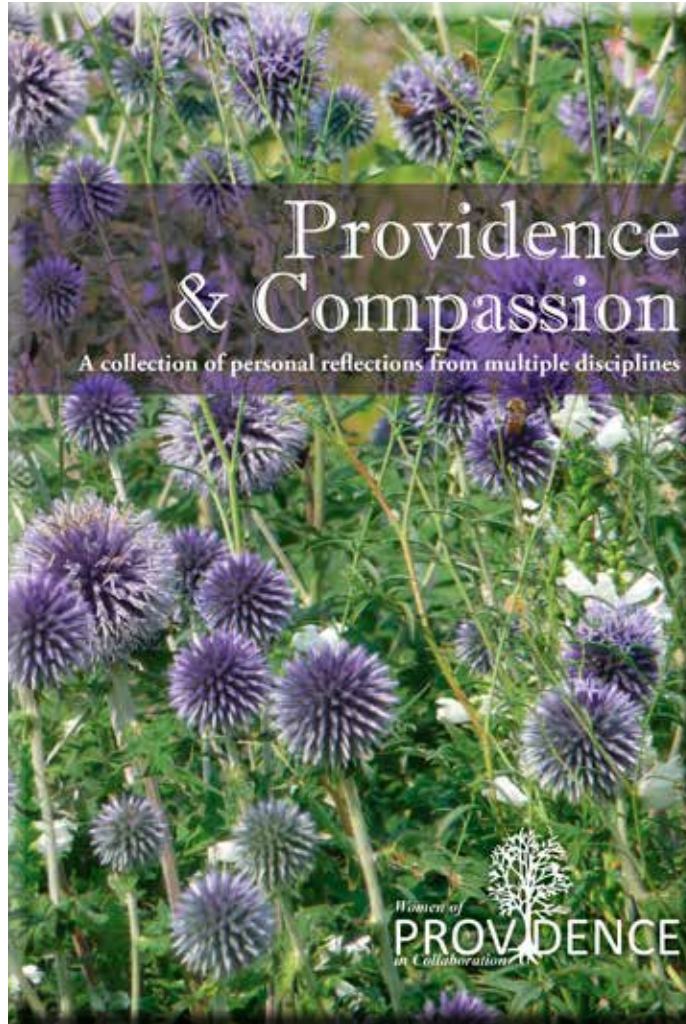
At the annual meeting elections of new officers also takes place. Nominations were sought and voting took place. Sandra Shannon, SP, from Kingston, Ontario was elected as Chair. Dawn Tomaszewski, SP, from Terre Haute, IN, was elected as Vice-Chair. Esther Guerrero, MCDP, was re-elected as Treasurer as was Judith Desmarais, SP, re-elected as Secretary. Terms are two years with a renewable term of office. Congratulations to our new Executive Committee officers! The meeting concluded with a farewell and blessing for outgoing board members. We then enjoyed a delicious Tex-Mex dinner on the famous San Antonio Riverwalk!



Providence & Compassion

Within this new and inspiring publication, nine Women of Providence share their understanding of Providence and Compassion through the lens of their lived experience in ministry and community life. These shared personal reflections will expand awareness and appreciation of the intimate link between Providence and Compassion in the lives of not only the author but also within the life of the reader.

Compassion has been personified in Jesus and his ministries, and is central to the charism of Providence women wherever they minister.



You will see how Providence and Compassion are expressed in diverse ministries. You also can discover similarities with your own living and ministry experiences as well as gain new insights from each author. Questions for personal and communal reflection are included with each essay.

This 58-page collection on providence theology and spirituality is a good resource to use with people in formation, in local houses, our providence retreat centers, bookstores in our sponsored colleges and universities, mission departments in our healthcare facilities, and for personal growth and reflection.

Providence and Compassion

**US \$13 single book, plus US \$3 shipping/handling; add US \$1 shipping for each additional book up to 10 copies
US \$10 per book if ordering more than 10 copies; add \$5 shipping/handling; for each additional book over 10,
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**Women of Providence in Collaboration
Providence Event
June 15-17, 2018, Kearns Spirituality Center
Allison Park, Pennsylvania**

*Echoing the Providence of Peace
in an Intercultural World!*

**Speaker will be
Megan McKenna**
An internationally known
author, theologian,
storyteller and lecturer,
she teaches at several
colleges and
universities and leads
retreats, workshops and
parish missions.
Megan was appointed an
Ambassador of Peace for
Pax Christi in 2002.

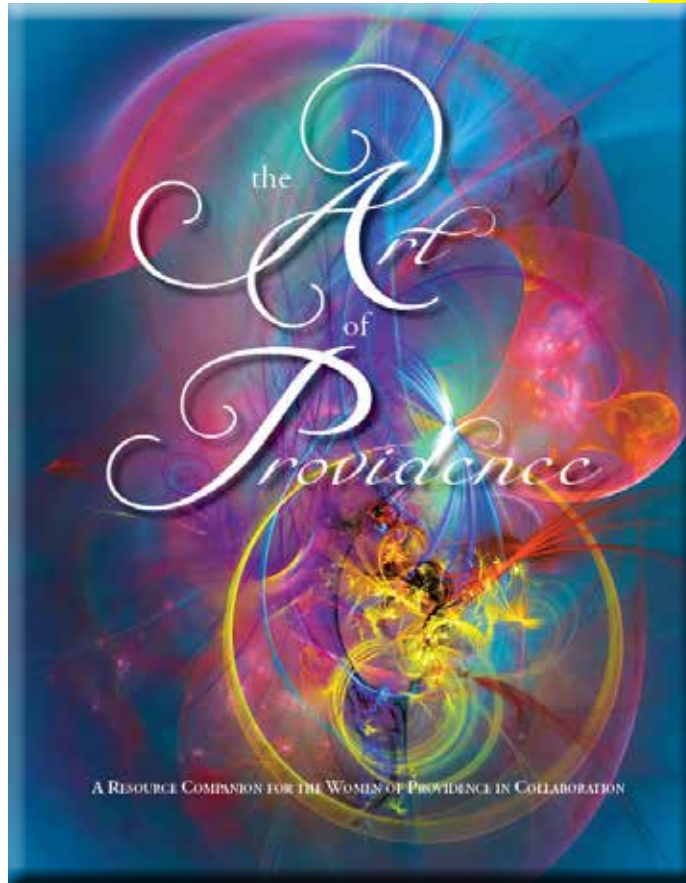


Join the echo!

Plus, a special Saturday
evening program honoring
Bishop Thomas Gumbleton!

The Art of Providence

Women of Providence in Collaboration is excited to announce its new publication, *The Art of Providence*. This is a beautiful resource book of prayers, poetry, prayer rituals, music, photos, reflections and artwork by various Sisters and Associates in our Providence congregations. The authors have shared their talents with us in a variety of ways. Each of them seeks to express their understandings of Providence through particular art forms.



The contributions witness to the movement of Providence among and within us and we are pleased to share them with a wider audience. Whether you use the book as a resource in your ministry or for your own personal spiritual reading and prayer, you will encounter the God we name Providence.

This 165-page beautiful resource book could be a valuable book for local convents, retreat centers, formation houses as well as it would make a wonderful gift for someone.

The Art of Providence

**US \$18 single book, plus US \$5 shipping/handling; add US \$1 shipping for each additional book up to 10 copies
US \$15 per book if ordering more than 10 copies; add \$5 shipping/handling; for each additional book over 10,
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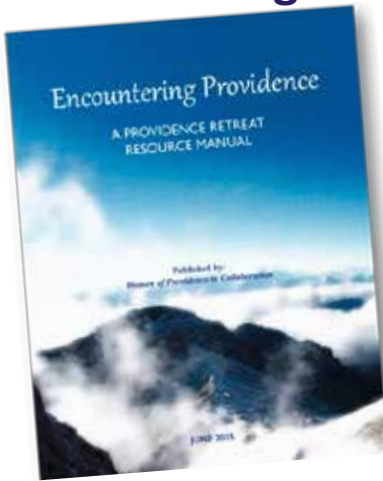
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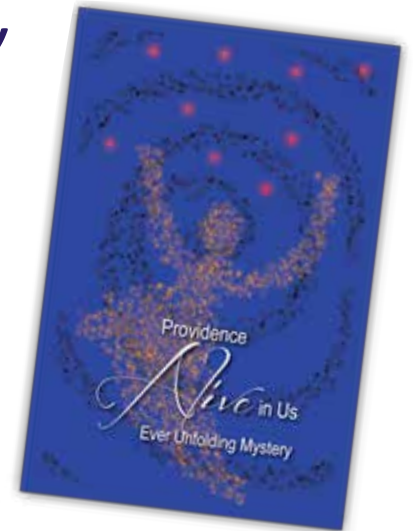
Encountering Providence: A Providence Retreat Resource Manual



Women of Providence in Collaboration (WPC) is celebrating its 35th Anniversary year with the recently compiled retreat resource manual. Its 12 retreats, submitted by Sisters of Providence and Providence Associates, can be used in retreat centers, private retreatants, local convent retreats, motherhouses, healthcare mission departments, and colleges, just to name a few. The retreats vary in length. Topics range from Images of Advent and Living Contemplatively in a Technological Age, to Spirit Gifts Found in Jesus and Walking as Provident Guests on Earth. (A complete list of topics is available on the WPC website: <http://www.wpcweb.org/>) The black and white manual includes a leader's guide, handouts, prayers, and resources for music, poetry, readings, etc. The manual is printed on three-hole paper for easy placement in a binder of your choice. Each manual has an accompanying flash drive storing various color graphics, PowerPoint and video presentations, and ready-to-print prayer, reflection and leader templates.

Providence Alive In Us: Ever Unfolding Mystery

The Women of Providence in Collaboration are excited to present their new book, *Providence Alive in Us: Ever Unfolding Mystery*. This book is designed to promote and broaden the understanding of Providence theology and spirituality and how, over the years, it has affected our lives. The authors will lead us in this search for still deeper engagement with Ever Unfolding Mystery. Authors include Marie McCarthy, SP and Anji Fan, SP from the St. Mary-of-the-Woods in Terre Haute, IN; Ruth McGoldrick, SP from the Sisters of Providence in Holyoke, MA; Michele Bisbey and Myra Rodgers are CDPs from the Allison Park, PA, Sisters of Divine Providence; Alba Letelier, SP, Hong Nga Nguyen, SP and Annette Suebert, SP are from the Sisters of Providence who began in Montreal, Quebec, and spread throughout the United States. New contributors, as well as four reflections devoted to intercultural voices and experiences, also take us inside ourselves to probe deeper meanings of abundance, expansion of partnership with God in the very action of transforming our world, and the challenges of being the face of Providence within a different culture and in different settings. Truly this work will provide much food for thought as to how each of us lives the charism of Providence in the world today.



Encountering Providence: A Providence Retreat Resource Manual

US \$50/book, plus US \$5 shipping/handling; add US \$1 shipping for each additional book up to 5 copies

Providence Alive In Us: Ever Unfolding Mystery

US \$15/book, plus US \$5 shipping/handling; add US \$1 shipping for each additional book up to 5 copies

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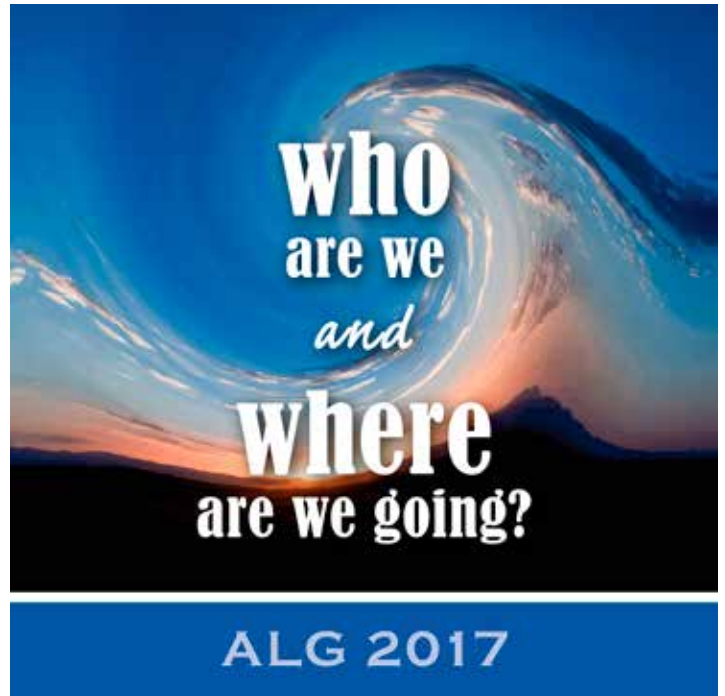
Save the date!

WPC Associate Leadership Group Conference Set

The Women of Providence in Collaboration ask all Associate Leaders within WPC member Congregations to save September 18-20, 2017, for the WPC Associate Leadership Conference at Genesis Spiritual Life and Conference Center in Westfield, MA.

Our topics and speakers include: SP Sister Pauline Lally's keynote address, "*Providence Spirituality and the Call for Justice*"; SP Sister Jo Ann Showalter's review of the CARA report on the growth of the Associate Movement; and Associate Barbara Baker's suggested process for drafting an Associate Directional Statement for your Congregation.

Please note: Details on the Conference have been distributed through email by Associate Margaret Bauer, a member of the 2017 ALG Conference Planning Committee. Margaret's email is Margaret.Bauer@providence.org.



Future Dates/Coming Events

2017

September 18 - 20: Associate Leadership Gathering at Genesis Spirituality Center, Westfield, MA

2018

April 11 -15: VFL meeting, Melbourne, KY, hosted by the CDPs.

June 15 - 17: Providence Event, Pittsburgh, PA -- SAVE THE DATE! See page 22.

Collaboration is published by the Women of Providence in Collaboration ♦ www.wpcweb.org

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