

Sister of Divine Providence Becomes Finalist for 2013 Lumen Christi Award

Earlier this year, Sister Zita Telkamp, CDP, was nominated by the Most Reverend Daniel E. Flores, STD, Bishop of Brownsville, to receive Catholic Extension's 2013 Lumen Christi Award. Catholic Extension is a national fundraising organization committed to supporting and strengthening poor mission dioceses around the United States.

Every year, the Lumen Christi Award honors an individual or group working in one of America's mission dioceses who demonstrates how the power of faith can transform lives and communities. Lumen Christi recipients bring light and hope to the forgotten corners of our country and inspire those around them to be the "Light of Christ" as well. Sister Zita is currently one of nine finalists for this prestigious award. Catholic Extension's Lumen Christi Award panel judges are reviewing information about each finalist and the results of the popular support shown in two rounds of online voting. The judges will give each finalist a composite score to help decide the 2013 Lumen Christi Award recipient. If she is selected as the recipient of the Lumen Christi Award, Sister Zita will receive \$25,000 for La Posada's ministry and the Diocese of Brownsville will also receive \$25,000 for its ministries, for a total of \$50,000. The winner of the 2013 Lumen Christi Award will be announced in late summer 2013.

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Top: Sister Zita Telkamp, CDP tutors a client in English as a Second Language (ESL).

Left: Sister Zita with one of La Posada's young clients. Two-thirds of shelter clients are women and children.

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From your executive director ...

Exploring landscapes

Here in my office in St. Louis, I have been watching the landscape out my window change as the beautiful spring colors become even more vibrant and the sun becomes warmer as the days grow longer. I suppose the landscapes we live and move in really do shape us. I think back to other far-away landscapes I have visited – Ireland, Germany, Spain – and reflect on the power they have to impact how we see the world around us. Different places, cultures and people all help us encounter the Holy One. And yet, so does the landscape right outside our windows in our own little corner of the world. There is a clear invitation to drink in the beauty which surrounds us and beckons us to listen deeply to the call of a Provident God.

In this summer issue of *Collaboration*, we witness the landscapes of one another's communities and all the wonderful ministries rooted in the Gospel call. I trust you will find the stories in these pages inspiring and revealing of transformative experiences in everyday ordinary lives. The people in these stories have made a difference in the lives of others in a variety of ways. Our own inner landscapes are often readied, tilled and planted by the sharing from others.

In writing the book "Soul Stretching," it was my hope to simply share the inner landscape of my own ordinary life experiences and invite others to reflect on theirs. For those of you who have read the book and given me feedback, thank you! For all those who contributed to the book "A Lenten Providence Journey," thank you for sharing some of your inner landscape with the WPC family. Many people found the book both inspiring and challenging. Kudos to all the writers and a special thank you to David



Sister Barbara McMullen, CDP
WPC executive director

Lavender for his help in formatting, editing and bringing it to completion.

The Women of Providence in Collaboration are exploring many other landscapes as well. I want to give you a preview of some of the "projects" in the pipeline. If you have interest in any particular one, please email and let me know.

Providence Retreat Manual: This will be a resource book with different "modules" in it. Some might be specific to Providence themes; others a bit more generic in topics covered. The object is to collect various retreats that people submit, using a designed template and have facilitator's guides, prayers to accompany each retreat and other handouts. These may be designed for one to two days, two to three days or longer retreat times. The thought is to package these for sale in a three ring binder so that addendums could be added over time.

Providence Prayer Resource Book: This will be a collection of various Providence prayers,

poetry, PowerPoint presentations with musical accompaniment, reflections, litanies, etc. that would be readily available for use in various meetings and venues. Most likely this would be packaged similar to the retreat manual so that new contributions could be added.

Compendium Book: This is still in the “brainstorming” phase ... but to take our first book, “Providence: God’s Face Toward the World,” and explore how we might update the articles in it and/or seek new ones.

Monograph: We are seeking people from different disciplines to write on a topic, such as: “Providence and Compassion.” This is also still in the early planning stages.

In the meantime, I have been “tilling” the landscape for the next Providence Event in 2015. The WPC is happy to announce that we have confirmed Sister Ilia Delio, OSF to be our speaker at the next Providence event. **Save the dates: June 19-21, 2015 at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind., campus.** Sister Ilia is the keynoter at this year’s LCWR August Assembly. The Core Planning Team is just beginning to meet by conference call. They will have their first face-to-face meeting in the fall. Please keep our planning team in your prayers.

I want to share a Mary Oliver poem with you, which I came across quite by accident, but as the days went on, seemed to keep speaking to me about landscapes ... thus where I began this director's page.

*There is a clear invitation to drink in
the beauty which surrounds us
and beckons us to listen deeply
to the call of a Provident God.*

Landscape

*Isn't it plain the sheets of moss, except that
they have no tongues, could lecture
all day if they wanted about*

*spiritual patience? Isn't it clear
the black oaks along the path are standing
as though they were the most fragile of flowers?*

*Every morning I walk like this around
the pond, thinking: if the doors of my heart
ever close, I am as good as dead.*

*Every morning, so far, I'm alive. And now
the crows break off from the rest of the darkness
and burst up into the sky—as though*

*all night they had thought of what they would like
their lives to be, and imagined
their strong, thick wings.*

~Mary Oliver, Dream Work

May the doors of your heart never close to the landscape within or around you! May your “spiritual patience” attune you to the shimmering beauty of our Provident God of abundance, and may you be blessed by the sights and sounds and smells of the summer season!

Barbara



Board meeting notes

The Women of Providence in Collaboration (WPC) Governing Board gathered in Melbourne, Ky., for its annual meeting on March 19-20, 2013. Hosted by Sister Fran Moore, CDP, Provincial of the Sisters of Divine Providence of Melbourne, Ky., the Governing Board addressed several key matters:

- Report of the Executive Director, Sister Barbara McMullen's transition, activities and new initiatives;
- Updates on the Vocation Formation Leadership Conference held in Seattle;
- A detailed review of the 2012-2013 and proposed 2013-2014 budgets by Sister Karin Dufault, SP, Treasurer; and
- An in-depth discussion of revamping the WPC dues formula, as well as an investment update.

The Governing Board elected new officers for a two-year term: Sister Kathleen Popko, SP – Chair; Sister Karin Dufault, SP – Treasurer; Sister Denise Wilkinson, SP - Vice Chair; Sister Ann Petrus, CDP - Secretary.

The group thanked Sister Fran Moore for her service as treasurer for four years and vice-chair for two years, and Sister Mary Frances Fletcher, CDP, who served for five years as secretary.

On day two, the Governing Board finalized its decisions regarding the dues structure, and brainstormed ideas for the next Providence Event, which will be held in 2015 and will coincide with the Women of Providence in Collaboration's 35th Anniversary. The Board also engaged in planning WPC publications: a proposed compendium called a "Retreat Resource Book," with complete materials for retreats on Providence themes; a reprint of a book of selected articles from the first Women of Providence book, "Providence: God's Face Toward the World," with new addenda as well as new written articles.

The WPC Governing Board will next meet in Seattle in the spring of 2014; the Executive Committee will gather in the fall of 2014 in San Antonio.

Sister Kathleen Popko, SP
Board Chair



Back row: Sisters Fran Moore, CDP, Karin Dufault, SP, Kathleen Popko, SP and Judy Desmarais, SP. Front row: Sisters Carmen Sanchez, MCDP, Ann Petrus, CDP, Barbara McMullen, CDP and Annette Noel, SP.

Sister Zita is the program director at La Posada Providencia, a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Divine Providence for people in crisis from around the world seeking legal refuge in the U.S. She assumed this position in 2008. As director, she is responsible for the development and delivery of shelter services, supervision of La Posada's staff and volunteers, the shelter's fiscal and operational management, and the ecological development of the land, buildings, and systems. Anyone who enters La Posada also knows that Sister Zita shines her special light that makes God's Providence visible.

As the only shelter of its kind in the lower Rio Grande Valley, La Posada provides crucial services to new immigrants and asylum seekers, far beyond the basic work of providing food, safe shelter, and clothing. Sister Zita, and her staff, oversee a loving, supportive home where each client receives specialized case management that responds to the unique needs of new immigrants. For example, clients need help with setting and meeting goals in order to achieve a successful resettlement. Supportive services provided include local transportation to off-site agencies (such as legal aid and social services), access to on-site phones and fax, paperwork assistance, English literacy, workforce readiness and life skills lessons. More importantly, clients are taught about the dignity of

Janis (right) recovering from her ankle surgery at La Posada.

every human being, respect and stewardship for God's earth and how to bring positive change in our world by working together.

"We provide hospitality to between 225 to 250 clients each year, nearly two-thirds of whom are women and children.

For the past several months, we have been responding to a dramatic increase in need for shelter services for those recently released by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)," explains Sister Zita. "So far this fiscal year, we have sheltered 455 individuals, many of whom, like Janis, are 'short-term' stays requiring a shower, clean clothes, a hot meal, overnight shelter and transportation to the bus station."

Janis's story is but one of many who arrive daily at La Posada . . .

"I began my journey to the U.S. on April 5, 2013. That day, a gang of seven men broke into my house and held my three children and me at gunpoint. They told us that we had to leave or they would kill us. That night, we began our flight from El Salvador."

"Janis" and her children fled to Guatemala, where she has friends and family who had also fled the



violence of El Salvador. Feeling it was "safer" there, she left her children and began her harrowing journey to the U.S. Led by a *coyote* (a human trafficker), Janis traveled through Guatemala and Mexico. In Reynosa, the coyote kept her for nearly a month in a stash house with up to 100 other people and little to eat. The coyote eventually took Janis, and 20 others, across the Rio Grande River to the border.

While trying to climb over the 20 foot border wall, Janis fell and crushed her ankle. Border Patrol called an ambulance and took her to a nearby hospital, where doctors reconstructed Janis' ankle with metal pins. When she was later sent to the detention center, she was kept in a holding cell for five days as Immigration officers argued whether she should be

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there with such a serious injury. They decided to call Sister Zita to come pick her up and take her to La Posada. "I am extremely thankful to be at La Posada. Everyone is so kind and gracious and I am getting stronger every day," says Janis. "I thank God for the kind Immigration officers who argued for my release to La Posada."

"We hear stories like Janis' almost daily at La Posada," says Sister Zita. "Our clients have fled violence, extreme poverty, natural disasters, or other dire circumstances - often

with only the clothes on their backs and hope in their pockets."

Father Jack Wall, President of Catholic Extension, one of its board members from San Antonio and three staff members visited La Posada in May to meet Sister Zita and learn about this remarkable social justice ministry.

"While they were here, they witnessed the arrival of a mother, her baby and six-year-old son from El Salvador and a father with his two young sons from Guatemala, who were released that

morning from Homeland Security. All of them needed showers, clean clothing and a hot meal," recalls Sister Zita. "Before leaving, Father Jack told me how impressed he and his group were with what they witnessed and thanked us for being involved in this much needed ministry in the lower Rio Grande Valley area."

For immediate updates about the status of the 2013 Lumen Christi Award or to learn more about Sister Zita and La Posada, please visit www.lppshelter.org.

LCWR Region 4 visit Capitol Hill to advocate for immigration

In April, Region IV of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) met in Washington, DC and descended upon Capitol Hill for a panel discussion of the need for immigration reform and the values that we shared around immigration. Some members of the House of Representatives attended a meeting in the Capitol building including Steny Hoyer, House Democratic Whip for the 113th Congress. After the panel presentation, sisters divided into groups representing geographic locations and visited their senators and representatives. Sisters Mary Francis Fletcher, Ana Lydia Sonera Matos and

Mary Traupman were part of the delegation visiting Senator Bob Casey and Representative Keith Rothfus. They presented letters from communities supporting immigration reform, particularly those provisions that would positively affect family relationships. They also gifted the representatives with a copy of the DVD, "We Are All Immigrants," which was produced in Western Pennsylvania with the support of the Tri-Diocesan Sisters Leadership Conference (now Catholic Sisters Leadership Council).



Left to right: Sisters Ana Lydia Sonera Matos, CDP, Mary Francis Fletcher, CDP and Mary Traupman, CDP were part of the delegation visiting Senator Bob Casey and Representative Keith Rothfus in Washington, DC.

2013 International Union of Superiors General (UISG) XIX Plenary Assembly in Rome, May 7-11

Every three years, the International Union of Superiors General organizes their plenary assembly in Rome, with the participation of nearly 800 women religious from several congregations.

I have returned to Montreal after an exceedingly blessed experience of participating in the 2013 International Union of Superiors General (UISG) XIX Plenary Assembly in Rome. I joined 800 other General Superiors from 76 countries around the world. It was another manifestation of intercultural, intergenerational and international religious life. The Plenary Assembly is a body for consultation, animation and reflection at an international level. It is open to all those who are members of the Union and occurs every three years. The Plenary Assembly's purposes are to study themes of current interest to religious life at the international level and to provide consultation on questions related to the life and mission of the UISG in the Church and in the world.

The theme of the 2013 assembly was "It will not be so among you." The theme was taken from Matthew 20:26, where Jesus

refers to Gospel service of leadership. All the presentations reflected a facet of servant leadership and the transformation that servant leaders are called to nurture.

It was a great privilege to dialogue with eight sisters at the English speaking table to which I was assigned. They were from the Philippines, Great Britain, India, Ghana, United States, Zambia, Kenya and Tanzania. The sharing of insights was deep and rich as we applied what we had heard in the presentations to our own lived reality. We had the opportunity to also network with others who were present. One sister from Togo, Sister Marie-Reine Amouzou, a sister of St. Augustine, introduced herself to me. She expressed a deep affection and appreciation for the Sisters of Providence in Montreal for providing community while she studied in Montreal from 1979-1982. I met with the four other congregational leaders of the Women of Providence in Collaboration and with sisters of the Canadian Anglophone and Francophone UISG Constellations. I also introduced myself to some sisters present



Sister Karin with some WPC's Sisters in Rome. Left to right:: Sisters Karin Dufault, SP, Ann Petrus, CDP, Denise Wilkinson, SP, Carmen Sanchez, MCDP and Sandra Shannon, SP.

from Chile and the Philippines. It was good to also reconnect with Sister Clotilda Nagugwa, an Ugandan Daughter to Mary, whom I had met at their centennial in 2010.

On May 8, all present for UISG Assembly were invited to a private audience with Pope Francis in the Paul VI Hall. The Pope spoke for about 15 minutes in Italian and was extremely cordial and warm. He does have a wonderful smile! He told us that "the lives of consecrated persons are a light in the world" and stated, "What would the church be without you?" He extended his pontifical blessing not only to us but to all our sisters and to those who minister with us!

*Sister Karin Dufault, SP
Congregational Leader*

Awards, Difference Makers, more

Chamber Salute

The Sisters of Providence of Holyoke were “saluted” by the Affiliated Chambers of Commerce of Greater Springfield (ACCGS), Massachusetts during the Chambers’ Business Breakfast held May 1 at the local Delaney House restaurant. The honor included mention of the Congregation’s 1873–2013 Anniversary – 140 years since the first Providence Sisters arrived in Holyoke from Kingston, Ontario, Canada.

ACCGS holds breakfast events from September through June to pay tribute to individuals, business firms and organizations

making major contributions to the civic and economic growth of the area, and/or for actions that reflect honor on the region.

The May breakfast included a “Mayors’ Forum” featuring input by local Mayors Alex Morse of Holyoke, Michael Tautznik of Easthampton, and Dominic Sarno of Springfield. During their respective presentations to the area’s business leaders, each of the mayors credited the work of the Sisters of Providence in meeting the needs of the area’s communities.

Sister Kathleen Popko, SP, president, and Sister Mary Caritas, SP, vice president,

represented the Congregation at the event. Susan Kaplan, a reporter and host for National Public Radio station WFCR served as moderator and presented the framed salute to Sister Kathleen. She also gave an overview of the sisters’ history in the area, particularly the congregation’s health care and social services ministries.

Difference Makers

“Our community wouldn’t be the community it is without the Sisters of Providence,” said George O’Brien, editor of Springfield’s BusinessWest Magazine. “Without the Sisters of Providence,” he continued, “well – I don’t even want to go there – don’t even want to think about it.” His comments came on March 21 at The Log Cabin in Holyoke as he introduced the Sisters of Providence as one of the magazine’s five Difference Makers Award recipients for 2013.

BusinessWest initiated its now annual tradition of granting the



Top: Sisters of Providence at the Difference Makers Celebration included (seated, from left): Sisters Marita Callahan, Ruth McGoldrick, Madeleine Joy, Kathleen Popko, Mary Caritas, Julie Crane and Mary McGrath; and (standing, from left) Sisters Mary Angela, Joan Manning, Mary Horgan, Margaret McCleary, Senga Fulton, Elizabeth Oleksak, Ramona Williams, Ann Horgan and Maria Joseph. Right: Sister Kathleen Popko, SP (center), with framed Chamber salute, and Sister Mary Caritas, SP (left) and Susan Kaplan. (Photo courtesy of Ed Cohen, photographer.)



awards five years ago. Publisher John Gormally and Associate Publisher Kate Campiti explained the award's name in the evening's program: "Difference Makers describes not only who these individuals are, but what they do. They make a critical difference in the lives of people in Western Massachusetts." Referencing the Sisters of Providence, they cited the Congregation's 140-year mission [in Western Massachusetts and beyond] "of providing compassionate, cutting-edge programs involving healthcare, education, and social services."

President Sister Kathleen Popko and Vice President Sister Mary Caritas accepted the award that evening on behalf of all Sisters of Providence, both living and deceased.

Speaking to the approximately 350 people at the Difference Makers Celebration event, Sister Kathleen recalled the pioneer sisters who arrived in Holyoke in 1873 and those who followed, right to the present. "It is clear," she said, "that the sisters tried to make a difference in the lives of the people they encountered. They saw needs and responded."

"Day after day, year after year," she recounted, "nearly 700 women, called Sisters of Providence, served the people of Western and Central Massachusetts and beyond. Their stories, over the years," she added, "have been read more clearly in the lives of the people they served than in the

headlines of the newspapers, or on television more recently."

In turn, Sister Caritas, remarked, "We have always worked in collaboration with others

and would not have been able to make a difference without the generosity and assistance of committed individuals who continue to inspire us and in many cases now carry on the work we started. Our Foundress, Mother Mary of Providence," she continued, "admonished us to 'never rest on what has been accomplished but press forward to what yet needs to be done.' We, Sisters of Providence, pray each day to live out that spirit. And, I believe," she ended, "that spirit is true of everyone here this evening. May all of you," she concluded, "continue to make a difference."

Nurture the Seed

Seed grown on good ground reaps a bountiful harvest. And, anyone who sows generously will reap generously as well, are two biblical truths that seemed to permeate the air at the recent "Nurture the Seed" event held



Sister Julie Crane (far left) speaking about Sister Ann Horgan's contributions to the Genesis ministry to some of the approximate 90 guests who attended the Nurture the Seed event at Genesis.

at Genesis Spiritual Life and Conference Center in Westfield.

The April 21 program honored Sister Elizabeth Oleksak, who founded Genesis in 1976, and four other Sisters of Providence – Ruth McGoldrick, Ann Horgan, Mary Horgan and the late Mary Raphael – all members of the Genesis staff, both past and present.

Taken together, these five women devoted 100 years of their ministerial lives to the Center "planting the seeds" that, over the span of their years, yielded the harvest Genesis reaps today, a spiritual resource for people to experience God's providential caring.

In her welcoming comments, Sisters of Providence President Kathleen Popko noted, "This celebration takes place in the context of another celebration – the 140th Anniversary of

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San Martin builds a chapel but still needs medical care



San Martin is a small town about eight kilometres from El Progreso, Peru. About 80 families live there. They are poor and very hardworking. Early every day, they go to their fields to cultivate broccoli, onions, potatoes and other vegetables. It is cold when they start out and when they come back home, their clothes are wet from working through the heat of the day.

In this small town, there are three children with different medical syndromes. Their parents suffer because they do not know what to do. All the possibilities of medical attention are far away in Lima, the capital, and it is expensive and time-consuming to travel that distance.

Sister Sara Jiménez is negotiating for the doctors of the Health Center of El Progreso to go to San Martin to conduct a

campaign for disease prevention and to give health advice. She has already had meetings at the Health Centre with the head doctor and a social worker about her concerns and her hopes for the people of San Martin.

This village did not have a church in which to gather for prayer and liturgy. The people had to travel by bus to the nearest church in Torre Blanca. The buses do not operate a full service in these outlying villages, so attending Mass could be difficult for these people. Through the Marillac Mission Fund, Sister Sara has been able to construct a small chapel in the village.

Sister Sara wrote this message last July:

“The Chapel is ready. It is very pretty and I am very happy. The people here are also content and have collaborated really well.

Last summer, the Chapel of St. Martin de Porres was built in San Martin, Peru, with the help of the Marillac Mission Fund. Pictured here, Sister Sara Jiménez, who led the project, opens the chapel doors, in the company of a local girl. The chapel allows local families to pray and celebrate liturgy in their own community. (Photo courtesy of Sister Frances O'Brien, SP.)

The delay in the construction was only due to the fact that we needed to level the ground. On June 16, (the villagers) did a food sale to pay for the construction worker. They have built steps and they are making plans to paint them and to create a small garden. I support them and dream with them. The donation of the congregation has allowed them to pay for the major expenses. Now we only need chairs and tables.”

A living wage for Kingston?

By Tara Kainer

This spring is seeing a resurgence of action to keep attention on a living wage for Kingston. It is a focus of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation office and a whole raft of allies.

In the fall, Kingston city councillor Bill Glover had tabled a motion to request a staff report on the feasibility of a living wage for Kingston. The motion also directed city staff to explore the implications of setting the living wage as the eligibility threshold for City of Kingston subsidized programs, such as recreation and transit.

While City Council didn't get to Glover's living wage motion in November, it did pass at December's meeting. A report from city staff is expected in September 2013.

The idea for implementing a Kingston living wage originated in March 2007 with Mayor

Harvey Rosen's Task Force on Poverty Reduction. Kingston's Poverty Roundtable then explored the concept over the next three years and published its findings in a 2011 report, *A Living Wage for Kingston*. The report was written in consultation with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA). When the Poverty Roundtable dissolved in December 2011, Living Wage Kingston took over the campaign.

Calculated in 2011 at \$16.29 an hour, the living wage is the rate of pay that provides a Kingston family of four with enough income to cover basic needs. Unlike the provincially-set minimum wage, it is based on the actual costs of necessities in Kingston, such as food, child care, transportation, rental housing and so on. It does not allow for retirement savings,

home ownership or savings for children's post-secondary education.

In March, a number of events were held to support Living Wage Kingston's campaign. Michael McCarthy Flynn from British Columbia's *A Living Wage for Families*, and Tom Cooper from Hamilton's Roundtable on Poverty Reduction, came to Kingston. They were guests on a half-hour TVCogeco program and at a public discussion of a living wage for Kingston. On May 13, at Crossroads United Church, Councillor Glover hosted a well-attended discussion with Senator Art Eggleton and, in June, pro-living wage economist Jim Stanford of the Canadian Auto Workers will square off against councillor and economist Bryan Paterson in a TVCogeco debate on the living wage.

Tara Kainer represents the JPIC office with Living Wage Kingston and staffs the weekly Friday silent vigil.



For more than 17 years, the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul in Kingston, Ontario have held a silent vigil to witness against poverty, hunger and injustice. On the vigil's anniversary in November, Sisters participated in an action calling for a living wage for Kingston.

Manus Dei Medal Award

Sister Mary Kaye Nealen honored for distinguished service to Catholic faith and UGF

At commencement ceremonies in Great Falls, Mont., on May 11, the University of Great Falls (UGF) presented its highest honor, the Manus Dei Award, to former faculty member Sister Mary Kaye Nealen, SP.

The Manus Dei Medal Award was created to recognize distinguished service to the Catholic faith and to the college, and to commemorate the centennial of the Sisters of Charity of Providence in Montana. No annual program of presentation was planned; instead, the awards were to be made “from time to time to honor outstanding men and women.”

Sister Mary Kaye joined the UGF family in 1979 as a part-time

professor. Over the next 33 years, she became a full-time professor of theology, provost and director of mission integration. “Sister Mary Kaye was a gentle and constant presence on campus, helping shape the university’s Catholic identity and mission of offering students ‘a liberal education for living and making a living,’” the university said in a press release. Last January, Sister Mary Kaye began a five-year term as a general councilor focusing on continuing education and social justice issues for the international congregation of the Sisters of Providence in Montreal, Quebec.

The Manus Dei medal was designed and handcrafted in silver in 1964 for the then-College of Great Falls by noted professor of art Sister Mary Trinitas, SP. The name of the award, “Manus Dei,” means Hand of God. The medal

depicts a cross as the symbol of Christ and a dove as a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The words “Manus Dei” are inscribed on either side of a replica of the college’s bell tower, erected in 1964 as a memorial to the first 100 years of the Sisters of Providence in Montana.

The first recipient of the medal was the Most Reverend William J. Condon, bishop of Great Falls. In 1993, the medal was presented to Sister Rita Mudd, SP (Sister Rita of the Sacred Heart).

Sisters present for the UGF Manus Dei Medal Award presentation to Sister Mary Kaye Nealen, SP, were (from left) Juliana Casey, IHM, Anita Butler, SP and Judith Desmarais, SP.



Washington news, continued

Sister Helen Brennan honored by IPJC

Sister Helen Brennan was one of three women honored at the Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center (IPJC) Women's Convocation in Bellevue in April for their work "on the margins." The theme of the convocation was "Grace on the Margins".

"By their lives, each of them calls us to envision new ways of being human, of loving, and of participating as God's partners in the transforming work of our God," the presenter said. Sister Helen was cited as a 64-year Sister of Providence who "has been an educator and a passionate advocate for justice. Over the years, she has comforted the afflicted, and often afflicted the authorities, in every

ministry, be it school, chancery or community.

"Always the educator, she encourages us all to be up to date, and when possible, be ahead of our time in our theology. For her, there is no compromise when it comes to justice. Wherever there is a community or person in need, she is there.

"She faithfully reminds us that NOW is the time for inclusive liturgy, NOW is the time for renewal of our church and WE are the ones to rise up and claim our baptismal rights as priest, prophet and leader!

"Sister Helen Brennan, we thank you for being Grace on the Margins!"



Sister Helen Brennan holds the plaque she received at the IPJC Women's Convocation.

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the arrival of the first Sisters of Providence in Western Massachusetts."

"In both (anniversary) instances," she continued, "seeds of ministries were planted and nourished whether in caring for the orphaned, the outcast, the sick, the elderly, those in need – body, mind or spirit. And now these seeds, planted so long ago, have flourished into extraordinary ministries that have touched the lives of thousands of persons."

"Genesis," Sister Kathleen continued, "is a wonderful

example of a seed of an idea planted in the mid-70s that has been nurtured, pruned, fertilized, and coaxed into new life and growth over these more than 37 years."

Richard Sullivan, former Mayor of Westfield and now State Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs, reflected on the number of civic meetings he hosted at Genesis during his mayoral terms. "Those meetings," he said, "led to new initiatives for the city like The Winding River Land Conservancy and the Amelia Park Ice Arena,"

initiatives that continue to enhance the lives of Westfield residents today. He also said he has carried his learnings about the environment from Sister Elizabeth to his current role at the state level.

The Reverend Terrence Devino, SJ, was among five presenters who offered statements of gratitude to each of the honorees. "The seed has been planted," he said, adding he "loved the invitation to this day – to this long overdue celebration and commemoration of Genesis, of

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Profession, Nuns on the Bus, more

Sisters Celebrate Perpetual Profession

On Sunday, April 7, over 400 Sisters, Associates, co-workers, friends and family from all over Texas and the United States gathered in joy and gratitude for a special Mass held in Sacred Heart Conventual Chapel in San Antonio. During this Eucharistic Celebration and Rite of Perpetual Profession, Sister Marjie Filler, CDP, Sister Joyce Detzel, CDP and Sister My-Hanh Tran, CDP each vowed to live her entire life as a Sister of Divine Providence.

The ceremony reflected our congregation's heritage, love for music and appreciation for cultural diversity as different parts of the Mass were proclaimed, spoken and sung in English, Latin, Spanish, and

Vietnamese. It was beautiful to see students of all ages from the three educational communities (Blessed Sacrament School, Providence High School and Our Lady of the Lake University) where the three newly professed sisters assisted at the Mass. May many other men and women hear God's wonderful call to the consecrated life and generously respond to the sacred invitation to be hands of providence for the Church and our world today.

Nuns on the Bus

On April 18, a dozen CDPs, along with women from other religious congregations, women interested in knowing more about Religious Life, representatives from the OLLU Center for Women in Church

and Society, and other friends, boarded the Nuns on the Bus to go from San Antonio to Austin. They went to speak to the members of the Texas legislature to encourage them to pass a bill which would allow the state to accept Medicaid funds from the federal government under the Affordable Care Act. The group from San Antonio was joined by others from Houston, Dallas and Austin as they demonstrated outside the Capitol and fanned out to talk with legislators or their aides in their offices. Unfortunately, the legislature has not passed the Medicaid bill.

On the evening of April 17, San Antonio's Socially Responsible Investment Coalition sponsored a very well attended event at which Sister Simone Campbell, Network's Executive Director,



Top: (Left to right) Sisters My-Hanh Tran, Joyce Detzel and Marjie Filler. Right: Sisters Lourdes Leal, Simone Campbell and Ann Petrus on the Nuns on the Bus tour through Texas.





was the main speaker. She focused on the plight of the poor in the U.S. and was enthusiastically received. Her message inspired the Nuns on the Bus who gathered the next morning at 5:00 a.m., and she was there to take part in the trip.

As of the beginning of June, there is a multi-state Nuns on the Bus tour in progress, with a focus on immigration reform. The bus will be in San Antonio for a rally on June 9.

Art/Auction on Sale

Under the direction of Sister My-Hanh Tran, CDP, the Blessed Sacrament School in San Antonio held an art silent auction and sale of students' works. The auction/sale was held on May 14 and all proceeds will go toward purchasing supplies and equipment for the art department and donating monies to the poor.

OLLU names Sister Jane Ann Slater, CDP, interim president

On February 22, Sister Jane Ann Slater, PhD, a member of the Congregation of Divine Providence, was named interim president of Our Lady of the Lake University effective March 12. She follows Tessa Martinez Pollack, PhD, who stepped down March 1 after serving as president since 2002.

Sister Jane Ann has served the University and Congregation in a variety of roles throughout her career. She taught as a member of the OLLU chemistry faculty from 1970-1981, was the dean of students in 1974 and served as the chairperson of the Academic Affairs Committee. Recently, she served on the Board of Trustees from 1987-1993 and again from 2005-2011 while she was Superior General of



Top: Sister My-Hanh Tran, CDP and some of her art students. Bottom: Sister Jane Ann Slater, CDP, interim president at Our Lady of the Lake University, San Antonio, Texas.

the Congregation. She left her position as academic advisor at the diocesan seminary to take the helm at OLLU.

With her appointment as interim president, she will become an *ex-officio* member of the Board. Sister Jane Ann is the eighth president in OLLU history and the second member of the Congregation to serve in this capacity.

Providence Health Care opens to the public

Providence Health Care at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind., the Sisters of Providence top-rated health care facility that has served the sisters since 2002, is now open to the public for short-term rehabilitation.

Providence Health Care is the only facility in the area that offers on-site aquatic therapy with a specialized pool with lift deck to accommodate patients with limited mobility. There is also a well-equipped therapy gym with state-of-the-art rehab equipment and caring staff. The facility is

open to all, regardless of gender or religious affiliation and Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance are all accepted. There is also an assisted living area now available to the public.

Sister Lisa Stallings, general officer/vicar for the Sisters of Providence who relates to Providence Health Care, is excited that the sisters are now able to offer the health care center to others. "We believe we can offer the community high-quality, compassionate health care in a setting marked

by peacefulness and hope.

The mission of the Sisters of Providence is to further God's merciful designs through works of love, mercy and justice, and we believe Providence Health Care is a means of doing so," Sister Lisa said.

"Opening the facility to our friends and neighbors in the community has been a goal since Providence Health Care was incorporated in 2002. We are very happy that we are now able to realize this plan," Sister Lisa said. "We are happy to be able to provide quality health care here, and we are happy to be able to share 'the Woods' with others," she said.



Top: Providence Health Care is the only facility in the Wabash Valley to offer an on-site aquatic therapy pool allowing even patients with limited mobility access to beneficial water therapy. Right: Providence Health Care is situated on the grounds of the Sisters of Providence 1,200 beautiful, peaceful acres. The facility is now open to the public.



Indiana news, continued

Laetare Medal goes to SPRED

The SPRED ministry team of Sister Susanne Gallagher, SP, Sister Mary Therese Harrington, S.H., and Rev. James H. McCarthy were recently awarded Notre Dame University's Laetare Medal for their work in founding and supporting the Special Religious Development ministry. "Sisters Gallagher and Harrington and Father McCarthy have summoned the Church to a crucial and too often overlooked ministry," said

Notre Dame President Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C. "Insisting that a developmental disability neither tempers Christ's invitation nor restricts one's right to respond, they have ushered countless people to their rightful place at the Eucharistic table." Sister of Providence Susanne has served in this ministry for 45 years. More info can be found at newsinfo.nd.edu/news/38187-laetare/



Sister Susanne Gallagher, SP, (at right), helps her sister, Rita, climb the 40 steps to get to Rita's SPRED faith community meeting. Sister Susanne has been with this ministry for 45 years.

Holyoke news, continued from pg. 13

the women of this story—this land, this most blessed footprint of the Divine, and of all that has been planted, all that has been nurtured, cared for and encouraged to bloom.”

The afternoon concluded with remarks by Liz Walz, the Center's new executive director, expressing her gratitude “to be part of this wonderful Genesis moment.”

Jubilarians

The Sisters of Providence observed milestone anniversaries of six of their members during a Mass of Thanksgiving on Sunday, May 19, in Our Mother of Sorrows Chapel at Providence Place. The Jubilarians are (photo, seated from left) Sister Mary Adrianella Gris , a Ruby



Jubilarian (70 years) and Sister Jeanne Brault, Diamond Jubilarian (60 years). Standing (left to right) are Diamond Jubilarians Sisters Mary McGrath, Mary Angela Haggerty, Doris Exford and Mary Martin de Porres Gris . Their combined years of service totals 370 years. Their talents are many and their service wide, including: finance director, treasurer,

Congregational leadership, nurse, pastoral minister, caretakers for the elderly and children, radiology technician, medical records director, chaplain, social worker, spiritual and retreat director, health care coordinator, public health nurse, volunteer teacher of English as a second language, service for the blind and more.

Novitiate entrance of Sister Mary Phillips

On April 30, the Sisters of Holy Province gathered for a simple entrance ceremony as Mary Phillips, candidate, became a novice. Providence led her to this point beginning with her childhood in a Newfoundland fishing town, where she saw her parents welcome the poor to their home and share all they had, a model of God's generous Providence. An attraction to the sick, the elderly and children shaped Mary's life all through the experience of marriage and the raising of two beautiful sons. She spent nearly six months in India caring for the poor in the streets of Calcutta, then

returned to Canada to discern a call to religious life, in which community life would be a support to vows, contemplation and service. The Sisters of Providence drew her attention by their openness, hospitality, love of the poor and compassion. In her year of candidacy, Mary has become deeply attached to Blessed Emilie Gamelin, foundress and to Our Mother of Sorrows, our model in compassion for those suffering.

Candidate Director Sister Toyleen Fook welcomed Mary's family, friends, sisters and Providence Associates. Mary chose as a scripture reading the

passage from John 15:1-13 on the vine and the branches and gave a reflection on it as a keynote in her life. Provincial Superior Sister Gloria Keylor affirmed Mary's request for admittance to the novitiate and presented her with a copy of the Constitutions as well as the Providence pin. Novitiate Director Sister Margaret Botch accepted her responsibilities to Mary and the community.

Following the ceremony was the signing of the document and a time of socializing followed by a festive dinner. Next day, Sister Mary drove to the novitiate in Spokane, sharing the driving with Provincial Councillor Sister Germaine Chalifoux and Formation Director Sister Elizabeth Kaczmarczyk.

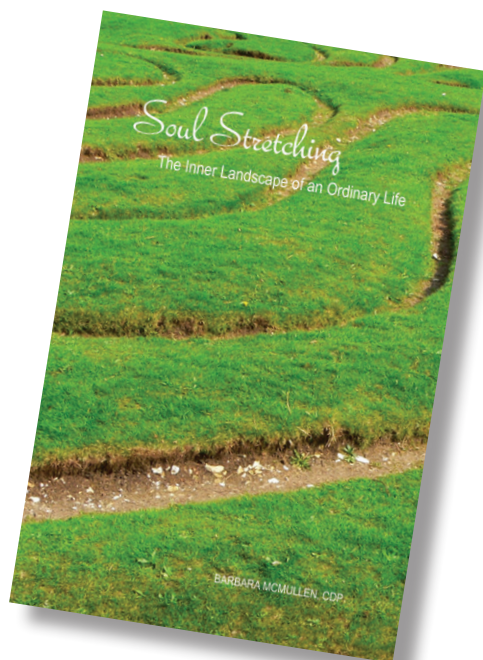


Left: Provincial Superior Sister Gloria Keylor gives Sister Mary the Providence pin. Top: Sister Mary and Father Matthew Hysell, a friend of the community.

Soul Stretching

The Inner Landscape of an Ordinary Life

by Barbara McMullen, CDP



Have you ever been to the circus and seen the trapeze artists? There has to be such a sense of trust between the one flying through the air and the one catching them.

Is that not who our God is for us, the Eternal Catcher? God is there, waiting for us to let go, to trust that we will be caught. Maybe we are not flying on a trapeze, but perhaps we are on a spiritual journey that is taking us to new places, new understandings, new horizons. We might be invited to move out of our comfort zones or, perhaps, enter into a new reality beyond our imagining.

I believe we have these sorts of tug-of-war times in our lives when deeper trust is being asked of us, and we take that leap of faith ... we let go ... and what a ride it is!

(© 2012 Barbara McMullen, CDP)

Thanks to the following retreat centers for being willing to help promote and sell this book:

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August 13-17, 2013	WPC Executive Director at LCWR Annual Assembly – Orlando, Fla.
September 16-19, 2013	Providence Associate Leaders Gathering – Spokane, Wash.
September 27-29, 2013	Providence Event Core Team initial meeting – Chicago, Ill.
November 11-13, 2013	WPC Executive Committee meeting – San Antonio, Texas
February 25-26, 2014	WPC Governing Board meeting – Seattle, Wash.
March 13-16, 2014	WPC Vocation/Formation/Leadership meeting – Allison Park, Pa.

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