

# Collaboration

*Sisters of Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods*

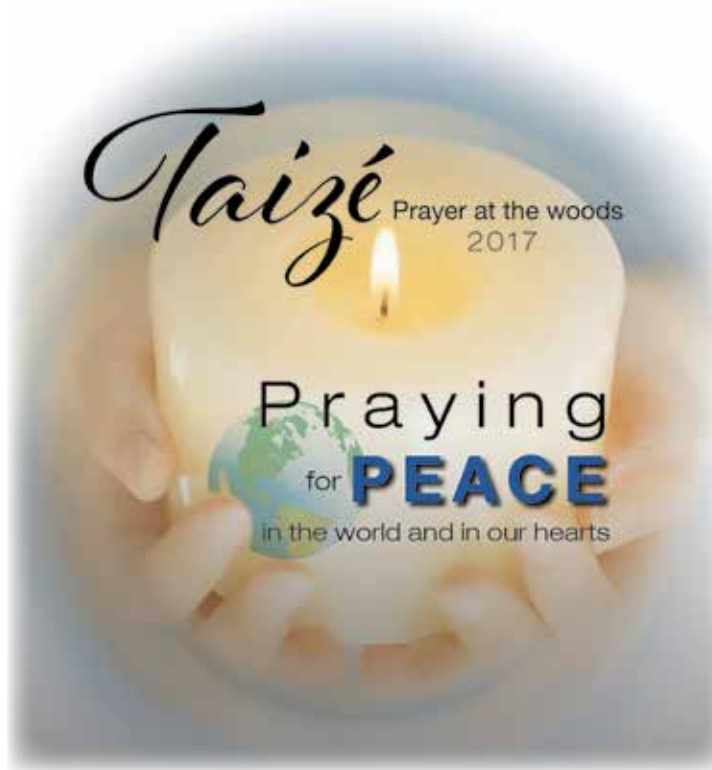
## SPs Mark Fifth Anniversary of Taizé Service

*By Sister Paula Damiano, SP, Co-director of Providence Spirituality & Conference Center*

This January marked the beginning of the fifth year that the Sisters of Providence have held our monthly Taizé Prayer service at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods Indiana. Roger Schutz (Brother Roger) was a Swiss Christian leader who, in 1940, founded the Taizé community, an ecumenical monastic community in Burgundy, France. Taizé is a sung and silent participatory prayer service designed to bring one to contemplation through music, song and silence. Here at the Woods it is held on the second Tuesday of each month to allow people from all faith traditions to attend on a day they would not normally worship at their own churches.

Taizé Prayer at the Woods serves as a way for people to slow down and just “be” in our chaotic world. Participants tell us that they have a sense of peace and serenity from the time they drive through the front gates and are surrounded by the beauty of nature. In a recent Sister of Providence blog post, teacher Beth Duley wrote, “Attending Taizé was a respite. ...The music, the readings, the presence of so

many like-minded people seeking to focus on something beyond the rat race, and especially, the silence slowed me down.” Taizé is an hour to focus on meaningful words and music. It allows us to reconnect with ourselves and our God.



There is a good deal of planning that goes in to creating a unique experience at every service. Each year our Taizé committee, which is comprised of Sisters of Providence, Providence Associates, laypersons, and members of other faith traditions work collaboratively to plan out the year. We choose a theme for the year and develop the format, loosely patterned after the Taizé service in France. Committee members take turns each month finding readings and working with our Liturgy Director to choose music. The committee meets every other

month and reviews upcoming services.

In light of the many tragedies that have been happening all over the globe, this year the committee chose “Praying for Peace in the World and in our Hearts” as

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## *From the director ...*



**Sister Barbara McMullen, CDP  
WPC executive director**

During the homily at Mass, Sunday, January 22, the priest reflected on what it means to be a disciple in our church and in our world. I admit I drifted a bit upon hearing the word “church.” It took me back to an encounter with a second grade student. I had asked them to draw a picture of the church—not the building—but the community of people that make up the church. I was astounded at her drawing. She was one of my most creative students for sure!

In the upper left hand corner she drew a picture of a woman in bed with people surrounding her. She explained that, that was her grandmother in a hospital bed. The people were members of the church praying for her healing.

In the upper right hand corner she drew a picture of a can. She said there were hungry people in the world and God doesn’t want people to be hungry, so the church is the people who share their food.

In the bottom right hand corner she drew children laughing and playing and said the church is a group of happy people because Jesus loves little children.

In the bottom left hand corner she drew music notes with people of different sizes and colors. She told me

that God loves all people, and the church gathers to pray and sing thank-you to God.

In the middle of the paper, big enough to overlap the area of each picture’s space and to unite them together, she drew a great big heart. God is love, she said, and we are all called to love God and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

What beautiful wisdom from an eight year old student! Reading the stories in this newsletter reminds me again and again what church is—these stories are the church in action! You’ll read stories about health, healing, feeding the hungry, assisting victims of storms, floods and disasters, and reaching across the globe to share the charism, making sure it lives on in those left behind. People of Providence are church with great big hearts all over this world of ours!!

May you find these pages and stories as inspiring as I did in reading them! Our world and our country, especially, are in great need of healing and hope. The Gospel calls us all to be church, to be disciple, to make Providence visible. May you find yourself in the middle of God’s great big heart, receiving and giving love and light to all you meet! Happy wintering!

*Barbara*



## SPs Mark Fifth Anniversary of Taizé Servicé

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our theme. A new peace pole with the words “May Peace Prevail On Earth” in eight languages, including



Braille, will be in the church all year to remind those who attend of our desire for peace in the world. To kick off the new theme at our first service of 2017, the committee decided to do something different and invite area clergy to share a meal together before the service. Our intention was to welcome all to gather together and show unity and commitment to peace.

We were thrilled to welcome 11 church leaders and their guests representing various faith traditions in our country. It turned out to be a wonderful way to learn about each other and find common ground. After dinner we assembled in the Church of the Immaculate Conception to worship together with more than 125 participants. At the conclusion all were invited, as they are each month, to light a candle as a reminder that God’s love is a fire that never goes out. It is truly a beautiful sight to see people of all faiths in the candlelit glow of the church.

We hope this outreach will forge new relationships where we can continue to pray together. Taizé Prayer at the Woods has grown each year and we are blessed by the presence of so many women and men of faith.

## Justice Commission Focuses on Eco-justice

*By Sister Jeanne Hagelskamp, SP*

The Justice Coordinating Commission (JCC) is an “umbrella” group comprised of Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Providence Associates, and others who have actively worked with the Sisters of Providence to address justice issues. The group, which builds on works of previous justice committees, is charged with focusing the justice issues for the Sisters of Providence Congregation. They first met in September to organize their work around a focus on environmental justice in the coming five years.

After a process of social analysis at the meeting, the group felt a focus on eco-justice within the larger arena of environmental justice would enable the Congregation and justice partners to address urgent needs. It would also allow the commission to examine how critical justice issues intersect.

The word “eco-justice” has its roots in the Latin word *oikos*, the home or household. Thus, eco-justice

refers to caring for and attending to the “household of creation,” including people, creatures, ecosystems, economy, environment, food, water, air, and rules that facilitate the well-being of all in the home.

The group identified four sub-focus areas in dire need of attention: climate change, water, food supply/food security, and migrant workers. Faithful to past work of the Congregation, the JCC suggested these areas be addressed through the lens of three filters: racism, women and children and investments.

Members of the JCC include Andrea Beyke (Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College); Providence Associates Barbara Cottrell, Ben Kite, Marsha McCarty, Jeanne Rewa, and Susan Weber; and Sisters of Providence Donna Butler, Kathleen Desautels (justice promoter), Jeanne Hagelskamp (general officer liaison), Tracey Horan, Rosemary Schmalz (secretary), Barbara Sheehan, and Rosemary Ward.



## Providence Village Dream Begins to Take Shape

Providence Village is a dream that is coming to life. The Sisters of Providence have shared their vision to transform their Motherhouse property in the centre of Kingston into a neighbourhood community. There has been tremendous support for the idea and numerous organizations and services are exploring the possibilities such a village creates.

These include long-term care, hospice and the Kingston YMCA. Providence Care, which operates the Providence Manor long-term care home currently in downtown Kingston, as well as hospital and community programs, is a committed partner and is working with the Sisters to transform the vision into reality.

The first puzzle piece dropped into place in late November when it was announced that housing developer Homestead Holdings had purchased four

acres of the 30-acre grounds of the property at 1200 Princess Street. The plan developed for Providence Village identified housing as a key need of the Kingston region. The sale commits Homestead to three apartment buildings that will add approximately 400 new units to the Kingston market. One of the buildings will cater specifically to seniors and will include 60 units designated as affordable housing units. Space within the buildings will be allocated to accommodate onsite programming, such as supports for seniors living in their own homes.

With a housing agreement in place, what are the other pieces moving ahead? Providence Village plans include transforming the Motherhouse building into offices, meeting spaces and a hive of activity for Providence Care and a number of other organizations. The Sisters

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## *Sisters of Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods*

### All Are Welcome Sign

*By Sister Ann Casper, SP*

The Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods leadership team, during their December meeting discussed how best to be a beacon of light to those in darkness right now. In addition to the letters and petitions many have already signed, how can we stand with those living in fear following the presidential election?

They had received a request to display a banner indicating "Immigrants and Refugees Welcome" and after

discussion decided to display a banner with the message, "All are welcome." The graphic on the banner is Earth, with the SP logo depicting light through the trees and the tag line "Breaking boundaries, creating hope."

The banner will be displayed in proximity to the Church of the Immaculate Conception. In the letter informing the Congregation, the General Officers stated, "we hope the banner will be seen as a meaningful symbolic action expressing our desire to be that beacon of light to ALL living in fear and darkness because of ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, violence and war."



## Providence Village

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will continue to live in the building, consolidating over time in the Marian wing. With them will be members of the Congregation for Notre Dame and the Religious Hospitallers of St. Joseph, who already live at the Motherhouse.

This is the picture that has emerged from more than a year of planning by the Sisters of Providence, Providence Care and the consultants who have worked with them on a master plan and master program for Providence Village.

The Providence Village idea was approved at the 2015 congregational chapter. A key component of the plan is the long-term care home. Providence Manor needs a new locale and the Motherhouse site would be ideal. Providence Care is working through the required approval process with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, and hopes to be moving forward with construction in the next few years.

“Our work over the past year and a half has been to do a study of what the local needs are here in Kingston,” said Sister Sandra Shannon, General Superior of the Sisters of Providence. “From that point, we looked at our property and considered how we might accommo-

date several organizations and uses on the site.” “We have had some exciting initial conversations with organizations that meet needs of different people in our community – whether they are seniors, families, people looking for work or people in their last stage of life,” says Cathy Szabo, President and CEO at Providence Care and member of the Providence Village Steering Committee. “Our vision statement is to develop ‘A neighbourhood of people helping people, inspiring hope, fulfilment and care for the earth.’ Working with our partners we know we are headed in the right direction.”

Providence Care is committed to the vision for Providence Village, and we’re excited to be planning to redevelop our long-term care home, Providence Manor, on the property,” Szabo adds.

The values used by the steering committee are compassion, respect and integrity. The five guiding principles of Providence Village are to: uphold a spirit of humility, simplicity and charity; demonstrate responsible stewardship of resources; create opportunities to connect, innovate and collaborate; be open, welcoming and supportive; and foster holistic life and wellness.

Although some components will be built sooner, the development plan for Providence Village stretches over seven to ten years.



*The illustration depicts the community feeling intended for the village of services being planned for the Motherhouse grounds at 1200 Princess Street in Kingston.*



## **Time Capsule in Tarnished Copper**

For 50 years, a time capsule was buried beneath the cornerstone of a wing of St. Mary's of the Lake Hospital in Kingston. Until this fall, that is. That's when the stone was moved and a slim tarnished box was found.

Originally shining copper, the box is now a mottled black and silver. It was a treasure — a time capsule — placed in 1956 when the hospital wing was built. The Sisters of Providence ran the hospital at that time and likely placed the box. Now, the hospital is part of Providence Care, who made an occasion of the opening, kindly invited the Sisters to participate, and included the Motherhouse and Providence Care archivists and communications staff. The time capsule was given to the Sisters of Providence Archives for posterity.



Defence and served as the Kingston Military Hospital from 1942 to 1946. It was returned to the Sisters who opened St. Mary's of the Lake as a chronic care hospital in the fall of 1946. The 144-bed hospital will close in 2017 when its patients are moved to the new Providence Care Hospital.

### ***A year for Mary, a new wing for the hospital***

Pope Pius XII designated 1954 as the church's first Marian Year, a year dedicated to Mary, the mother of Jesus. Marian celebrations took place around the world including several rallies in the Archdiocese of Kingston. Archbishop O'Sullivan of Kingston undertook a fundraising project, known as the Marian Year Campaign, to raise money to expand Providence Motherhouse and St. Mary's of the Lake Hospital. The sod was turned for the St. Mary's of the Lake expansion on June 1, 1954. The new wing was completed in 1956. The Apostolic Delegate, the Vatican's representative in Canada, was invited to lay the cornerstone and open the new wing of the hospital; Bishop Giovanni Panico laid the cornerstone on June 15, 1956. A hollow had been cut into the back of the stone for the copper box.

### ***A word from our Archivist***

In the archives we have records documenting the laying of the corner stone but I was unable to find any mention of a time capsule! It was really special to be present when the time capsule was opened by Sister Sandra Shannon and Cathy Szabo, President of Providence Care, and to see so many people excited about history. The time capsule reminds us of the importance of those that have come before us and highlights our ties to the past.



### ***So what was in the box?***

- ◆An invitation to the opening of the Wing
- ◆A special edition of the Whig-Standard announcing the opening of the Wing. The names of the Sisters of Providence who were on staff at the hospital are in the paper. The Superior of St. Mary's of the Lake was Sister Mary Gwendolyn.
- ◆Two religious medals, one is the Miraculous Medal and one is Our Lady of Perpetual Help. On the other side is a male saint....well, we're not sure who he is.

### ***About the building***

St. Mary's of the Lake was built by the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul in 1910 as a novitiate and orphanage. The novitiate was only located at St. Mary's of the Lake for four years, before returning to the House of Providence in 1914. The building continued to be a busy orphanage, even requiring an addition in 1930. In 1941, however, the building was requisitioned by the Department of National

## Province Celebrates Anniversaries

The year 2016 was full of milestones for the Sisters of Providence in Mother Joseph Province. The year ended with three anniversary celebrations: the 15th anniversary of the beatification of foundress Blessed Emilie Gamelin, the 50th anniversary of the opening of St. Joseph Residence (SJR) in Seattle, and the 160th anniversary of the arrival of Sisters of Providence in the West.

On October 9, Provincial Superior Judith Desmarais addressed participants in a special liturgy held in the chapel at SJR to celebrate “the honor bestowed on Blessed Emilie on October 7, 2001, the recognition that she is a faithful and exemplary Servant of God . . .” Hundreds of Providence pilgrims – Sisters of Providence, Providence Associates, family and friends – had traveled to the Vatican to witness the beatification.

Taking words from Beatification of Emilie Tavernier Gamelin, published in Montreal in a special 2001 issue of *MISSIVE*, Sister Judith quoted Pope John Paul II’s homily: “In her life as a mother of a family and religious foundress of the Sisters of Providence, Emilie Tavernier Gamelin was the model of a courageous abandonment to divine Providence. Her care for persons and situations led her to create new forms of charity. She had a heart open to all the distressed, serving especially the poor and little ones, whom she wished to treat like kings. She remembered that she had received everything from the Lord and she wanted to give without counting the cost. . .”

Another special liturgy and luncheon was held at SJR on December 8 to celebrate the other two anniversaries. On that date in 1856, Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart and four companions – Sisters Praxedes, Blandine, Vincent de Paul and Mary of the Precious Blood – arrived in the Washington Territory at Fort Vancouver. They had survived a month-long, arduous journey from Montreal. Sister Judith described how the Sisters of Providence Corporation, the “Sisters of Charity of the House of Providence,” was incorporated on January 28, 1859. It is the second-oldest continuously registered non-profit corporation in the state of Washington.

“The purpose of the corporation is for the ‘relief of the needy and suffering humanity in the care of the orphans, invalids, and the sick and the poor, and in the education of youth.’ This rings true for the Sisters of Providence today just as much as it did when it was founded.” Sister Judith said.

The altar display for the liturgy beautifully summed up the story. Included was a photo of the five foundresses, the Guard of Honor made in 1906, at the time of the 50th anniversary of the arrival in the West, and a tabernacle made by Mother Joseph. The Guard of Honor is a wonder, with the names of all of the sisters in the West since 1856 handwritten around the heart.

The dedication of SJR took place on the feast of St. Joseph the Worker, May 1, 1966. The first Mass was celebrated there on May 11 of that year and the first retreat was held there the following July.

Those in attendance for the December 8 liturgy and luncheon included Sisters of Providence, sisters from other religious communities, a number of co-sponsors of Providence St. Joseph Health and members of its executive team, and several priests who offer Mass at SJR.

Providence of God,  
we thank you for all!



***Altar displays included a photo of the five foundresses, the Guard of Honor created in 1906, and a tabernacle made by Mother Joseph.***

**Ministry in Walla Walla, Washington**

## **Sister Margarita Brings Faith Formation to Hispanic Children and Parents**

As of September 1, Sister Margarita Hernandez has been serving for one year as director of religious education for grades K through 8 for three Catholic parishes in Walla Walla. To say that her position is unique is an understatement. In her first full-time job at age 35, she is older than the parishes' pastor, Father Matthew Nicks, and its two vicars. She also is charting new waters in trying to do faith formation for Hispanic parents along with their children. It is the kind of parish work she loves and is well prepared for with her degree from the Catholic Leadership Program at the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio, Texas.

Sister Margarita was accompanied to Walla Walla by Sister Margaret Botch. They live in the rectory at St. Francis Parish, a predominantly Italian congregation. Sister Margarita's office is at the predominantly Irish St. Patrick parish, the largest of the three and the only parish where Mass is celebrated in Spanish.

Further down the street is Assumption parish, which is the most diverse parish.

The realities of this ministry became clear right away. Pastoral work is a full-time job, sometimes without a break. Sister Margarita offers the Hispanic program on Fridays and Sundays and her days off are usually Saturdays and Mondays. But God's people have needs that are not constrained by any clock or calendar. She often works some of those days off plus long hours and weekends. Hers is not the only sacrifice to make this ministry possible. Sister Margaret, who takes communion to shut-ins, admits that she finds herself in the unaccustomed position of being lonely because her housemate spends so much time working that even sharing a meal together is an infrequent occurrence. Another Sister of Providence, Sister Helen Mason, is a longtime resident of Walla Walla whom they see in church each week and on other occasions. Sister Margaret said she is adjusting as she gets to know people in the community.

Sister Margarita's predecessor served for 20 years and then retired. During those years, an English and a Spanish program were offered, but the director was not bilingual, but had a Hispanic assistant. "There was no communication with the director in Spanish," Sister Margarita explained. "Hispanics came to class and that was it. They had to try to understand and keep up. What surprises me and is really scary is that Hispanic children were preparing for first communion but didn't even know what it means. That really got my attention. I said, 'I need to meet with the parents'."



***Sister Margarita shares prayer time with Sister Margaret Botch.***

Her faith formation for Hispanic adults includes confirmation and first communion. Anglo parishioners go to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). Sister Margarita coordinates the English and Spanish programs and hopes to offer a combined program for Anglo parents and their children.

She finds joy in this work. "I just feel it. I have time to be with people, to go to their houses and to help them build a better relationship with God," she explained. "Sometimes parents can't drive and I go to their house to visit and will even teach classes at home." She began a new initiative when she discovered that many of the adults don't know how to pray as a family. "They just pray the 'Our Father'. I say, 'I will go to your house and pray with you.'" Her focus is on being present to them and helping them to become more integrated into the overall community.

Father Nicks said Sister Margarita has forged personal relationships with parents and other community leaders and is actively involved in community events everywhere, earning broad community support. His hopes are to create "a different sort of arrangement with three distinct parishes with their own identities and histories and their own ministerial structures. The goal is to achieve unity and a common mission and purpose "that we work towards in a way that respects the differences."



## **Genesis 40th Anniversary is an Occasion to Remember and Celebrate**

Genesis Spiritual Life and Conference Center in Westfield has welcomed thousands over the past four decades—people from all faiths, traditions, cultures, and walks of life. Some were seekers, others spiritual and/or retreat directors. They included theologians, mystics, poets, artists, gardeners, women religious, clergy, focusing companions, married couples, 12 Step groups, quilters and drummers. Some came as strangers. All left as friends.

On Sunday, December 4, 2016 approximately 100 Genesis friends gathered in the Center's chapel to commemorate the ministry's 40th Anniversary and to hear Executive Director Liz Walz offer the greeting: "We welcome the Providence of God today, incarnate in the Sisters of Providence and Associates among us. We recognize the love of God beating in the hearts of our staff who carry out our mission. We are grateful for God's fidelity as enfleshed by our volun-

teers, and God's self-emptying generosity revealed through our donors. To the seed of God in each person gathered to celebrate with us, we thank you."



***Sister Elizabeth Oleksak (right), who directed Genesis from its founding in 1976 until her retirement in 2002, with Liz Walz, Genesis' current executive director.***

A Mass of Thanksgiving celebrated by Reverend Terrence Devino, SJ followed. During his homily, Father Devino told the assembly, "The Center's direction has always been about the paths of those who seek the pathway to God. And who we celebrate today are the wayfarers who made their way to this place. And here they felt welcomed, [their] lives made whole."

He spoke of Founder Sister Elizabeth Oleksak's "call" to the Genesis ministry, naming her call "the grasp of Love," and saying Sister Elizabeth "leaned into that grasp."

Sister Elizabeth said Father Devino's homily "connected" her "to many of the moments" in her life including leading her back to the writings of Jesuit Pierre



***Celebrating with Sister Elizabeth Oleksak (third from left) are (from left) Alan Sawyer, Sister Ruth McGoldrick, Providence Associate Ann McGaharn, Reverend Terrence Devino, and Sister Kathleen Popko.***

Teilhard de Chardin in the book *Hymn of the Universe* gifted to her over 50 years ago. She shared, "In Teilhard de Chardin's quote—I thank you my God for having a thousand different ways that led my eyes to discover the immense simplicity of things. Little by little through the irresistible development of those yearnings you have planted in me as a child... I have been brought to the point where I can no longer see anything, or any longer breathe, outside the milieu in which all is made one—I discovered aspects of my own journey. For me," she ended, "the past 40 years embodied the reality of Genesis."

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## Two Fall Galas Recognize Contributions of Sister Mary Caritas to Health Care

Two fall gala fundraisers recognized the contributions of Sister Mary Caritas to the health care field. She was the woman of the hour at Lea's Foundation for Leukemia Research's Premiere Fall Gala on October 8; and Caring Health Center's (CHC) 20th Anniversary Gala on October 13. Both galas were hosted at the Springfield Sheraton.

Lea's Foundation for Leukemia Research, headquartered in Hartford, designated its proceeds from the gala to benefit the Sister Caritas Cancer Center at Mercy Medical Center, Springfield.

Dr. Philip and Mrs. Thomasina Glynn, and Mr. and Mrs. Larry and Mary Anne Eagan, chaired the event. Each recognized Sister Caritas' support of the Cancer Center with Dr. Glynn saying, "Sister Caritas found where the energy of her life needs to be and it's in developing and growing this facility. And she's done a magnificent job. She's part of that spirit—no job is too small."

At CHC's gala, Sister Caritas joined Dr. James Hunt, Jr., and Dr. Mark Keroack in receiving CHC's "Caring Health Caring Heart Award."



***Sister Mary Caritas (center) is pictured on the evening of Lea's Foundation for Leukemia Research's Premier Fall Gala with the event's chairpersons (from left) Thomasina and Dr. Philip Glynn of Mercy Medical Center, and Mary Anne and Larry Eagan of Longmeadow.***

(Photo courtesy of GEORGE Photography.)

The award recognizes the recipients' "...remarkable contributions and their ongoing dedication to the health care community." Sister Caritas had supported and participated in the planning process that led to

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## Genesis 40th Anniversary

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***Sister Ann Horgan, a spiritual and retreat director, served as Genesis administrator from 2007-2013.***

Other event speakers included Sisters Kathleen Popko, SP president, Sister Mary Caritas, vice president, Sister Ruth McGoldrick, the Center's first program director, Sister Ann Horgan, a former Genesis administrator, Alan Sawyer, neighbor and board member, and Margaret Sears, one of Genesis' very first guests.

In her remarks, Sister Kathleen noted, "Sister Elizabeth has given her life to the formation and growth of Genesis, nurturing every new relationship, every new program, every new animal, garden or plant to assure that Genesis Spiritual Life Center would be known for its mission, its hospitality, its quality programs, and most especially, as a place of hope and healing. Her vision and personality," continued Sister Kathleen, "have left an indelible imprint on Genesis."

Following the Anniversary's liturgy and program in the chapel, Sister Elizabeth and guests continued the celebration with refreshments and socializing in the Genesis Carriage House.



## **Two Fall Galas Honor Sister Mary Caritas**

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CHC's founding, working with a team to meet the criteria necessary for CHC to become qualified for federal funds.

Speaking at the gala, Dr. Scott Wolf, president of Mercy Medical Center, said, "By definition, the word, Caritas, means 'love of humankind' and 'charity.' I can't think of another person who more aptly embodies the spirit of their name than Sister Mary Caritas."

Continuing, Dr. Wolf added, "Well known throughout Western Mass for her strong leadership and unwavering commitment to the local health-care community, Sister Caritas is also known for energetically embracing any task at hand with passion, grace, and humility."

Reflecting on both galas, Sister Caritas commented, "Two wonderful events within a week was a bit overwhelming but both were for such great causes that it made it easy to participate and to celebrate."

"The Lea Gala raised \$87,000 for leukemia research," Sister Caritas continued, "making it possible for patients at the Cancer Center to participate in clinical trials... a real breakthrough in treating this form of cancer."

Then, referencing the CHC Gala, she added, "The Caring Health Center's Gala celebrated 20 years of providing quality and compassionate health care services

to some of our most marginalized brothers and sisters in the Springfield area. CHC efforts," she continued, "are so related to our Congregation's commitment to those who are poor... something most dear to the heart of every Sister of Providence."

CHC is the first and only federally qualified community health center in Springfield. It was created for the community, by the community, and serves 20,000 patients with over 60,000 visits per year providing quality

care regardless of insurance, ability to pay, language and cultural barriers.

Proceeds from its gala were earmarked for CHC's substance abuse programming.



***Sister Mary Caritas holds the award she was presented at Caring Health Center's (CHC) 20th Anniversary Gala. With her (from left) are Dr. Scott Wolf, Sisters of Providence Health System president and CEO; Tania Barber, CHC president and CEO; and Patrick White, CHC Board chairman.***

*(Photo by Ed Cohen.)*



## Community Aids Hurricane Matthew Victims

For the past 15 years, Sisters Maxine Tancraitor, CDP, and Thérésine Gildea, CDP, have ministered in Clinton, North Carolina, helping Hispanic immigrants who seek a better future in the United States.

In October 2016, Hurricane Matthew devastated the area and people were in need of aid. "Sixteen inches of rain fell in a few days and water just inundated roads and houses, especially the trailer parks where most of our Spanish population reside. High winds caused an extensive amount of damage; trees fell on houses, trailers and electrical wires, leaving thousands and thousands of people without electricity for many days," said Sister Thérésine.

To help Sisters Maxine and Thérésine get necessities for the storm's victims, the Sisters of Divine Providence appealed for donations. Sisters, Associates and

worshipping communities in St. Louis, Pittsburgh and Kingston, MA, responded very generously.

"With the donations you sent us we were able to replace furniture, household items, clothing and even a washing machine (the first for this family who has lived in the U.S. for 14 years). Food was a big item for families, along with linens and personal items. People were unable to get to work for a few days; therefore, 'no work, no pay.' Most of our parishioners work on farms; pig, turkey, crops and so on. The financial donations allowed us to help many families with rent, light bills and car and property damage—the list goes on," said Sister Thérésine.



*Some of the items donated to aid the hurricane victims are shown with (left front) Sister Michele Bisbey, Provincial; Sister Sandra DeNardis; (right front) Sister Carolyn Winschel; Sister Donna Marie Gribschaw, Provincial Councillor; Sister Thérésine Gildea and Sister Maxine Tancraitor.*

Many residents are still recovering from Hurricane Matthew, and the Sisters of Divine Providence continue to keep them in their prayers and thoughts. At their annual Christmas party in Pittsburgh, each Sister and Associate who attended brought a new or gently used child's sweater, sweatshirt or

shirt, which were given to Sisters Maxine and Thérésine to take back to North Carolina.

## La Roche College President Voices Support for Undocumented Students

Sister Candace Introcaso, CDP, president of La Roche College, was featured in a recent Pittsburgh Post-Gazette article about area Catholic college and university presidents jointly supporting undocumented students who were brought to the U.S. as children and avoided deportation under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), implemented by President Barack Obama in 2012. This policy is now at risk of repeal under President Donald Trump. "It speaks to who we are," said Sister Candace of the group's support for these foreign-born students. "They're an important part of our future, and this opportunity needs to be preserved."



*Sister Candace Introcaso*

## **Providence Heights Hosts STOP Hunger Now Event**

*"For I was hungry and you gave me food..." (Mt. 25:35)*

On December 28, 2016, for the third year in a row, Providence Heights in Pittsburgh hosted a meal packaging event for STOP Hunger Now.

Over 40 volunteers, ranging in age from 9 to 60, packaged highly nutritious dehydrated meals composed of rice, soy, vegetables, flavoring and essential vitamins and minerals. Each package provides a reasonable serving for six and is easy to transport, store and distribute to those in greatest need.

The event was sponsored by the Emma Munson Foundation, which was founded by Michael and Denise Munson in honor of their daughter Emma who died at the age of 19 in a tragic accident.

"Emma had so many dreams...she wanted to be a farmer and live off the land and be self-sufficient and feed the world. She wanted to hike and explore and learn as much as she could about our beautiful world and the people in it. She wanted to join the Peace Corps and help others. She especially wanted to treat



everyone she met with love and respect," said Michael and Denise on the foundation's website.

Throughout the year, the Munsons fundraise to buy the food to package, recruit volunteers and coordinate the event with STOP Hunger Now, which provides all the needed equipment: measuring cups, scales, plastic bags and shipping boxes. In just two hours, the group of volunteers packaged 10,000 meals, which will be shipped throughout the world to support school feeding programs, orphanages and crisis relief.

## **New Associate Director Appointed**

The Provincial Leadership Team has appointed Erin Dowling Middleton as the new Associate Director of the Marie de la Roche Province of the Sisters of Divine Providence, Pittsburgh, PA. She has been a CDP Associate for four years



**Erin Dowling Middleton**

Erin brings many gifts to this leadership ministry. She desires to help the Associates grow deeper in spirituality and ownership to ensure a stronger future for the Associate Relationship for the Community.

Erin is a mother of five children who range in age from 18 to 29. Ben, the youngest, attends La Roche College, Pittsburgh, PA. She is the grandmother of 1 year old Hartley Grace.

Erin has resided in Pittsburgh since 1972, having moved with her family to Pittsburgh from Long Island, NY, when she was 12. She developed her love of Sisters while attending St. Raymond's grade school in New York.

Her professional life encompasses education, hospital work, literacy for adults and children, and most recently, hospice work. She has lived in various parts of the U.S. – from Pennsylvania to Montana; Utah to Florida. She is a graduate of Westminster College in New Wilmington, PA, where she received a BA in Speech Communications and minored in Sociology and Christian Education.

In her application for the position, Erin stated, "... the timing for me is Providential; I am ready to create work/life balance in a new career challenge. I aim to inspire, guide, and continue to build on the efforts of Ellen Lavender and Pat Montgomery who have worked so hard to establish a firm foundation."



## General Leadership Team Makes Official Visit to Bernarda Morin Province

*By Karin Dufault, SP and Josie Lerios, SP*

After a month of visiting the communities and works of the Province and at the end of their official visit, the members of the General Leadership Team said goodbye to the sisters of Bernarda Morin Province. A closing ritual was held in Santiago on Saturday, October 22, 2016.

During the closing ritual, the members of the General Leadership Team commented on how they felt during the visit. They emphasized that it had been a real gift to meet the sisters of our province, to see the creativity and talents present in the people who are part of the mission, and to enjoy the Chilean geography and landscapes. As well, the sisters gathered gave thanks for the visit, mentioning that it was as if God had been in the province through the members of the General Leadership Team. They were appreciative of the simplicity in which the General Superior and her Council shared with everyone.

On October 23, 2016, Sisters Karin Dufault, Congregational Leader; Josie Lerios, General Councillor; and

Isabel Cid (interpreter) departed Santiago, Chile, for Argentina as a part of the Bernarda Morin Province canonical visit. They represented the General Leadership Team in Comodoro Rivadavia and Caleta Olivia, Patagonia. The visit was specifically timed to be in solidarity with the sisters, Providence Associates, and people of Comodoro Rivadavia for a thanksgiving liturgy for the fifty-three year presence and ministry of the Sisters of Providence as it drew to a close. Before the early evening liturgy on October 24, Sisters Karin, Josie, and Isabel joined with some sisters from Bernarda Morin Province in reliving the history of the mission in Comodoro Rivadavia by visiting each of the parishes and ministry sites where our sisters had served.

In 1963, the beginning of the missionary ministry there, Canadian and American sisters responded to the invitation to minister in hospital services and neighborhood catechesis. They continued doing so for many years and are still named and remembered by the people. The sisters' compassionate dedication to the poor, loving relations with all people, and

*Continued on page 15*



*Closing of the mission of the Sisters of Providence in Argentina*



## Official Visit to Bernarda Morin Province

*Continued from page 14*

tireless pastoral work continue to inspire the Associates. Argentinian Sister Isabel Cid was among the early sisters to serve there; having her present for the visit provided for rich storytelling.

In 1970, the ministries became part of Bernarda Morin Province and Chilean sisters joined the efforts around parish life by assuming a multiplicity of functions in response to the needs of the parishes and people. The last sister to leave Comodoro was Sister Ana María Montenegro, who began her ministry in Comodoro Rivadavia in March, 2010. She left for Santiago in late August after the province's discernment painfully concluded that the sisters were called to withdraw from this particular mission.

The ritual and liturgy of thanksgiving for the presence of the Sisters of Providence, and the recognition of the ending of their services, took place outdoors on a circular piece of land (called a *rotonda*) where four streets converge. Each street leads to sectors where people are living in poverty and are served by the churches where our sisters have ministered. The municipality will name this circle Providence Place. The large cross that was outside the house of the sisters will be erected at the site along with a plaque recognizing the services of the Sisters of Providence.

Sisters from Bernarda Morin Province who had served there were present for the liturgy, including: Sisters María Angélica Alvear, Mónica Corral, Ema Maureira, and Alda (Pabla) Vargas. Sister Jaqueline Juárez represented the Provincial Leadership Team. Also present were Sisters Karin, Josie, and Isabel. Providence Associates from Comodoro Rivadavia and Caleta Olivia were in attendance, along with many collaborators, parishioners, and friends. The Bishop of the Diocese of Comodoro Rivadavia, Bishop Joaquín Gimeno Lahoz, also attended. His presence and his words to the assembled community were comforting.

The liturgy was prepared by Sisters María Angélica Alvear and Hortensia Tapia, both of whom have deep love for the people. The liturgy was filled with meaning and symbolism in all its parts, inclusive of those attending. The Providence Associates, of Comodoro Rivadavia and Caleta Olivia, were also missioned during the liturgy to continue the founding spirit of Blessed Emilie Gamelin, Mother Bernarda and Mother Joseph, making fertile the ground of the Providence Mission, attentive and responsive to the needs of the poor. The music and words spoken engendered many mixed emotions for all who attended. Many pleaded afterwards that the sisters visit from time to time and not forget them.

*Continued on page 16*



*Providence associates from Caleta Olivia, Argentina, sharing a meal with the Sisters*

## Official Visit to Bernarda Morin Province

*Continued from page 15*

Following the liturgy, everyone was invited to Capilla Don Bosco, a half block away, for fellowship, sandwiches, and delicious sweet treats. It was clear from the conversations that Providence is planted deep within the hearts of the people and will live on through the Providence Associates and all the people who have touched and been touched by our sisters. Likewise the people of Comodoro Rivadavia and Caleta Olivia will long live in the hearts of the Sisters of Providence.

In Chile, sisters from several local communities of Bernarda Morin Province gathered the day preceding the liturgy in Argentina. Together with the sisters of Bernarda Morin local community, they held a grieving ritual and liturgy thanking God for life planted in Argentina.

On October 25, 2016, the sisters in Argentina traveled in two cars to Caleta Olivia and were hosted by the Providence Associates with a delicious dinner and its Argentinian specialties. Afterwards, Sister Josie led a process during which Providence Associates shared what sustains their commitment and dreams as Associates. It was inspiring and moving to hear their testimonies. The Associates then took us to visit a

family whom they have been assisting for some time – a mother caring for her young adult son who was in a very serious accident and left with paralysis, a brain injury and wheelchair bound. The mother and son expressed deep appreciation for the support and prayers of the Associates. We also visited one of the first Associates, Norma, who is now ill and was unable to come to the dinner. Everyone enjoyed the laughter as well as the deep conversation during the visit with her and her daughter Sylvia, who is also an Associate. Once again we witnessed Providence so alive in the caring and sharing.

What a privilege it was for Sisters Karin and Josie to share these moments in the history of ministry of the Sisters of Providence and Providence Associates in Argentina and to witness how the sisters who have served in both Comodoro Rivadavia and Caleta Olivia live so vividly in the memories of the people with great gratitude. We are grateful to Sister Isabel Cid for serving as our interpreter as well as for all she shared about her own experience of ministry in Argentina. Seeing the continued deep love of the people for her and their delight in renewing friendship was wonderful to witness.



*Children from the “Hogar de Niños de la Providencia”, Limache, Chile*



## **Assembly, First Profession and Ecumenical Service**

The Sisters of Divine Providence, Melbourne, gathered for an Assembly on New Years Eve. Sister Joyce Detzel, CDP of San Antonio, was the featured speaker who focused on the topic of relationships and Providence/Trinity. She shared the sad story of their early history with the Bishop of Texas who forced the separation of their community from St. Jean de Bassel, France and the two remarkable women, Sisters Andrew Felten and Camilla Schaff who endured the hardships. She proposed that our two congregations are not really cousins because of our common founder but "sisters separated at birth." Later that afternoon, both communities shared memories and re-acquaintances via Skype.



*Sisters Kay Kramer, Florence Anybuonwu, Joyce Detzel, Leslie Keener*

### **First Profession**

Sister Florence Anybuonwu professed first vows at a beautiful ceremony in Immaculate Conception Chapel on January 14, the anniversary of the Founding of the Congregation in 1762. A delicious meal was enjoyed afterward for friends and community with an assortment of her native Nigerian foods. Sister Flo is presently a Refugee Case Worker for Catholic Social Services of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.



*Sister Florence Anybuonwu*

### **Ecumenical Service**

For the second consecutive year, Holy Family Community hosted the annual Thanksgiving Ecumenical Services for the local churches in Melbourne and Silver Grove. Every church in the area was represented at the service, some with few members, others with more. The service was prepared by our Liturgy Committee and included sisters as well as ministers and members of other denominations.

It was very beautiful! Positive comments on the night itself as well as written messages which followed indicated that church members would like Holy Family to consider becoming the permanent host facility. The guests appreciated the warm hospitality always extended by the sisters and they also noted the many advantages of our facility over their smaller churches.

Since many of the guests are senior members of their congregations, the elevator is very much appreciated as it allows them to attend the service and the social gathering which follows. Dining room seating was also ranked high as most of the neighboring churches can provide a room with refreshments but with standing room only. Their comments helped us realize once again how blessed we are in so many ways which we often take for granted!



## ***The Gift of Prayer, Presence and Community Service***

The gift of presence is a great gift, whether that is presence to God or presence to one another. At Our Lady of the Lake Convent Center, San Antonio, many in the community have identified as their on-going ministry: Prayer, Presence, and Community Service.

The Sisters make it a practice to pray throughout the day; they frequently remind each other to remain “present” to God by brief prayers, brief glances to God. More formal prayers occur when some join with others to pray the rosary, participate in the Liturgy of the Hours, or assist at Mass. Then there are those precious times when the Sisters pray privately in Chapel or before the Blessed Sacrament during weekly Holy Hour. These prayers deepen their presence to one another, and to all others the Sisters meet.

Presence to one another shows itself in other ways. It is evident when a Sister anticipates the needs of another. She might push a Sister to chapel in her wheelchair or she may feed someone who has difficulty with this ordinary task. Presence to one another takes on special significance when the Sisters visit one another or when they keep vigil with those who are on their journey to heaven. The Sisters feel and appreciate each other’s presence when they play games together (especially Bingo), engage in community discussions with one another, or share faith by gathering to reflect on Sacred Scripture. There is a specially felt presence one to the other when the Sisters participate together in Community Celebrations, whether that might be a Birthday, a Missioning Mass or a Jubilee.

Community Service is practiced in many ways. It means taking turns at the doorbell, directing deliveries or visitors, helping distribute the daily mail, helping fold napkins, helping sing or play the organ, or accompanying someone to a medical appointment. When you are in your 80s and 90s, daily scheduled times of

service keep you more alert and on track. The Sisters believe service to the community helps the person think about others’ needs and not only about her own.

Writing a letter during the Holidays is a cherished tradition. But some of our elder Sisters in Regan Hall and McCullough Hall can no longer manage to keep in touch with family and friends. For Sister Francis Lorene Lange, CDP, that means writing letters for other Sisters. Sometimes it means taking time to listen, repeating the story for them to hear, spending free time with them and even reading out loud for them.



***Convent Coordinator, Sister Madeleine Zimmerer, CDP helps Sister Muriel Bodin, CDP***

Service to one another occurs most frequently in the day to day experiences of life together. One may say to another: “Let me do that for you. I have time.” There are those who serve one another by volunteering for ministries during the celebration of liturgy. They may be sacristans, musicians, Communion ministers, lectors or singers. Support and care shows itself when someone sews on or takes off name labels, mends clothes or sews a “special needs” garment for the retired. Service

to one another is evident in the dining room: plates are served for the less abled; the room is decorated to reflect each season; surplus food is taken to the poor. The words found in Matthew’s Gospel ...“as you did to the least of these [sisters] of mine, you did it to me” are real for the Convent Community.

The Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy are evident among the Sisters who live at Our Lady of the Lake Convent Center. The corporal works: visiting the sick, keeping vigil with the dying, burying the dead are all opportunities to serve. The Spiritual works: Counseling the doubtful, comforting the sorrowful, bearing wrongs patiently, and praying for the living and the dead are all carried out with great care. The Kingdom of God is present at Our Lady of the Lake Convent Center and the Mission of Jesus continues to be fulfilled.

## Value of Committee Work

It has been said that the way to slow things down is to send them to a committee. This may be true in the legislature but, as Women of Providence, the Texas CDPs have gotten a lot of mileage out of committee work.

Advocacy Circle Committees, including an Earth Care Committee, have helped to ignite and maintain the interest in the issues of Preventing Violence, Human Trafficking, Immigration Reform, and Earth Warming. The Sisters keep up, post articles, share educational pieces, write letters to influence legislators and pray for peace and justice. There is also a new urgency to educate against racism. The Sisters have attended the local COPS/ Metro Alliance Organizers meetings which have been focused on the minimum wage issue.

The CDP Strategic Plan 2015 – 2019 has created a few structures including committees to implement some of the strategies. The committee on Ongoing Formation and the Viability Committee were two areas that

called for some small group work. The honest discussions held in community demonstrated an increase in trust and confidence in the sharing groups. The work in committees raised issues and helped a few grass root suggestions move forward.

In preparation for the Chapter in 2017, with the theme of *"Furthering the Mission of Jesus,"* the Chapter Planning Committee organized a means for gathering input from the monthly discussions of various groups. A new Time of Grace Committee planned liturgies for the different celebrations during the 150th Anniversary year. They included the use of innovative original music written by two of the Sisters and helped the Congregation creatively recall its early beginnings. The Committee has planned all the liturgies for the week of the Chapter of Affairs and Elections, January 29 to February 4, 2017. With the help of the Holy Spirit we are co-creators with Providence.



***Pictured are members of the CDP Advocacy Circle focused on Ending Human Trafficking:  
(Left to Right) Sisters Carolyn Pelzel, Louise Miksch, Barbara Fry, Lucille Ann Fritsch and Barbara Lynn Hyzak.***

## **Associate Director Reports on Jubilee Year**

*By Ana María Laborde De La Portilla, ACDP  
Director, Office of Associates*

*"Since 1974, women and men interested in a closer relationship with the Sisters have been invited to become Associates (ACDPs)." – Sister Mary Christine Morkovsky, 2009, p. 271.*

Associates are individuals who long to grow their spirituality through association with the Sisters, and share their charism, one based on four gracefully entwined fundamental virtues: simplicity, charity, poverty and abandonment to Divine Providence. In 2006, the Congregation of Divine Providence (CDP) Associates in the United States and Mexico numbered 362. This included a new group of Young Adult Associates, ages 18-40, primarily students at Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU), San Antonio, Texas, a university founded by the CDPs in 1895, and today is one of two CDP-sponsored educational institutions in the city. As of January, 2017, Associates in the U.S. and Mexico number 445; 20 received in May, 2016; and nine currently enrolled in an eight-month formation program.

During the first 15 years of Associates, Sisters served as directors of the office. Sister Emily Rabalais, director from 1992-1999, stated, "I feel strongly that we need to appoint one of the Associates...as Director/Leader of the team," claiming that a 'vowed' director is like 'spoon feeding' the Associates. Thus, upon her retirement in 2000, the first lay director, Florence Carvajal, was appointed. In 2006, when Florence retired, she was succeeded by Sister Lucille Ann Fritsch, who served until 2015. At the end of September of that year, I accepted the appointment—what I can refer to as one of many "Providential moments"—and became the second lay director of the office of CDP Associates.

Accepting the assignment to this ministry was an answer to a personal prayer nestled in my heart. As an alumnus of Providence High School (now Providence

Catholic School, college preparatory for girls grades 6-12, also a CDP-sponsored educational institution), I fondly recall how in my college and professional years, the nudging of the Sisters would help me build a confidence level and tremendous ánimo (spirit) I never knew I could possess but has helped in every endeavor I have undertaken. This would be no different.



**Ana María De La Portilla, ACDP**

First of all, there is no such thing as it can't be done or let someone else do it when it comes to community relations, which is what this ministry entails. It's about nurturing and building relationships with and between persons who share the same CDP charism but may be completely different in all other aspects. As Blessed John Martin Moye many times stated: "When we have true Charity we love and praise the good wherever it is found—without discrimination of groups or exception of persons." Intentionally seeking those "uncommon" from us makes for a nice blend of individuals who respect each other in ways unimaginable to many, very much like our CDP Sisters.

Associate gatherings are open to all Associates. There is no fee or requirement to attend a discussion group, only the willingness to listen, observe, and share with persons who have gone through a formation process to become "co-workers in the vineyard" (USCCB, 2005) with the Sisters. Most discussion groups meet on a monthly basis where the conversation is based on a reflection prepared by one of the Associates. Anyone wishing to lead the discussion is welcome to do so.

Among other events held every year is an Associate Convocation. The first convocation in March 2011, drew 45 Associates and 25 Sisters. Spring convocations have been held every year since and continue to draw Associates from all parts of the U.S. An ongoing goal is to have representation from all regions—Indiana, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Mexico and Texas—share their Providence mission and spirituality.

The resounding message at our last convocation was



## **Jubilee Year**

*Continued from page 20*

to know more about the Sisters. This prompted Coffee Conversations, a monthly sharing of Sisters' lives and ministries — informative for Associates and Sisters, for many did not know the details of their ministry work and personal stories. "Well I didn't know that about you!" was often proclaimed by more than one Sister at the monthly gatherings. Coffee Conversations allows for dialogue between Associates and Sisters and has become not only an enlightening experience but also a relationship-building event for all. At one session, upon hearing two Associates share their important role as "prayer partners" with a Sister, and learning that many Associates are without prayer partners, those Sisters present agreed to accept additional Associates as their prayer partners.

Daily use of social media to communicate news, events, novenas, prayer requests, and fundraisers is shared with all Associates and with some of our national peers. Followers have steadily increased as more information is shared through persons who "like" our page ([https://www.facebook.com/CDPAssociates/?ref=aymt\\_homepage\\_panel](https://www.facebook.com/CDPAssociates/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel)). Additionally, the Associate newsletter is now a monthly publication (versus quarterly); other documents sent periodically to Associates include Prayer Corner and ACDP News Bits. Communicating to our current audiences (including the bilingual community) and making inroads to expand our audience pool, I believe, has to be intentional, consistent and steady.

Associate Mike Gibson, of Indiana, comments: "Thanks for all of your good work there. Because of your efforts as well as others (especially in the area of technology) I'm feeling more connected to the sisters and the associates there." He has contributed articles on what the Indiana Associates do in Fort Wayne, IN to carry out the mission of the CDPs. "Over the last 10 years as Associates...we have been deeply inspired, uplifted, and personally touched by so many of the Sisters of Divine Providence—their prayers, their history, and their work," he states. As a result, they embarked on a 150 Challenge as part of the CDP 150th Jubilee. Their challenge was to offer up 150 community service hours in honor of the Sisters and their jubilee celebration, which they successfully accomplished as part of Fort Wayne's Great America Cleanup in May, 2016.

Last year I embarked on what I refer to as a collabora-



***The photo shows Sisters Frances Trochta (left) and Theresa Anne Billeaud with Associate and OLLU Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Michael Laney. They were participating in the annual MLK walk in San Antonio.***

tive effort between this office and other groups where the Sisters have ministered. Many sites, organizations, and people who have been impacted by the Sisters are beyond grateful; they want to contribute but don't quite know how. Thus, I began conversations on this topic with the director of the Center for Women in Church and Society, Jacqueline (Jackie) Walter, ACDP, based at OLLU, to collaborate on two endeavors: a workshop on art as a form of prayer/praying conducted by former Providence teacher and OLLU alumnus, Enedina Vasquez; and with Sisters Christine Stephens and Pearl Ceasar, with C.O.P.S./Metro Alliance, a broad-based community organizing group with roots in San Antonio since 1974, for a workshop on organizing a community. These endeavors are to expand the Associates' view of the "vineyard" beyond the borders of the CDP-sponsored institutions and our own in-house discussion groups, but out into the community.

Collaboration and communication are key aspects to strengthening the relationship with Sisters, Associates, CDP institutions, and the larger community. As I stated to the CDP viability committee, the changes that have occurred within the Associate program and the efforts being done to establish "a stronger tie of commitment" to the Congregation. Collaborative pursuits will continue to be explored. I consider them extremely important in building community relations and establishing relationships with persons and groups who do not know the Sisters or Associates. Such efforts place "us" in the community, evangelizing and "furthering the Mission of Jesus."

*Save the date!*

*2018 Providence Event*

*June 15 - 17, 2018, Pittsburgh, PA*

*Echoing the Providence of Peace  
in an Intercultural World*

*Join the echo!*

**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.**





## **Sister Maria Patterson Releases New CD**

When Maria Patterson, CDP, released her second CD *"Breathe Your Soul,"* she noted that it "has been a work in progress for the last four years. While it consists of mantras, which should be easy to write, I found the writing challenging." Sister Maria's first CD *"I Wait"* was produced about five years ago.

Sister noted that a lot of prayer and soul-searching went into this CD. People who have purchased it, told Sister that it calms them (especially in rush hour traffic!) and one person told her that she can't get her little dog to settle, but when he hears the mantras he quiets and settles. "Don't tell me God doesn't have a sense of humor!" she added.

Sister Maria has been a songwriter most of her life. She recalled that "as a little girl, my mom and I would

make up 'silly songs' to sing to each other, then laugh at the fun of it all! I believe seeds were planted in me at that young age."



Sister Maria said that "Music is like my breathing — always happening, sometimes labored, sometimes freely moving, always bringing me life and closer encounters with our Provident God, the giver of this gift. I am blessed, there is no doubt. My prayer is that you will be blessed should you decide to buy and pray with, my music. May it be one more channel for you to encounter our Provident God, who always waits."

*"Breathe Your Soul"* may be purchased for \$15 (includes shipping and handling) by contacting Sister Maria at [mpatcdp@aol.com](mailto:mpatcdp@aol.com).

## *Congregation of the Sisters of Divine Providence*

### **Congregation Publishes History**

*"The Lure of Providence* recounts the history of an international congregation of Sisters who have spent over a century and a half transcending boundaries of nation, culture, and ministry. Sister M. Christine Morkovsky, CDP, brings these women to life and helps us to appreciate their rich legacies as benefactors of both Church and society. She has made a significant contribution to our understanding of modern religious life, in the United States and around the world." - Margaret Susan Thompson, Syracuse University.

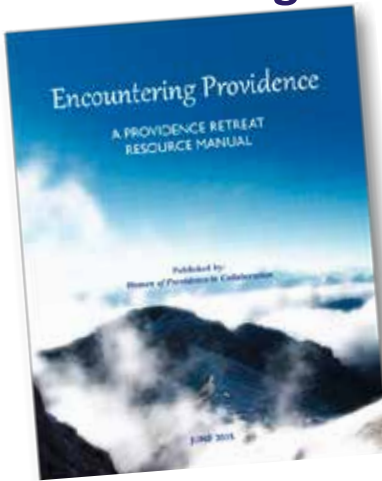
Sister Mary Christine Morkovsky, CDP, a native of San Antonio, TX, professed vows as a Sister of Divine Providence of San Antonio in 1951. She earned MA and Ph.D. degrees in philosophy and an MA in religious studies from St. Louis University. Sister Mary Christine has been a teacher, administrator, researcher, lecturer, writer, and spiritual director.

*The Lure of Providence* is available in English and Spanish versions. *The Lure of Providence* is available for a \$25 contribution. Proceeds benefit the ministries and mission of the Sisters of Divine Providence.



An order form is available at: [cdpsisters.org/LureOfProvidence](http://cdpsisters.org/LureOfProvidence)

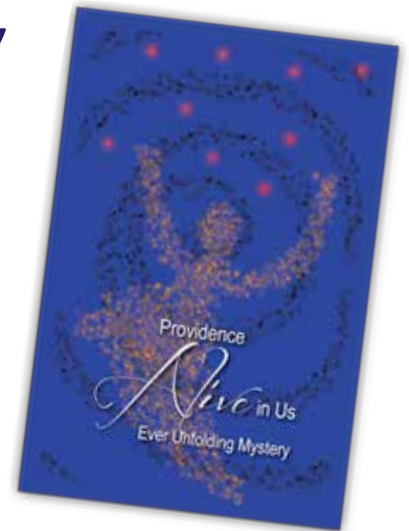
# Encountering Providence: A Providence Retreat Resource Manual



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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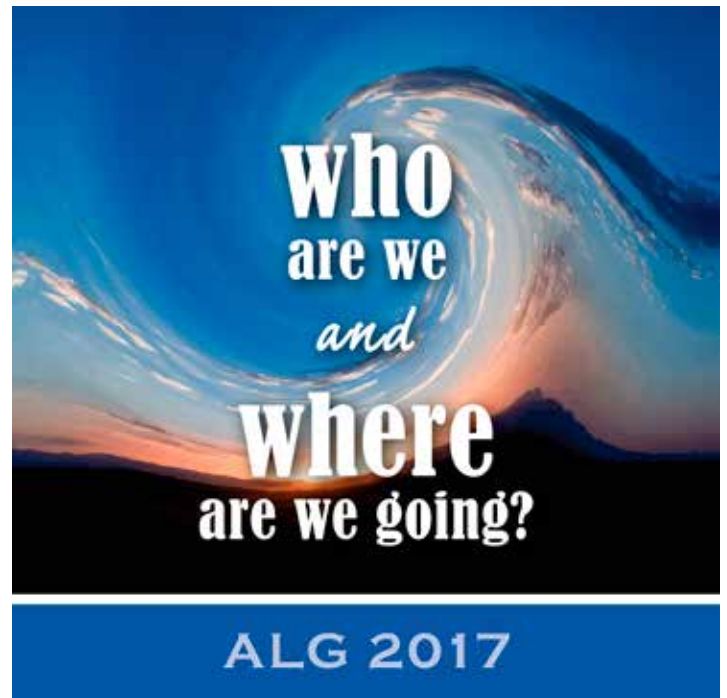
**Save the date!**

## **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:** Further details on the Conference will be 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**

**April 3 - 5:** WPC Governing Board meeting, San Antonio, TX, hosted by the CDPs.

**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!**

**Collaboration** is published by the Women of Providence in Collaboration ♦ [www.wpcweb.org](http://www.wpcweb.org)

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*Member Congregations:* Congregation of the Sisters of Divine Providence, Allison Park, PA ♦ Congregation of the Sisters of Divine Providence, Melbourne, KY ♦ Congregation of the Sisters of Divine Providence, San Antonio, TX  
Congregation of the Sisters of Divine Providence, Wakefield, RI ♦ Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence, San Antonio, TX ♦ Oblate Sisters of Providence, Baltimore, MD ♦ Sisters of Providence, Holyoke, MA ♦ Sisters of Providence, Montreal, QC, Canada ♦ Sisters of Providence (Emilie-Gamelin Province), Montreal, QC, Canada  
Sisters of Providence, Seattle/Spokane, WA ♦ Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, IN ♦ Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul, Kingston, ON, Canada ♦ Sisters of Providence, Edmonton, AL, Canada