



# Collaboration

*Sisters of Divine Providence, San Antonio*

## Escuela Móvil: A CDP Ministry in Mexico

Since 1962, the Congregation of Divine Providence has had professed Sisters in México. In 1996, the Sisters of Divine Providence (CDPs) formed the Region of México, and three years later, they formally held their first Regional Chapter with elections of a Regional Council with a six-year term. In México, the CDP Sisters currently serve in ministries in Querétaro, Morelia and Mexico City where they educate, serve the needy and work actively in their parishes.

Today, there is a reality of extreme poverty that affects the lives of many people throughout the world. Of those impacted, children and teenagers, many of which provide for their families, become homeless after escaping abusive households. As a result, their rights and needs are not met, and many are subjected to danger, submission to drugs and human trafficking. Developed to decrease the percentage of children and street workers exposed to this danger, Mobile School was created. The organization was developed to train local street workers and educate children. This world-wide ministry was introduced to the CDPs in México by their Affiliate from Colombia, Jessika Martínez. CDP Sisters in Querétaro, México, observed the needs of the local street workers and children then developed their own ministry to address them. They called it "Escuela Móvil."

Sisters Elizabeth Carrasco and María Guadalupe "Lupita" Silva joined Jessika's efforts to find a sponsor for this minis-

try. Alvida QRO, a non-profit food bank in Querétaro, loved their work and added this ministry to their program under the condition that the CDP group take full responsibility of its operation. On April 12, 2013 they began the mobile ministry in the city of Querétaro where the regional Motherhouse is located.



**Hermana Elizabeth Carrasco Araujo, CDP, teaches children at Escuela Móvil.**

The ministry involves taking a fully equipped cart on wheels that includes chalkboards, panels, games and writing supplies to the streets of the city. The Sisters and their volunteers transport the cart to two locations in downtown Querétaro four times a week.

Upon arrival, they roll the cart off the truck and take it to a prime location for set up. Children and teens who live on the streets come to visit, talk, seek help with school work and interact with them. Even young mothers come by regularly to gain knowledge

and receive advice. First-time visitors have become regulars who gravitate to the program for warmth, attention, companionship and lessons, all which provide respite from their challenging lives. The growth and success stories witnessed by the Escuela Móvil volunteers inspire them to continue educating and making an impact all over the world.

Due to Coronavirus, the CDPs in México have decided to keep Escuela Móvil off the streets for their own safety and for the safety of those they serve. Sisters Elizabeth and Maria Guadalupe hope to continue growing and working with this ministry in the future.

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Sister Barbara McMullen, CDP  
WPC executive director

As I write this page for the Winter issue of *Collaboration* our nation and the world is still dealing with the Corona virus. In many parts of the world there is still a crisis of cases, of sickness, and of deaths being reported. Our healthcare workers are exhausted, and our hospitals are being overrun and stretched to capacity. In some states the vaccine rollout has been rather slow. There are many difficulties and unknowns still to be faced.

As if dealing with a pandemic wasn't enough, our own country witnessed an attack on our very own democracy by a mob of rioters at our Capitol building. That insurrection has caused deaths and physical injuries to many people. Beyond the physical harm, the vitriolic rhetoric and the symbols of white supremacy and racism shocked our nation. We are in need of so much healing. Hopefully with the peaceful transition of power taking place on Inauguration Day and President Biden promising to try and bring unity and restore the "soul" of America, things will begin to change for the better.

I am hopeful that change can happen. This issue of *Collaboration*, with its wonderful stories of Providence women and their various ministries, gives testimony that there are indeed positive things happening all around us if we but look and listen. Associates in Peru have been very busy trying to set up a much needed oxygen processing plant and see to the needs of students trying to learn virtually but without the needed equipment and supplies for

that type of learning. Some Sisters made angel ornaments for healthcare workers to thank them for their service. Sisters are involved in education in a variety of ways, especially with the creation of a mobile school for poor children in Mexico, or being willing to provide virtual retreats, or giving us a synopsis of the Pope's encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti*.

Whenever there is a need we often see Providence Sisters step up to the plate. For their years of distinguished service some of them have even been recognized and received pontifical honors. Others volunteer to help give vaccine shots, while other newer members profess their vows and dedicate themselves to service.

These stories show us there is hope even amid situations that might be very dire. As Providence people, a strong faith and trust gives us the courage to face these situations with compassion. We live in trust and know that a loving and protective God is with us.

**Providence: Where Justice and Radical Hope Meet**, the Providence Event, will take place virtually on February 20. The 260 participants and I are looking forward to Nancy Sylvester's presentations. It promises to be a great day as we also celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Women of Providence in Collaboration!

*Barbara*



## **Three CDP Sisters Receive Pontifical Honors**

At a ceremony on September 27 at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption in Covington, KY, Sisters Janet Bucher, Fran Moore and Margaret Stallmeyer, were among the nine religious women and eighteen laity and clergy to receive “*The Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice*” (“For Church and Pontiff”). This honor, established in 1888 by Pope Leo XIII, is the highest papal medal awarded to the laity by the Pope and is given in recognition of distinguished service to the Church.

Sr. Janet Bucher, CDP, has ministered since 1991 as Parish Administrator at Our Savior Church in Covington, founded by Bishop Howard in the 1940’s to serve the needs of African American Catholics in the city. Always a woman with a great passion for social justice and a deep desire to serve those who are most vulnerable, Sr. Janet also helped launch the Emergency Shelter of Northern Kentucky in 2008, the region’s only cold weather shelter for adults. Soon operating year-round, the Shelter has outgrown its current quarters. On December 15, Sr. Janet could be found at the groundbreaking for its new facility with other members of the Shelter’s Development Board and local officials, shovel in hand!

After serving the Church for fifteen years as the Director of Catholic Social Services in Lexington, in 2004 Sr. Fran Moore, CDP, was called to lead her community as Provincial Superior. It was a decade of change that saw the sale of Saint Anne Convent in Melbourne, KY to the diocese

and the construction of a new Province Center. For Sr. Fran, service to the Church through her participation on many boards and committees over the years (including the WPC Board) has been a mutually-shaping experience that she views as a great blessing. It has also offered her a “big picture” perspective, which she thoroughly enjoys. Since 2015, Sr. Fran has brought this perspective, as well as broad experience in Church and community, to her current ministry as Vicar for Religious in the Diocese of Covington.

Following almost 20 years of ministry in education, Sr. Margaret Stallmeyer, CDP, obtained a degree in Canon Law from Catholic University and was invited by the bishop of the Diocese of Lexington to open and direct its tribunal. She remained in this ministry until 1994, when she was appointed Provincial Treasurer. Ten years later the Holy Spirit came calling again when Sr. Margaret was asked to assume the presidency of Thomas More College (now University) in Northern Kentucky. Here she found abundant opportunity to express her love for young adults and to apply her financial and organizational skills along with her background in Canon Law. Appointed Provincial Treasurer again in 2014, Sr. Margaret is currently the Director of the Tribunal of the Diocese of Covington, KY, and as Provincial Councilor and Treasurer.

Congratulations on this well-deserved recognition, Sisters Janet, Fran, and Margaret! You are truly dedicated women of Providence!



*(left to right) Sr. Janet Bucher, CDP; Sr. Fran Moore, CDP; Bishop of the Diocese of Covington Roger Foy, and Sr. Margaret Stallmeyer, CDP.*

## ***Sr. Cindy Fehrenbach, CDP, Honored by United Way***

The work of Brighton Center in Northern Kentucky and the people she meets there hold a special place in the heart of Sr. Cindy Fehrenbach, a long-time volunteer for its Food Pantry and Clothing Closet ministries.

So when the number of people that the Center usually serves quadrupled not long after the start of the pandemic, Sr. Cindy “doubled down” on her shift hours and took on the additional responsibilities of training new volunteers and running the back-end of the Center’s food distribution.

On December 15, she was recognized by United Way of Greater Cincinnati, along with twelve other individuals, for improving the Northern Kentucky community.

The “Do Good Award” is given to people who “help change lives, alter perceptions, and build awareness,” and whose “efforts and passion in going above and beyond help strengthen the communities where we live, work, and gather.” United Way and Brighton Center cited Sr. Cindy for “always going above and beyond” to help Brighton customers “in whatever way she can.”

Always willing to jump in to help, Sr. Cindy has learned all the Center’s volunteer roles, and so has become as well the “go-to” person for any questions that a customer or another volunteer might ask.

“We couldn’t accomplish anything without the help of dedicated volunteers like Sr. Cindy,” says Madison Smith, the nominator from Brighton Center.

The Center helps people become self-sufficient by providing a wide range of programs and services, which include meeting basic needs, workforce development, affordable housing, financial education and neighborhood-based programs. In a word, the Center is dedicated to creating hope—just like Sr. Cindy, another true Woman of Providence!



***Sr. Cindy Fehrenbach, CDP at her ministry with Brighton Center, Northern KY (Food Pantry)***



***Sr. Cindy Fehrenbach, CDP at her ministry with Brighton Center, Northern KY (Clothes Closet)***



## Teresa Huang Thi Nguyen Professes Final Vows

During this particularly challenging year, celebrating the perpetual vows of Sister Teresa Huang Thi Nguyen was a bright spot.

Sister Huang professed her final vows of chastity, poverty and obedience as a Sister of Providence in a liturgy on Sunday, Oct. 11, at Vietnamese Martyrs Catholic Church, Tukwila, WA.

Due to pandemic health and safety requirements, Sister Huang's vows ceremony was a bit of a break from tradition. The church was limited to 25 percent capacity, which restricted the number of friends, parishioners and sisters to approximately 200, with masks and social distancing in effect. Caution tape blocked off alternate pews, attendees were seated six feet apart, and a cleaning crew appeared as soon as Mass was dismissed. The customary final vows reception will be rescheduled as health and safety requirements allow.

Though Sister Huang's family was unable to travel from Vietnam for the ceremony, they were able to watch via livestream video. Several times during the ceremony, the family was addressed, keeping them engaged from afar. Sisters of Providence in lockdown and long-distance were able to enjoy the event online and be present in spirit, as well.

All four members of the Provincial Council of Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province, were able to attend – Provincial Leader Barbara Schamber and Councilors Jacqueline Fernandes, Margarita Hernandez

and Karen Hawkins – as were more than 25 other sisters. Congregational Leader Karin Dufault, SP, traveled from Montreal and spent 14 days in quarantine so she could take part in the event. Father Gioakim Dao Xuan Thanh presided, with six concelebrants.

Sister Huang's many personal gifts and talents were apparent at the ceremony. The altar was decorated with a handmade needlework quilt and flowers arranged by the creative sister, who also sewed her own dress for the occasion. The ceremony culminated with a beautiful song written and sung in Vietnamese by Sister Huang for her parents. The lyrics describe her gratitude for their love and support, and reassuring words about her call to become a bride of Christ: *"Jesus is my married man. He is the best of the best... Mom, Dad, please do not worry for me because with Jesus I am at peace, and I am His beloved, and I will try to live this love for the rest of my life."*

Sister Huang entered the Sisters of Providence religious community as a candidate in April 2010. She had been called to religious life as a young woman and initially joined the congregation of the Lovers of the Holy Cross of Thanh Hoa in North Vietnam after graduating from high school. When her family experienced difficult times, she left the religious community to help support them as a seamstress and florist.

However, God's call persisted, and Huang was drawn to the Sisters of Providence. She spent two years communicating with various Sisters of Providence.

Eventually two sisters visiting Vietnam paid a visit to Huang and her parents, and she was invited for a "Come & See" experience in Seattle.

As a Sister of Providence candidate and novice, Huang spent time in Spokane, WA, studying theology at Gonzaga University and taking courses at Spokane Community College. She also volunteered at the Women's Hearth and St. Ann's Child Center.



***Sister Teresa Huang Thi Nguyen processes into her first vows ceremony COVID style – with masks, closed pews, limited attendance and livestreaming for distant family and friends.***

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## Teresa Huang Thi Nguyen Professes Final Vows

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Sister Huang returned to Seattle in June 2013 where she finished her associate degree at Seattle Central College and earned a bachelor's in business administration at Seattle University. She completed a master's in transformation leadership at Seattle University in June 2020, celebrated "the Covid way" with a virtual online graduation ceremony.

Sister Huang begins her new ministry this month as a residence service coordinator with Providence Peter Claver House and Providence Gamelin House, affordable supportive housing programs in south Seattle.

"I cannot explain enough how Provident God is in my life, particularly my religious life, but one thing I know: God will always be with me in every step of my life," said Sister Huang. "I often remind myself of the words St. Teresa of Calcutta said, 'I can't do a great thing, but I can do a small thing with great love.' So, I choose this way as I trust in my God because, 'with God, nothing shall be impossible' (Luke 1:37). I offer my life to God through the Sisters of Providence responding, 'Yes, here I am, send me!' to serve people who are marginalized and vulnerable in our society.



***Sister Huang (right) recites her vows to Sister Karin Dufault, congregational leader. The liturgy was presented in English and Vietnamese.***

## **Teaching in Peru During the Pandemic**

**By Carmen Alomía Guía, Providence Associate**

Here in Peru the situation is complicated. I think the government is making the right decisions, but the big problem is poverty, the lack of respect for the rules by the citizens and our poor health system, which is not prepared to deal with what we are facing.

We started with a state of emergency and quarantine but in many parts people did not comply. This was often out of absolute necessity because they do not have a salary, but live on what they earn day by day as street vendors or casual labourers.

By closing down everything and taking care of only the essentials like medicine, food and security many were left without an income. In the face of this, the government gave a bonus to the families, but it did not reach everyone. There is solidarity among the people. The houses that do not have food to eat put up a white flag asking for help. The water, light and gas services are maintained. The government asked the companies to only incrementally increase what they charge throughout the year after the quarantine is lifted.

Education is another dilemma. The government proposed remote education, starting April 6th. We were going to start on March 16th. However, we came across the stark reality of having no means of connecting with the students. First, the registration system of our schools did not have phone numbers for all the students. Every teacher had to look for ways, usually by phone, to find the families. Others are without Internet connection as only a few have computers connected to the Internet. The teacher's

contact with the students has been difficult. Out of the 38 students in each of my classes, only 15 have access to a phone with a prepaid plan costing 6 soles for one day with Internet service.

Therefore, we connect only by WhatsApp, once a week. Ahead of time we send an outline of a topic with simple directions, then we connect so that the students can ask questions and have the teacher clarify the topic and specify the one required activity. I have five 5th cycle sections each with 38 students, in total 190 students. In other words, we are accompanying only those with whom we make contact. Those we do not know about are the students that we cannot contact. It's frustrating.

The good thing is that the government has arranged to give 25-minute classes on television and radio once a week. The majority of students have access to television or radio. From there the teachers are able to reinforce the classes. The government also offers a ministry platform for education but of 38 students, only one has access.



*Carmen Alomía Guía is the Coordinator of the Providence Associates in Peru. She teaches Spanish language and literature at a high school in El Progreso, Carabayllo.*



## **Campaign for Oxygen in Carabayllo**

By Sister Sara Jiménez Angulo & Carmen Alomía Guía

### **Sister Sara Jiménez Angulo:**

On Sunday August 16, 2020, the Peruvian Associates met virtually and during the meeting Providence Associate and Public Health nurse, Lourdes Alvarez made a proposal that the Associates participate in a campaign to save the lives of persons with Covid-19 in Carabayllo, Peru. We made suggestions about people who could join the campaign to get an oxygen processing plant for Carabayllo. It is well known that the hospitals do not have enough oxygen to be able to attend to the entire population affected by the virus and many die at home or in hospitals because of the lack of oxygen.

August 20, 2020 we had the first meeting via Zoom for the campaign members. This campaign is being called "No One Else Dies". I will be representing the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul.

I find myself moved by many signs of Hope and Light in this time of darkness. The campaign for oxygen for Carabayllo has motivated many people to participate, especially the youth and the organizations of the town. We meet every week via Zoom with the leadership team of the commission. Many ideas and suggestions have been put into practice.

Our Bishop Lino Panizza Richero is supporting the campaign. Donations are being deposited in the Caritas Carabayllo account. Broadcast media have supported the campaign. Fund-raising activities and events began and culminated November 30, 2020.

The beneficiaries of the Glass of Milk Program, which total more than three thousand at the district level, will contribute 1/2 sol each. Some of the young people of the El Progreso Library plan to hold a "Flea" Bazaar, others a Raffle, etc. The Peruvian Associates are also organizing to support it.

You can feel the warmth and the joy, the Solidarity and Hope that comes from projects to help the weakest. I feel happy because Our Provident God loves us, guides us and takes care of us.

### **Associate Carmen Alomía Guía:**

Regarding the Campaign for Oxygen, it is on its way. As Associates, we decided to make a common fund for the initial contribution to the dissemination of information to the population. Those of us who are teachers are working on this issue in our classes so that as citizens we become aware of the importance of being organized and feeling that this campaign is ours, that is, it is of the entire population and moves us in solidarity and love. People are giving what they can...only a few soles sometimes.... but there is confidence that it will be possible.



**People line up for 2-3 days in order to refill oxygen tanks at inflated prices for COVID-19 patients. The Marillac Mission Fund has contributed \$10,000 USD to this campaign for oxygen in Carabayllo, Peru.**



## Providence Defined Amid Trials of the Pandemic

By Rezebeth Noceja, SP

A conversation among our volunteers at one of our ministries in inner city Edmonton was around the definition of Providence. They asked, "what is Providence?". Some explained it is like divine intervention which becomes present at the most difficult times even without being asked for while others said providence is the answer to prayers which were intentionally begged for. It was interesting to hear their discussion. As I write this article, I ponder on my own experience of providence during the past year and by extension render for us a definition of it.

It is January 2021 and looking back at the past year I marvel at how God has been good to me in all the complexities I went through. This included the fear of having contracted the virus around March last year which turned out to be a simple case of cold and flu. With a ministry that was abruptly transitioned to work-from-home, I soon began to feel the privilege of still having a job amidst massive cuts from different sectors and having a secure home where I have all the things I need, safely distanced from possible virus carriers. Soon enough I felt a gentle yet persistent nudge to use this privilege to help those in need.

After a few weeks of being home-bound, my community and I started to wonder how we can be providence to those who are marginalized and heavily affected by the pandemic. Our local community, together with the Novitiate community, started volunteering at my workplace to deliver food hampers to immigrant and refugee families and seniors who are home-bound across the Edmonton area.

Aware of the risks we were taking, we drew inspiration from our foundress, Mother Emilie, and our Sisters who braved the typhus epidemic in the year 1847 and the cholera epidemic in the year 1849 that deeply affected the city of Montreal in Canada. The Sisters braved these plagues ministering to God's people with trust in Providence.

By the middle of the year, I had a ministry transition to full-time study online which proved to be very challenging in all sorts and form. I soon realized that the

challenges I faced were shared by most students in my class. My intuition says that the gravity of mental and emotional pressure experienced by students were associated with the restrictions brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic. It is one thing to learn about critical social issues and social justice towards the achievement of a degree in Social Work; it is another story to do it without the necessary social interactions with peers and teachers. Paradoxically, it is learning to be a social worker without being social.



*Rezebeth Noceja, SP*

As I examine my own values as a Religious and how it may be in conflict with the demands of the profession, and as I learn about the theories behind social work and the plight of those in the margins of society, I myself am immersed in my own form of plight.

The rigorous demands of school, the social isolation I was not accustomed to, the expectations of community life, and my own continued discernment as a Sister of temporary vows created stress and pressure. Thankfully, I survived the first semester of the university program and with the occasional doubts about my own call, I am still here...sustained and cradled by Providence. At times when I felt like slipping away, Providence was

faithfully and steadily grounding me.

One thing I learned from the experience of online study is to be "intentional" about making connections with my classmates (though remotely) in order to form a good support in the learning process.

Much like religious community life, we have to be intentional about our community life if we want to thrive in our response to God's call. In the absence of tangible school community, I found learning companions in my local community members who had the experience and robust knowledge in ministry which is providential.

As the new year starts, I hope in Providence that is my ever-present companion in moments of joy as well as in moments of fear and doubt.

## **Sister Nancy Nolan, 15th General Superior, Passes Away**

On December 20, the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana, announced the death of former General Superior, Sister Nancy Nolan. Sister Nancy, formerly Sister Jean Paula, was 84 years old and had been a Sister of Providence for 66 years. She was the Congregation's 15th General Superior, from 1986-96.

Born on May 13, 1936, in Galesburg, Illinois, Sister Nancy entered the Congregation on February 2, 1955, from Corpus Christi Parish in Galesburg. She professed first vows on August 15, 1957, and perpetual vows on August 15, 1962. Sister Nancy followed her two older sisters, Sister Lucy Nolan and Sister Carol Nolan, into the Congregation.

"My grandfather's sister, Sister Modesta Nolan, joined the Sisters of Providence, so the Sisters were always important to our family," Sister Nancy once said. "My memory is in fourth grade when a Sister asked what we wanted to be when we grew up and I knew I wanted to be a Sister. I know I was influenced by the Sisters who taught me. That is important because my two sisters joined the Community before I did, but I remembered I wanted to join before they did."

Sister Nancy earned a bachelor's degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, a master's degree in education from the University of Illinois and another master's degree in pastoral studies from Loyola University in Chicago.

Her teaching ministries took her to schools in Indianapolis, Chicago and Oklahoma. She ministered as principal at Corpus Christi School in Oklahoma City from 1971-75 and as president of Mother Theodore Guerin High School in River Grove, Illinois, from 1999-2008.

She served in elected leadership as Co-Provincial of St. Joseph Province, in the Chicago area, from 1975-83. For 10 years, she served as the Congregation's General Superior. She was elected to her first term on February 26, 1986, and her second term on July 17, 1991.

"It was the greatest privilege of my life," Sister Nancy said. "I felt very honored to be in that position. And I said many times that it probably was the best 10 years of my life.

"It was during that time that we celebrated our sesquicentennial in 1990, which, I think, was a great mo-

ment in our history. We worked on getting the cause for Mother Theodore to go forward. And, most important, we deepened our understanding of Providence spirituality and its relationship to our charism."



**Sister Nancy Nolan**

During her 10-year term, Pope John Paul II bestowed the title of Venerable to Mother Theodore, who was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI on October 15, 2006. In addition, during her administration, Sister Nancy oversaw the razing of Foley Hall, the renovation according to liturgical norms of the Church of the Immaculate Conception and the construction of Providence Center, now known as Providence Spirituality & Conference Center. The Congregation's government structure was also centralized during her second term.

Sister Ann Casper, who served as General Secretary alongside Sister Nancy during the two terms, said, "Sister Nancy was the perfect leader for those 10 years. Her 'laid-back style' was somewhat misleading, for she was a woman of great wisdom, vision, strength and courage."

After completing her second five-year term, Sister Nancy was hired as Programs Director at the Institute for Spiritual Leadership in Chicago, before starting her ministry at Mother Theodore Guerin High School in 1999. There, she was instrumental in changing the mission of the school at the request of Francis Cardinal George of the Archdiocese of Chicago. The school became co-ed in order to welcome the young men of neighboring Holy Cross High School because of that school's closing and was renamed Guerin College Prep High School.

Sister Nancy returned to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in 2011, and, in 2012, she became the Congregation's Vocations Coordinator, while also taking part in prison ministry at the Terre Haute Federal Penitentiary until 2017 when she began a ministry of answering the prayer requests posted on the Sisters of Providence website.

Upon learning of Sister Nancy's passing, Noreen Fitzgerald, who taught at Mother Theodore Guerin and Guerin Prep high schools, said "Sister Nancy was so fortunate to make a difference in so many places as a Sister of Providence. I have true admiration of her success with making friends with those she worked with. Her calm demeanor and critical eye allowed those she came in contact with

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## Sister Mary Roger Madden Turns 100, Celebrates 80 Years as a Sister of Providence

"She is one of our treasures in our community. She's one of the very special people. She's the one person who speaks the truth. She has a heart of gold and she's my very best friend." Sister Jeanette Marie Lucinio is talking about Sister Mary Roger Madden, who has had a busy December. During the month, Sister Mary Roger celebrated 80 years in the Congregation and also turned 100 years old, joining Sister Marceline Mattingly as the current Sisters of Providence who have reached the century mark.

Only days after reaching the milestone, Sister Mary Roger said she was feeling very well. "Turning 100 is not much different than 99," she said. "It's about the same, but it is amazing. I never expected it. No one in my family has lived this long. My birthday was a wonderful day. I heard from a lot of people whom I had not heard from in a long time. I have such wonderful friends."

Sister Jeanette Marie and Sister Janice Smith, who is also quite close to Sister Mary Roger, said one of her favorite things to do during the day is to get caught up in a book. "She is an avid reader on very deep and intense topics, including spirituality, politics and culture," Sister Janice said. "She has a great intellect and her personality matches that. She has very firm and well-thought-out opinions about our current world situations. She's no lightweight, even at the great age of 100!"

"She's very well versed in all kinds of things," Sister Jeanette Marie added. "She knows what is going on. She listens to the news."



**Sister Mary Roger Madden (left)  
and Sister Alice Ann Rhinesmith**

Sister Jeanette Marie said Sister Mary Roger's birthday, which took place on December 5, was quite special. "She had such a wonderful birthday," Sister Jeanette Marie said. "I did get over to see her for her birthday. I had a conversation with her outside of her window. I speak with her every Sunday on the phone, but she has lots and lots of friends. I'll call her sometimes on a Sunday and the phone is busy. She is such a remarkable lady and I think we all know that."

Sister Mary Roger was born in Decatur, Illinois. She entered the Congregation in 1940 from St. Patrick Parish in Decatur and professed perpetual vows in 1949. She earned a bachelor's degree in English from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and has a master's degree in English from Indiana University.

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## Sister Nancy Nolan Passes Away

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to succeed. She was a compassionate leader who was driven with a strong faith. She was appreciative of those she worked with whether it be employee or student or friend. Everyone loved her. Her memory will be engraved in so many minds."

Former Mother Theodore Guerin and Guerin Prep high school principal Bonnie Brown also added, "She took me on as an assistant principal and had confidence that I could help administer Mother Guerin ... She influenced my leadership for many years and I am sure there are many, many people today who have been influenced by her within your community."

Sister Maureen Abbott said, "One of the things that most impressed me was how Nancy expressed Provi-

dence Spirituality in a way that has taken root in our SP understanding of our charism. I remember how Barbara Doherty was the mover and shaker within the Women of Providence in Collaboration that articulated the theology, but Nancy had a gift for making it practical and accessible."

Regarding all of her ministries through the years, Sister Nancy once said the established relationships she had with others were most important to her.

"The relationship with the Sisters I lived with and the relationships with the students and parents [were always a part of me]. I don't think there is any place I have ever been that I have not continued some relationships," Sister Nancy said. "We are women who aren't afraid to be challenged, to grow, and to change."

## Sister Mary Roger Madden turns 100

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Her teaching ministry found her in many different locations, beginning in Chicago in 1943. She has also taught in Hammond, Indianapolis, Peru, Richmond, Fort Wayne and Clarksville, all in Indiana; as well as Washington, D.C., and in California.

Sister Mary Roger also ministered as the Congregation's historian for 10 years and is the author of "The Path Marked Out: History of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods Volume III." Released in 1991, it covers the Congregation's history from 1890 to 1926.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Sister Mary Roger has spent a lot of time in her room at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, but those close to her said her demeanor is always upbeat.

"Sister Mary Roger is a very contemplative woman," Sister Jeanette Marie said. "She has a beautiful prayer life. She can be alone with God for many hours and it does not disturb her at all. She could stay there all the time. She's very at peace in God's presence. I think it's something she has longed for all her life. She's very grateful about that. "She has the quiet, but she's not alone. She's happy that she is very occupied with God."

Sister Mary Roger said her love of reading stems from her childhood and evenings at home watching her father read everything in sight. "He brought books home to me," Sister Mary Roger said. "I got a good start that way. I learned to read before I went to school. I used to sit on my father's lap and he would read the comics to me. I learned to read because he read to me."

Sister Mary Roger said her education is also what drew her to the Sisters of Providence, a Congregation with a rich history in teaching. "I love to teach," Sister Mary Roger said. "I remember as a child, I used to set up chairs on the lawn in the neighborhood and teach the kids. I have always loved teaching.

"I had three brothers and one of my brothers always said, 'She always liked to tell everyone else what to do.'" One of her other brothers, David Joseph Madden, was a television actor made famous for his role as Reuben Kincaid in "The Partridge Family" from 1970-74. He also appeared in "Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In," "Bewitched," and "Happy Days." His final acting role was in 1998, when he appeared in an episode of "Sabrina The Teenage Witch." And from time to time, David would visit Sister Mary Roger at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Sister Mary Roger said on one particular visit, she accompanied David to one of the Terre Haute television stations for an on-air interview. "He used to come about once a year," Sister Mary Roger said. "And he was very interested in photography. He took a lot of pictures."

"She is very close to her family," Sister Jeanette Marie added. "Sometimes, she would tell me stories about when they were young. They moved around quite a bit because of their father's business. They lived in Canada for a while."

Even though she is now 100 years old, Sister Mary Roger is not one to rest on her laurels. In fact, Sister Jeanette Marie said, she continues to write poetry and shares it with the Congregation. "She composes something for all the sisters

who are at Mother Theodore Hall," Sister Jeanette Marie said. "She calls over to our printery and asks for some kind of design for cards she sends to the other sisters with her poems on them. Her mind is very active."

Because of her love of teaching, Sister Mary Roger said her advice for any youngster is to maintain an avid interest in reading and never let go of the thirst of more knowledge. "I see every experience as unique," she said. "Don't worry about young children reading as long as they keep reading. You just have to read, read, and read more before you come to understanding our language."





## ***Excellence in Leadership Award***

Sister Mary Caritas Geary, SP, always has been a force to be reckoned with. As she completed her term at the Trinity Health of New England (THONE) Board of Trustees in 2019, she was asked to speak to the health system's Leadership Conference, where she, at age 96, amazed the colleagues with her insights and anecdotes.

For her outstanding service to the health care field, Dr. Reginald Eadie, THONE President/CEO decided to honor Sister Mary Caritas by establishing The Sr. Caritas Excellence in Leadership Award for colleagues in the regional health system. For the first time in November 2020, six awards were given recognizing the following characteristics in these colleagues:

- Outstanding commitment to our Core Values
- Support for our Mission
- Excellence in job performance, and the
- Ability to embrace change to assure Trinity Health of New England is truly a Transforming influence in the communities we serve.

Recovering from knee surgery, Sr. Caritas was unable to attend the ceremony but sent a heartfelt message to the awardees: "I wish I could tell you in person how proud I am of each one of you. Moreover, I would encourage you to continue to be open to new possibilities and to embrace change as an opportunity to improve care and service to all whom we are privileged to serve."

Sr. Mary Caritas' very long health care career includes 17 years as CEO of Mercy Medical Center in Springfield, MA; President of the Sisters of Providence; Chair of the Board of the Catholic Health Association; member of other health system boards; honorary degrees; CHA Lifetime Achievement Award; and multiple national and local board, committees and task forces. She continues her active engagement on many Congregational, diocesan, and civic organization boards.



*Sr. Mary Caritas on the right speaking with a colleague, Rachael St. Cyr.*

## ***Trained to Test for Covid-19***

Sr. Julie Crane, SP, a nurse practitioner, is always ready for a new challenge. When she heard that Providence Place, the Sisters of Providence 119-unit independent living facility, was seeking a nurse to help with rapid testing for COVID-19, Sr. Julie responded immediately that she would be willing to serve.

Richard Pelland, executive director, was delighted to hear the news. He already had the BD Veritor Plus System and 17 kits (30 test/kits) for sample collection for SARS-CoV-2, which provides a “quick test” and gives results in 15 minutes. Those who test positive must have the more complex PCR test that involves sample analysis in a laboratory. Mr. Pelland’s problem was that he had no one trained to do the sample collection.

Sr. Julie was willing to be trained to carry out the procedure. A session was planned for one-on-one education by a locally trained nurse, Lori Hannah, RN, where Sr. Julie learned how to use Personal Protective Equipment and execute the steps in carrying out the sample collection and analysis procedure. In addition, she was able to take an on-line training course offered by the manufacturer. With training completed, Sr. Julie is ready to offer testing for staff and the approximate 120 Providence Place residents as needed.

Asked why she volunteered, Sr. Julie said, “I am eager to assist in this project because it is important for people to know if they test negative or positive..... I am just happy to be able to do whatever I can to get this virus under control.”



Always ready to be of help, in the fall of 2019, Sr. Julie had travelled to the US-Mexican border in San Benito, Texas, to spend two weeks at La Posada Providencia working with the Sisters of Divine Providence, Marie de La Roche Province, who had established the shelter three decades ago and worked with immigrants coming across the border. Earlier Sr. Julie worked in a variety of settings from providing health care for migrant workers traveling up and down the East Coast to founding a health care program for the homeless or volunteering with the Red Cross in areas of need.





## Justice Committee Creates Informative, Prayerful Materials on Migrants, Refugees and Plastics

The Ketteler Legacy for Justice Committee is an ongoing working committee of the Sisters of Divine Providence of the Marie de la Roche Province. Their program that addresses the plight of millions of our brothers and sisters around the world who are searching for what we may take for granted—a safe, secure home and place to raise a family without the fear of being oppressed, or taken into slavery or even killed—can be viewed by going to [cdpsisters.org/migrantsrefugeesprogram](http://cdpsisters.org/migrantsrefugeesprogram). The committee's informative and prayerful presentation on plastic waste and its adverse effect on the environment can be viewed by going to [cdpsisters.org/plasticpollution](http://cdpsisters.org/plasticpollution).



## New Youtube Channel Focuses on Vocation



The Vocation Committee of the Marie de la Roche Province is inviting women from 18 to 50 to join the Sisters of Divine Providence in the adventure of making God's Providence more visible in our world through a new YouTube channel. To subscribe to the channel:

- Visit YouTube.com
- Type "Sisters of Divine Providence" in the search bar
- Click or tap the red "subscribe" button next to the Marie de la Roche province logo.

## Sisters Make Ornaments for Hospital Workers

Our Sisters at Providence Heights worked tirelessly over several weeks to make 1,100 angel ornaments for all first responders and frontline healthcare workers at UPMC Passavant hospital in McCandless Township, PA. The ornaments included a note that read, "To an angel in our midst, we give thanks and offer this angel ornament as a small token of our gratitude!"



workers at UPMC Passavant hospital in McCandless Township, PA. The ornaments included a note that read, "To an angel in our midst, we give thanks and offer this angel orna-



## **Fratelli Tutti: Brothers And Sisters All!**

By Sister Annette Aspirot, SP

*(text translated from the original in French)*

*Here we introduce you to the experience lived by Sister Annette Aspirot, SP, of making an "interior and personal journey" in the complete analysis of the Encyclical Fratelli Tutti, in the way of a Sister of Providence.*

Through the eight chapters of the encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis addresses the realities inherent in the life of all human beings. For each of these realities, the encyclical reflects a teaching which, inspired by the good that each person derives from it, teaches us how to recognize one's brother and sister in this great human family. All have some attachment to each other. These realities call for wise guidance to achieve a noble and promising growth that is defined in fraternity and social friendship.

"*Fratelli Tutti*" were words Saint Francis of Assisi wrote in addressing all his brothers and sisters in order to propose to them a way of life that is in keeping with the Gospel.

Along with this advice, Pope Francis also emphasizes two things in particular. He invites us to a love that overcomes the barriers of geography and space. He expresses the essence of an open fraternity that allows us to recognize, value and love each person regardless of physical proximity, and no matter where they were born or where they live.

To illustrate the encyclical in a brief summary, the following is a glimpse into each of the eight chapters that compose it:

**1. Dark Clouds Over a Closed World:** This chapter invites us to become aware of certain tendencies of the current world that hinder the promotion of universal fraternity. History is giving signs contrary to human fulfillment and growth.

**2. A Stranger on the Road:** Before presenting any avenues for action, the encyclical devotes a chapter to a parable told by Jesus Christ two thousand years ago. The parable is presented in such a way that each one of us can feel implicated. "What is written in the Law?" He replied, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour

as yourself." He replied: "You have answered correctly; do this and you will live."

**3. Envisaging and Engendering an Open World:** Hu-

man beings are made in such a way that they are fulfilled, developed, and reach their full potential through the selfless gift of self. There is no life where one can claim to belong only to oneself and to live as an island: in this attitude, death triumphs.

**4. A Heart Open to the Whole World:**

To live in harmony among brothers and sisters, to accept the challenges that we face, is to promote understanding and assistance towards others; for instance, for a migrant person, there are many complex challenges. Our efforts in regard to arriving migrants can be summed up in four verbs: welcome, protect, promote and integrate.

**5. A Better Kind of Politics:** A better

kind of politics, at the service of the common good, is necessary to allow the development of a world community, able to achieve fraternity among peoples and nations. Pope Francis expresses this as follows: "Lack of concern for the vulnerable can hide behind a populism that exploits them demagogically for its own purposes, or a liberalism that serves the economic interests of the powerful. In both cases, it becomes difficult to envisage an open world that makes room for everyone, including the most vulnerable, and that shows respect for different cultures."

**6. Dialogue and Friendship in Society:** Coming together, expressing oneself, listening to each other, looking at each other, getting to know each other, trying to understand each other, looking for points of contact, all this can be summed up in the verb 'to dialogue.' In order to meet and help each other, we need to dialogue, to look for solutions, to recognize the values of the other.

**7. Paths of Renewed Encounter:** In many places in the world, avenues of peace leading to the healing of wounds are needed. We need capable peacemakers willing to wisely and boldly develop processes to heal and to connect with one another. Learn to cultivate a penitential memory, capable of accepting the past to prepare for the future.



*Sister Annette Aspirot, SP*

*Continued on page 17*



## Whom Shall I Send? Who Will Go for Us? Here I Am, I Said; Send Me. **Isaiah 6:8**

By Nagwa Gameel, SP

*(text translated from the original in French)*

It is a pleasure for me to express my deep gratitude to God, after three years of demanding work at the University of Notre Dame of Haïti, God who has granted me health, perseverance and courage.

Nothing is easy in life, especially when you do not know the culture, the people and the language very well, but Providence is always at work. I have met good people along the way and this has helped me to face the difficulties I have encountered.

Studying in a country different from mine is quite an adventure. As Pope Francis says, "if you want to go fast, work alone, but if you want to go far, work with others."

Here is what I experienced during these three years at university, always with my classmates. We have walked together as brothers and sisters. Our professors were excellent counselors and friends. Thank you, Lord!

The first week at the university, I realized that I could not speak or read French properly. This was an obstacle to my education, especially in science classes, because I had to write down the professor's long and difficult scientific explanations and expressions. I thought about giving up the university, but my

classmates encouraged me and said: "Give yourself a chance."

At present, I have finished my studies and I defended my thesis between December 1st and 8th on the following topic: "*L'importance du matériel didactique dans l'enseignement comme apprentissage au troisième cycle de l'école fondamentale*" (The importance of didactic materials as a method of teaching and learning in the third cycle of elementary school).

I will never forget the third year, as several changes and regulations due to coronavirus disrupted our program and activities. I have experienced bereavement in my dear family, but I kept courage, because God grants the graces.

Here is a message from the employees of our two houses, who thanked the Community of the Sisters of Providence for their quality of presence and their way of keeping in touch with them during the coronavirus. They felt supported, loved and encouraged.

For the past two months, I have been teaching biology and catechism classes. With the students, we have made liquid dish soap, cards and other things as manual work. I participated in a spirituality program with the Jesuits to nourish my faith and to learn more about accompanying young people either individually or in groups. Providence of God, I thank you for all!



**Nagwa Gameel, SP**

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## **Fratelli Tutti**

*Continued from page 16*

### **8. Religions at the Service of Fraternity in Our World:**

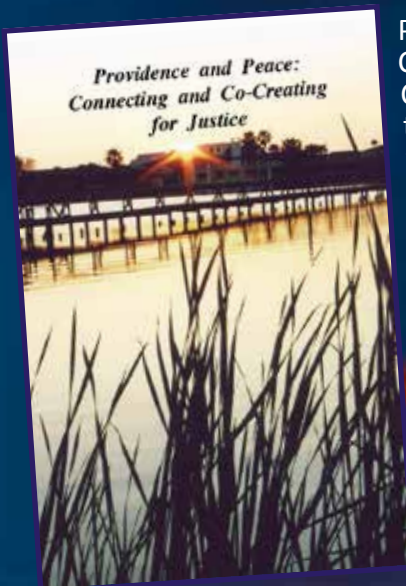
The different world religions offer a valuable contribution to the building up of fraternity and to the defense of justice. The dialogue between people of different religions is not achieved through mere diplomacy, kindness, or tolerance. The aim of dialogue is to establish friendship, peace, harmony and to share moral and spiritual experiences in a spirit of truth and love.

*Fratelli Tutti* is an exhortation that proposes the way to live social friendship in a world where so many opposing currents seem to attract human beings. May this

commentary be an encouragement to refer to all the chapters of the encyclical. In the face of all that threatens good understanding among peoples, let us learn to discover a wise and fruitful application of our experience to achieve fraternity and social friendship. Then we will have attained the ideal of our human and Christian vocation. This encyclical could be our sole bedside reading and the document that inspires our meetings, our meditations and our resolutions. This article is only a summary of FRATELLI TUTTI, and how much we will learn as we go through all its chapters to the end. The document is an excellent guide for our experiences and those of our brothers and sisters around the world.

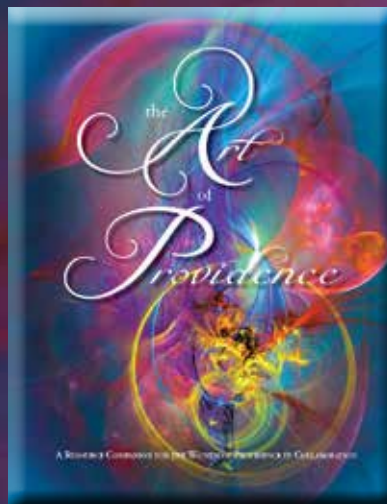
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***Providence and Peace: Connecting  
and Co-Creating for Justice***



Providence and Peace: Connecting and Co-Creating for Justice is the second in a series featuring authors who look at specific topics through the lens of Providence and their lived experience in ministry and community life.  
\$13.65

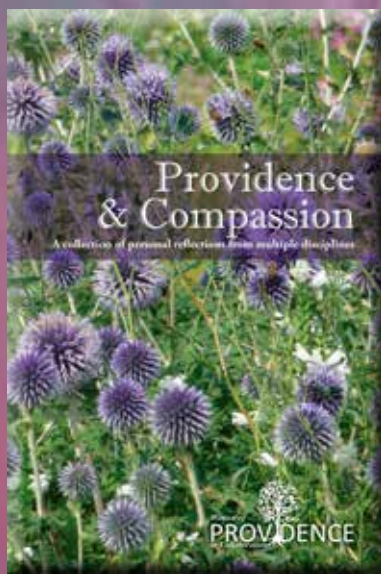
***The Art of Providence***



The Art of Providence is a beautiful resource book of prayers, poetry, prayer rituals, music, photos, reflections and artwork by various Sisters and Associates in our Providence congregations. The authors have shared their talents with us in a variety of ways. Each of them seeks to express their understandings of Providence through particular art forms.  
\$18.90



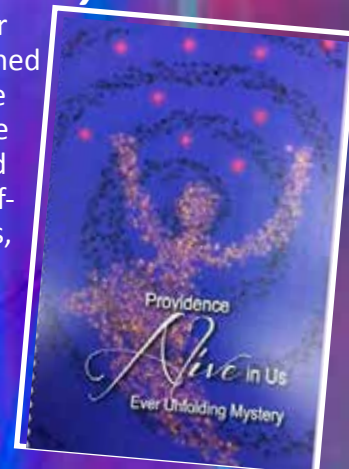
## Providence & Compassion



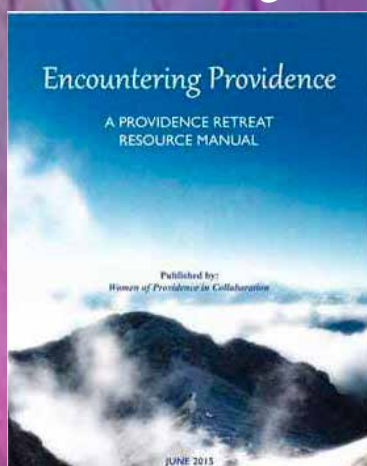
Nine Women of Providence share their understanding of Providence and Compassion through the lens of their lived experience in ministry and community life. These shared personal reflections will expand awareness and appreciation of the intimate link between Providence and Compassion in the lives of not only the author but also within the life of the reader. \$13.65

## Providence Alive in Us: Ever Unfolding Mystery

"Providence Alive in Us: Ever Unfolding Mystery" 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, some of whom are previous contributors to other Providence published books, will lead us in this search for still deeper engagement with Ever Unfolding Mystery. \$15.75



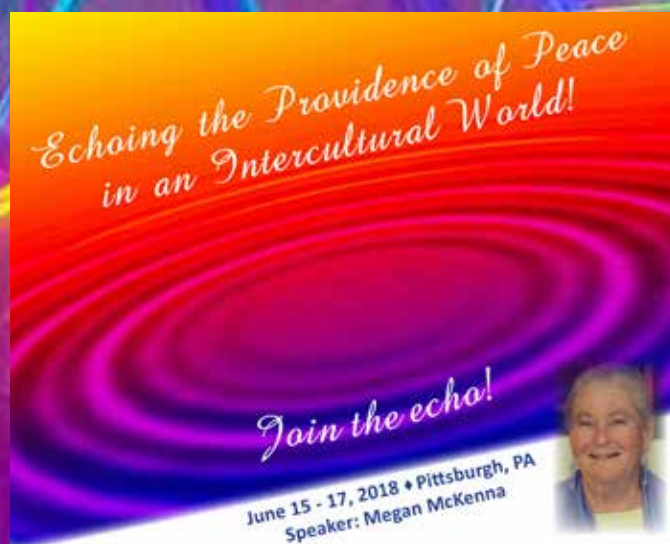
## Encountering Providence



Created for WPC's 35th Anniversary. This compiled retreat resource manual features a flash drive with presentations, videos, prayers, reflection and leader templates. \$52.50

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

If you were unable to attend the 2018 Providence Event, the Friday and Saturday presentations by Megan McKenna and Bishop Thomas Gumbleton are available on a set of five DVDs or on a USB/flash drive. \$31.50 for either media





## ***Calendar***

**February 5:** Deadline for all Moderators for the Providence Event to complete Zoom training session

**February 17:** Ash Wednesday begins--Lenten Pray Services distributed and posted on the WPC website

**February 20:** Providence Event~Where Justice and Radical Hope Meet will be a virtual event via Zoom!

**March 5:** Deadline for reflections on the Providence Event due to David Lavender (dlpgh@verizon.net)

**March 19-22:** WPC Governing Board Meeting, San Antonio, TX. May be a virtual board meeting.

**April 2:** Special Providence Event issue of Collaboration will be distributed.

**September 13-16:** WPC Associate Leadership Conference, Kearns Spirituality Center, Allison Park, PA. May be a virtual conference. Watch for further details.

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