



Collaboration

Volume XVII ♦ Issue 3 ♦ Spring 2022

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

Fresh Faces in SPSMW Leadership!

Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana, announce their new leadership team. During the 40th Chapter meetings in October 2021, Sister Dawn Tomaszewski, SP, was re-elected as General Superior of the Congregation. Sister Jeanne Hagelskamp, SP, will continue serving in leadership as she was elected Vicar/General Treasurer. Elected as General Councilors were Sister Laura Parker, SP, Sister Anne Therese Falkenstein, SP and Sister Carole Kimes, SP.

The move to the Woods meant, for some new leaders, their first return to living at home in decades. One relocated from parish ministry in Indianapolis, another left her hospital chaplaincy position in the Chicagoland area and the third (winning the greatest-distance-traveled award) crossed the International Date Line coming from Providence University in Taiwan.

On January 23, 2022, at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Chaplain Father Terry Johnson celebrated the liturgy installing the new leaders whose commitment runs through 2026. After a blessing for the leadership team, Sister Dawn said, "I will carry out this service in dialogue and in collaboration with the members of this

Congregation. I promise to love all Sisters of Providence as true sisters, to strive with them to deepen our spirituality and to encourage them to live more deeply in the mystery of Providence according to the Constitutions of the Sisters of Providence."

Sister Dawn then asked the remaining four General Councilors to offer a response, to which they said in unison, "I promise to serve with the general superior in the leadership of this Congregation of the Sisters of Providence in counsel and mutual support. (We) shall strive

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(from left) General Councilor Sister Anne Therese Falkenstein, General Councilor Sister Carole Kimes, General Superior Sister Dawn Tomaszewski, Vicar/General Treasurer Sister Jeanne Hagelskamp and General Councilor Sister Laura Parker.

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From the director

Sister Barbara McMullen, CDP
WPC Executive Director

So long, farewell, auf Wiedersehen, adios, Au revoir, goodbye...these are words said with a heart full of gratitude for the last ten years of my ministry with the Women of Providence in Collaboration and the seven years the first time. To say this ministry has become synonymous with my being would be an understatement.

As the Director of WPC, I feel I have become a better Providence woman, largely in part because of all of you! Over the years I have met so many wonderful Providence women from the congregations who belong to WPC. The first, of course, are the founders. I feel privileged to have met Michelle Holland before her death and feel even more grateful for the friendship I share with Ruth McGoldrick still and the ways she has supported me in this endeavor.

Then there is the Board of Directors, which changes over time due to leadership terms of their own. I have been privileged to work for and with a magnificent group of women leaders over all these years. Their guidance, leadership, and affirmation are gifts in my life and some of the close friendships I have made with several of them I know will carry on into the future.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the Core Planning Teams of Providence Events over the years. It's too many to name them all, but you know who you are! These Providence Sisters and Associates brought wonderful talents and skills to bear in the planning of such events. We all benefited from their sharing of gifts. There are also the conferences of our WPC subgroups over the years, the Vocation/

Formation/Leadership Sisters, the Associate Leadership group (ALG), the newly formed JPIC (Providence Justice Collective) group, and the 55 and Under Sisters group. Each of these have women and men of Providence willing to step up to the plate and help to plan their events. I could never have done it alone.

Then, of course, is the "staff" behind the scenes. This is a one woman office but I have always been blessed with volunteer help. The wonderful Collaboration newsletter would not be as great as it is without the expertise of David Lavender! The "computer guy" I go to when I need help is Gil Weyhaupt, who always comes

through for me and figures it out! The bookkeeper, who uses the QuickBooks program was my room-

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From the director

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mate, Beverly Camper, now deceased, but who from her hospital bed asked her best friend, Carol Patterson, to help me and Carol graciously has done so over these last two years every month. When they say it takes a village, it's true!

While I don't officially leave until the end of August, this will be my last "From the Director" page in the Newsletter. People have been asking me what I will do next. Honestly, I don't know. I do know two things: it was time for a change for WPC, a fresh face with more technological skills and some new ideas; and, secondly, I know that our Provident God will put something in my path for my next piece of the journey. Of that I'm confident based on past history. Jeremiah 29:11-14 has long been the Scripture that accompanies my journey. God has a plan for my future...it just hasn't been revealed yet!

New Executive Director Named

Lastly, I am happy to announce that the Board has hired a new WPC Executive Director. Her name is Mary Stanco, HM. Mary is a Humility of Mary Sister from Villa Maria, PA. Mary's personal strengths and qualifications align with the needs and mission of the Women of Providence in Collaboration. She brings experiences in nonprofit management, creativity and strategic thinking, technology, communication, and leadership. She has coordinated programs and events in her former ministries and been a part of the LCWR Collaborative Leadership Program. She also is a member of Giving Voice and helped to plan their 2005 Gathering as well as the 2019 Leadership Collaborative Biennial Gathering.

We hope to have a special mini-issue of Collaboration in the summer where Mary can introduce herself to you from her first "From the Director" page. In the meantime, I welcome her and look forward to working with her in the transition of the WPC office.

So my friends, though I say goodbye, I'm hoping our paths will cross in different ways in future times. May our Provident God bless each of you for the gift you have been in my life, and I promise to hold you in my heart and prayer always.

Now read about all the marvelous things our WPC communities are doing to make the world a better place!

Blessings and love,

Sister Barbara

Fresh Faces in SPSMW Leadership!

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to be united with her and the other councilors by bonds of charity and confidence, having but one heart and one spirit as we participate in the same authority.”

Those in attendance also offered a blessing to the three outgoing members of the leadership team, Sister Lisa Stallings, SP, former vicar, and former General Councilors Sister Mary Beth Klingel, SP and Sister Jenny Howard, SP.

What’s ahead for the “retiring” leadership? Sister Lisa has been learning the ropes at The Connecting Link, a ministry of the Sisters of Providence in West Terre Haute. Under the mentorship of current director, Sister Dorothy Rasche, SP, Sister Lisa has been preparing for a director transition that will take place in the coming months. Sister Jenny plans on traveling a bit as she continues healing from a recent surgery. And Sister Mary Beth assumed a newly created role as Innkeeper of Woodhaven Retreat House at the Woods.

Woodhaven Retreat House, that initially housed ten sisters, has officially transitioned into its original vision of a space for small, overnight retreats. Beginning May 1, groups will have a one-stop-shop venue available for small self-led retreats in Woodhaven, which features nine single rooms with private bathrooms, a full kitchen, laundry facilities and a great room with a dining area and furnishings equipped for a flexible retreat environment. Sisters Paula Damiano, SP, and Jan Craven, SP, co-directors of Providence Spirituality & Conference Center, will begin offering in the fall SP-led overnight retreats at Woodhaven for groups up to nine retreatants.

The newly installed leadership team began their roles with a week-long retreat of strategic planning with a facilitator that began the day following the ceremony and has hit the ground running since then! The Providence Community plans on a broader celebration of the installation later this year during the Sisters of Providence/Providence Associates annual meeting the last weekend in June.

What’s Going on With the Providence Associates?

Providence Associates and Sisters of Providence gathered March 11-13 for the Providence Community spring retreat. Thirty people participated in person at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods and 47 participated virtually via livestream. All spent the weekend reflecting and growing on the theme “Images of God.”

The Providence Associates hosted their first-ever virtual “Come and See” event April 28 for those interested in learning more about the Providence Associate relationship. Providence Associates and Sisters of Providence shared about what the Providence Associate relationship means to them. Time for questions and answers followed.

We continue to have active Providence Circles and are working to allow even more associates to be engaged in this way. Providence Circles are small community groups that meet virtually or in person for discussion and learning. It is a wonderful bonding element for the community.

Our Providence Community continues to grow each year with more wonderful Providence Associates. We are thankful for the blessing of our Providence Associates in bringing the Providence charism into the world!



River Witness Advances *Laudato Si'*

Dr. Ann Scholz, SSND, extended an invitation to LCWR Region 4 members across the country to join them in a public “River Witness” on March 14 as a way of advancing *Laudato Si'* and Care for our Earth.

International Rivers Day on March 14 marked the last day of Catholic Sisters Week 2022. Region 4 planned a witness for care of our rivers and water at the confluence of the Ohio, Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers in Pittsburgh! While this was initiated by Region 4 LCWR, they were inviting others to join and bring the event to a river near them. The vision: “A witnessing of sisters on the Mississippi, the Hudson, the Colorado, the Rio Grande ... and many more!”

Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana, answered the invitation and rose to the occasion! After all, from November to January, we had participated in the traveling Smithsonian Water Ways exhibit in collaboration with Wabash Valley river-SCAPE and Indiana Humanities. The exhibit highlighted the role water plays in our daily lives and how it affects our local communities.

Our beautiful and unique Saint Anne Shell Chapel at the Woods was one of the designated sites open for tours as part of the West Terre Haute exhibition, enabling the sharing of the story of Saint Mother Theodore Guerin and the sisters and postulants who reverently collected shells from the Wabash River and



built the walls of the chapel in thanksgiving to Saint Anne for keeping Sisters of Providence safe in their treacherous crossing of the Atlantic back to our motherhouse in Indiana.

On International Rivers Day, along the recently restored riverfront of the Wabash River in Vigo County, Sisters of Providence, staff, community members and media representatives gathered at Fairbanks Park for a beautiful tribute and River Witness experience. The program included welcome remarks, an introduction and a Blessing of the Water—

“We sing this song like a lullaby. The song means the water is the life’s blood of our mother the earth. Water is the life’s blood of our own bodies.”

Grandma Nancy

Participants joined in prayer, songs by Rufino Zaragoza, OFM, and readings from scripture and Sally McFague’s “Living Abundance.” The event honored the life giving water and all the First Nation Peoples who used the Wah-Bah Shik-Ki, meaning pure white, river for sustenance, transportation and healing.

What a beautiful and special way of ending Catholic Sisters Week and fostering greater understanding of our socio-ecological vocation within the spirit of our Providence charism!



Living the Charism and Mission for 160 years

by Sister Jeannette Filthaut

The Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul have lived the Charism and Mission for over 160 years, since our founding in Kingston, Ontario, by Sisters of Providence in Montreal. On December 13, 2021, the Sisters of Providence held a small celebration that encompassed storytelling of the past, present and future in the Chapel of Mary, Mother of Compassion at Providence Motherhouse. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the Sisters invited only a small number of special guests to participate in the Chapel celebration while others could join through the livestream.

General Superior, Sister Sandra Shannon joyfully welcomed everyone with – “What a life we have lived” – from our humble beginnings of responding to the needs of the times, to much change during our Golden years as a Congregation.

Archivist Veronica Stienburg spoke of our early history with many new ministry openings. She focused on the hardships and new beginnings of our pioneer Sisters, of their journey west in 1908 to open a hospital in a small remote community of Daysland, Alberta. It was so cold that the Sisters often had frozen food along with terrible prairie blizzards.

At the Congregation’s centenary in 1961, the community comprised 400 Sisters and novices. Now at the 160th we are only 51 Sisters, however our Associate membership exceeds 90 people living in various regions of Canada and Peru.

Three Sisters of Providence and one Providence Associate shared with us personal experiences they had with our Sisters that influenced their lives.

Sister Lucy Kearney explained how being wished “grace of perseverance” at her welcome into the community enhanced her diverse ministries of teaching and pastoral work.

Sister Pat Amyot spoke of how in the early days, decisions were often made for the younger Sisters, but now these decisions are done collaboratively with discernment on the parts of Leadership and the individual.

Sister Monica Whalen echoed the importance of discernment and dialogue which she learned even in her intercommunity novitiate experience.



Shirley Kindellan, PA

Shirley Kindellan, Providence Associate, was one of the initial members of the first group of Associates in 1985. Her Sister Prayer Partner prayed the Memorare every day for her as this was Shirley’s favourite prayer. Shirley shared Associate Debbie Muise’s story of her close connection with the western Sisters and how some 22 years later she became one of the initial western Associates.

At the close of the Eucharistic Celebration, Barbara Baker, Providence Associate Director, Bridget Doherty, Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Director and Brian Hogan, Providence Village Board Chair, shared insights into how our Charism and Mission will be carried forward into the future.

Barbara Baker spoke of how the spirituality of the Associates is reflective of the Sisters’ spirituality and charism, of how they are moving to becoming a not-for-profit organization of liminal edge-walkers moving the planet and people to wholeness, as they reach out to the marginalized.

Bridget Doherty spoke of how on January 1, 2022, a new path was being forged with CHSO (Catholic Health Sponsors of Ontario) to form Healthy Communities with Care for All through the Providence Centre for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation.

Brian Hogan, spoke of the Sisters’ vision of Providence Village at Chapter 2015 and how this non-profit charitable organization, sponsored by the Catholic Health Sponsors of Ontario will partner with Providence Care, Hospice Kingston and the present Motherhouse to bring Hope, Belonging and Well Being to All.

After 160 years’ we are still able to Trust in Providence, Serve with Compassion and Walk Forward in Hope.

Salvadoran Scholarship Program Expands

Since the mid-1990s, Sisters of Providence in El Salvador have enriched the lives of hundreds of students through the Providence Beca Program. In 2021, the program served 65 students in El Salvador and now, thanks to a generous donation of land, the sisters plan to build a second facility as well.

Scholarships, beca in Spanish, are based on projects students design and present themselves. Projects have ranged from something as complex as planting an orchard at an elementary school or as 'simple' as teaching a senior citizen how to read and write. The youth, many of whom are below the poverty line, must report regularly on their progress. Sr. Marita Capili and Sr. Marcia Gatica run the program.

The expansion to the "Island District" traces its roots to a visit Sisters Marita and Marcia had with the St. Mother Teresa's Missionaries of the Sisters of Charity. After seeing the poverty and lack of educational opportunities in the region, Sisters Marita and Marcia began working with students in 2018 using the Missionaries' facilities.

A donor – learning of their work on the islands of San Sebastian, Punta Arena, La Pirraya, and Rancho Viejo – gifted the Association of the Sisters of Providence with land on La Pirraya Island. The Mother Joseph Province has approved construction of a facility for the program in the Island District this year. The new facility will include a meeting room, the beca office, a psychology



Students learn about the Providence Beca Program

clinic and a small community living space. The facility will be built with the collaboration of engineers and architects from Universidad Centroamericana José Simeon Cañas (UCA) and with help from the mayor's office to transport building materials to La Pirraya island.

In a move that shows God will not be out done in generosity, a donation to buy a boat was also made by the Providence International office in Montreal (see photo). Not only will the reach of the beca program expand, but these projects will also generate temporary jobs for the people on the island. In 2022, four high school students will graduate this year; three will go on to pursue university study. Eight university students will graduate with the degrees in Public Accounting, Business Administration, English, Communication or Agroecology Engineering.

Parents, Community Nurture Vocations in an African Village

Nothing unusual about a Sister of Providence helping young women discern their vocations. But for Sister Marie-Thérèse Gnamazo, whose hometown is nearly 8,000 miles away in Africa, it's a little more complicated than usual.

Given the distance, Sister Marie-Thérèse stresses the importance of the parish, parents and community in the discernment process. When you think of it, that's true whether the person discerning is next door or on another continent.

Sister Marie-Thérèse's own route to the Sisters of Providence began in 2008 starting in Cameroon with a stop in Rome before joining the Congregation in Seattle.

During a visit home earlier this year, a classmate from her time at the Gregorian University in Rome allowed Sister Marie-Thérèse to speak to his parish, Sts. Peter and Paul in the Abong-Mbang region of Cameroon.



Sr. Marie-Thérèse with young women in Abong-Mbang, Camaroon.

Chapter is a Verb

by Sister Pauline Lally

In the midst of this never-ending pandemic, we held a pre-chapter retreat in October. The highlight for me was that we were able to get together. To see each other, to talk to each other, to share meals and laughter once again. After how many months? It seemed like a hundred.

However, it was a serious affair as well. This Chapter will be about transforming ourselves into a new reality in a yet unknown future. That sounds a whole lot better than being about coming to completion. As Sister Sandra reminded us, "God is always calling us to grow and change." According to science, no energy comes to completion; it is always transformed. Yet, we must also be realistic as we await the surprise of Providence.

The Leadership Team has hired a wonderful person and canon lawyer, Sister Bonnie MacLellan, the present Superior General of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie, to be our facilitator. How good does that get! Sister Bonnie was accompanied by another Sister of St. Joseph, Sister Mary Jo Radey, who led us in a beautiful process where we reflected upon and shared in table groups our personal call, our covenantal commitment and our communal transformation as Sisters of Providence. Sister Sandra, our own General Superior, challenged us to say "Yes" to this journey of transformation together with imagination and creativity, sensitive to the needs of the world; that the congregation's future lay in our hands.

During this retreat we pondered the life of a butterfly



Sister Mary Jo Radey, CSJ

which begins with the hatched and hungry caterpillar that eventually munches its way into the larva stage where it rests in its own soup for a period of time. Who would ever believe that a beautiful butterfly would emerge from that mess to make gentle flying visits here and there pollinating flowers in order to make our world so colourful and beautiful?

After working for many years like busy caterpillars ourselves, in our various ministries, are we now in the soupy stage? If so, what will emerge in order for us to continue to serve the world in a different way than before? Through this gathering and this process, I think the stage was set for the important work of Chapter ahead of us and – don't forget, the Surprise of Providence!



Sisters of Providence sitting in groups for discussion.

Catholic Sisters Week 2022 Shines Light On Spirituality, Mission, Community Building

In the name of our Founder, Bishop Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler, the Sisters of Divine Providence of the Marie de la Roche Province challenged ourselves and our Associates to carry on his legacy of social justice by addressing the issues of our day, which include the care of Mother Earth herself. We invited all to join us in focusing on the care of Earth with the goal of making a difference that can have a long-term impact. Our Sisters participated in a Public Witness sponsored by LCWR at Allegheny Landing, near the confluence of the Allegheny, Monongahela and Ohio rivers (Pittsburgh) to coincide with the International Day of Action for Rivers followed by a river trail cleanup.



Kearns Spirituality Center Re-opens, Plans New Programs



Kearns Spirituality Center, a facility that provides a space for spiritual nourishment and retreats, re-opened in March 2022 after a two-year closure due to the pandemic. Kearns is currently collaborating in PROSO (Providence Spiritual Outreach), a volunteer ministry of spiritual outreach offered by our Sisters and Associates with the Sisters and Associates of the Congregation of Divine Providence of Texas. PROSO Ministry offers retreats, conversation groups, workshops and spiritual direction. Through a collaboration with La Roche University, our Kearns facility is also a site for new community programs for the general public offered through La Roche's Center for Lifelong Learning.

Sisters Collaborate with La Roche University to Help Ukraine

As the dire situation in the Ukraine continued to escalate, the Sisters pondered how to be advocates and the presence of God's Providence to the suffering victims of war. In collaboration with La Roche University and coordinated by Sister Janet Folkl, we requested monetary donations and collected specific items including soap, toothpaste/brushes, first aid kits, gloves, hats, diapers, flashlights with batteries and pre-packaged food and protein bars. We also doubled our special prayers for peace in Ukraine.



Associates:

“Providence will guide us, let us have confidence.”

Practice of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy are at the center of every CDP Associate's commitment. Like the threads of a tapestry, each contributes to a richly embroidered, larger picture of God's providence—alive, active, wrapping the world in love and touching people in simple yet powerful ways...

Mentor Relationship

Mary Helen Bertolini, a CDP Associate since 1986, had nothing specific in mind when she contacted the Cincinnati Youth Cooperative (CYC) several years ago. She was simply responding to a gentle interior nudge she thought might be an invitation from the Spirit.

CYC quickly accepted Mary Helen's offer to help out, and asked her to mentor a student from an inner-city grade school who struggled with a troubled home life. Their relationship has grown over time. Today, the student attends a local Catholic high school, but she and Mary Helen continue to share the casual, helpful conversations that occur while they engage in activities as simple as taking an occasional walk together.

“Adore the designs of God without knowing them,” advised Father Moyer. Mary Helen embraced that advice when she agreed to become a mentor for CYC, trusting she would be an instrument of God's providence. Years later, she's quick to point toward the many blessings she has received through this ministry.

Angel Gowns

“Love and do what you will.” This simple directive of the founder helps inspire the ministry of Associate Terri Meunnich, who lovingly reaches out to bereaved women and families grieving the loss of a child who did not survive birth. Crafting beautiful, custom-made “angel gowns” or wraps for the children's remains from donated wedding dresses, she is put in touch with interested families through contacts at local hospitals. Terri, who also creates a memorial ornament for each family to keep, became an Associate in 2002. She was initially attracted to the program through her aunt, CDP Sister Jane Frances Kaelin.

Refugee Response

The compassionate, mission-oriented heart of CDP Associate Cathy Brunner shows the face of God's providence on a daily basis through La Amistad, a Cincinnati-area non-profit for which she and her husband, Mark, assumed personal responsibility more than ten years ago. La Amistad offers day-to-day living assistance, clothing, food, medical care and below-market housing to refugees and immigrants from Central America. With the couple's unflagging dedication to this ministry (not to mention their own rehab skills), La Amistad has expanded its operation to seven houses from its original two. Presently, they serve as living quarters for nine immigrant and refugee families, including fifteen children. One family has expressed an interest in purchasing their residence, and Cathy and Mark are working to make that possible for any interested resident family in the future. The couple is always on the lookout for other houses to rehab so they can assist more people who are most in need of a new start in a new land and a place to call “home.” For Cathy, the words of CDP founder Blessed Jean Martin Moyer are a daily touchstone as she heads out the door to be the instrument of God's care for others: “Providence will guide us, let us have confidence.”



135th Anniversary of the Sisters of Our Lady of Seven Dolors

by Yvette Renaud, SP

Photos by CIP Communication Office

For this beautiful celebration, on March 27, we were able to count on the presence of several guests, including the SNDD sisters: Fernande Thibault, Bernadette Pelletier, Georgette Leduc and Micheline Veilleux; the sisters of the SP General Leadership Team: Karin Dufault, Rollande Malo, Hortense Demia-Mbailaou, Josefine (Josie) Lerios, Nancy Arévalo and Annette Noël; and SNDD Associates: Dominique Lemay, Louise Tremblay, Gisèle Gauthier (with her friend Carole Blais), Jeanne-Mance Éthier, and a friend Associate, Mrs. Henriette Léveillé (accompanied by her husband). Thérèse Pelletier, my great friend and interpreter of S. M. Veilleux, was present as well as Father Paul Lebœuf, chaplain to the deaf; Claire Houde, SP, superior of the Émilie-Gamelin Province; Céline Brousseau, SP, the former superior of the SNDD, and about thirty Sisters of Providence who have worked with the deaf at the Institution.

The Sisters of Our Lady of Seven Dolors is a congregation formed exclusively by deaf women whose Congregational Leader is currently Sister Karin Dufault, also Congregational Leader of the Sisters of Providence.

During this meeting, everyone shared memo-

ries while observing the decorations that came from the Institution of the Deaf-Mutes: three large drawings of the Prodigal Son (Gospel of the day) made by the members of the pastoral team, including Mrs. Léveillé. There were also posters, photos, frames, pots, flowers, banners, antique tables, albs, etc.

During the procession, we had the beautiful surprise of seeing Dominique (SNDD Associate) in an antique alb (lace helm) holding the banner of the "Congregation of the Children of Mary, Institution of the Deaf-Mutes" and Father Paul in an old-time alb, hand-embroidered by an SNDD. After hanging the banner next to that of "The League of the Sacred Heart, Institutions of the Deaf-Mute," Dominic put on the "black biretta." He said and signed: "I am Canon Trepanier." All applauded.

A tribute

Sister Karin welcomed everyone, especially the SNDD and the associates. She paid them a beautiful tribute and congratulated them. Sister Yvette proceeded with a "quiz" to recall the founder, Canon FX Trépanier, the patron saint, St. Francis de Sales, and the patroness, Our Lady of Good Counsel. The

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135th Anniversary of the Sisters of Our Lady of Seven Dolors

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question was: what is the link that unites us?

The festive mass:

Song: Let us celebrate the call, it comes from God, for our happiness, he has chosen us.

Let us celebrate the call, it comes from God, to serve the world and his Church.

Father Paul began the mass offered for the deaf people, especially SNDD Sisters. Dominique read the epistle in sign language, and Sister Yvette Renaud, SP, read it aloud. The antiphon from the psalm was perfect for the celebration: "Taste and see that the LORD is good." After reading the Prodigal Son Gospel, Father Lebœuf delivered a short homily. The offertory was sung and signed by all the assistants who were touched by the words of the song *Les mains ouvertes* (Open Hands). At the end of the Mass, everyone sang: "Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, eternal is his love."

A friendly meal followed: a *vin d'honneur* was served, and there was a toast, followed by a delicious hot lentil soup with a hearty cold lunch, a gift from the Providence Community that members of the General Lead-

ership Team served at the tables. We were warned: "Hold on to your forks, the best is yet to come." Here is the surprise! Two beautiful cakes well decorated with the SNDD logo and the statuette of Our Lady of Sorrows, was served with a good cup of coffee offered by the General Leadership Team. The cake was meant to extend the celebration to the real date of the founding of the SNDD Congregation, April 1st. We ate it on March 31 in the company of Gisèle Routhier, SP.

Other surprises awaited us, a logo bookmark, with Our Lady of Sorrows (photo of the statue in the chapel of our former residence in l'Assomption). In addition, the General Leadership Team offered gifts to the SNDD, and some SPs gave them envelopes. In the end, we had the joy of watching the slide show of the SNDD, a gift from Father Paul. Such beautiful memories!

What a wonderful day! Thanks to the Lord! Thank you all!

The Associates seem to have enjoyed their day, as they are asking to repeat it on June 9, the feast of Sister Fernande Thibault, s.n.d.d. Probably with a smaller number of people!



New Ministry Born Out of COVID Pandemic

by Sr. Joyce Detzel, CDP, Director of PROSO

Providence Spiritual Outreach (PROSO) has emerged as a response to the spiritual hunger that intensified during the pandemic shutdown and the resulting societal changes. This response grew out of collaboration between PROSO founder/director, Sr. Joyce Detzel, CDP, and other Sisters and Associates of the Congregation of Divine Providence of San Antonio, TX, and the Sisters of Divine Providence, Allison Park, PA.

God planted the seeds of PROSO early in 2020. I had just moved from Texas to work at a retreat center in Ohio when the center closed due to Covid. I found myself part of the wave of millions who were struggling with pandemic unemployment, isolation, grief, fear, and loss. Telephone conversations and virtual programs at the retreat center attested to the depth of people's suffering and their desperate need for new ways to express faith and maintain relationships.

What distressed me, however, created a new opportunity for Providence. A wise Sister once noted, "Chaos is the workshop of Providence." Providence can refashion something new out of the broken bits and pieces of life. We pondered this idea during our Lenten Journey of 2022. In one of our reflections, I referred to the ancient art of kintsukuroi. The Japanese word kin means "golden," and tsugi means "joinery." This technique fills the cracks in a broken pot with a liquid adhesive mixed with gold. After firing, the pot emerges with its original shape, but beautifully restored and stronger than ever.

My homesickness, social isolation, and grief over the death of some of our Sisters due to Covid commingled with the sorrow and brokenness of those around me. God's love was the golden glue that held us together. I deeply desired to be a true vowed Sister of Divine Providence: a woman of courage, eager to respond with compassion, creativity, and courage.

The Congregation supported my vision of a virtual outreach ministry for adults tossed by the waves

of pandemic and the resulting social and personal changes. The concept of this ministry spread by word of mouth, and a team of CDP Sisters and Associates in Texas began to design and offer spiritual outreach programs anchored in trust in God's Providence. In January of 2021, the Sisters at Our Lady of the Lake Convent Center offered a blessing prayer as PROSO

began to provide virtual and hybrid retreats, conversation groups, workshops, and individual spiritual direction. The Sisters and Associates of Divine Providence of the Marie de la Roche Province in Allison Park, PA, came to help us in May.

Associates and Sisters of both of our Congregations are now using their gifts and skills to fuel this new ministry. During its infancy year, 35 CDP Sisters and Associates volunteered over 1,500 hours of service as program designers, presenters, small group leaders, spiritual directors, writers, photographers, website developers, and support personnel. Others have made financial dona-

tions, participated in events (an invaluable contribution!), and supported us with prayer and personal encouragement.

PROSO reaches another milestone this fall as it moves to the Kearns Spirituality Center in Allison Park, to explore future collaborative opportunities. It is my hope that other Providence groups may also feel called to join in this ministry.

Providence encourages us to remain steadfast in building something new, healing hearts, and expanding minds. Dreams have taken flight, faith has grown, and those who mourn have been comforted. Praised and blessed be Divine Providence now and forever more!

For more information on PROSO, contact, Sr. Joyce Detzel, CDP, at proso@cdptexas.org or 210-707-8400.



**Sr. Joyce Detzel, CDP,
Director of PROSO Ministry,**

Justice Workshops: The Doctrine of Discovery

by Sister Barbara McMullen, CDP

On three separate dates the Providence Justice Collective of the Women of Providence in Collaboration held workshops on the Doctrine of Discovery. Each workshop began with a welcome, opening prayer, the showing of a video: the Doctrine of Discovery in the United States, small group sharing, large group sharing, and closing prayer. All of this was done by zoom meetings with nearly 500 registrations over the course of the three workshops.

Though the video showed the Doctrine of Discovery in the United States, we know that it was used in other countries who also experienced colonialism such as: Chile, Haiti, Canada, Philippines, Mexico, Jamaica and others. As participants watched the video they were encouraged to recall their own national history.

For some participants this Doctrine of Discovery was “totally new to them and shocking,” as some attendees shared in our group conversations. Others were familiar with some of the material and the small group conversations were both enlightening and enriching to learn what is being done about the Indigenous Peoples and attempts at Truth and Reconciliation. Following each workshop there was a Resource page shared with all participants. It was ongoing, as we added to it each time that other people shared resources. We share it with all of you here, in this newsletter, so that if you have not had the opportunity to view the video, you can access it from the Resource page. Maybe you want to gather a group of your own and view the video and have some follow-up discussions.

WPC is very grateful to the Providence Justice Collective for all their work in bringing this to our members and beyond to extended justice networks and other communities.

Doctrine of Discovery - Resources

Videos:

The video that was presented at the workshop:
Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops Response:
<https://www.cccb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/catholic-response-to-doctrine-of-discovery-and-tn.pdf>

Oren Lyons on Doctrine of Discovery (6 minutes) 2015
Native American Faithkeeper of the Turtle Clan of the Onondaga Nation of the Iroquois Confederacy. This series of short films is done via their testimony and creates the space for the Iroquois to tell their story as they strive to uphold the traditions and the legacy of

their people while also protecting the central tenets of their people and their relationship and care for the Earth. www.youtube.com/watch?v=V3gF7ULVrI4

The Episcopal Church Exposes the Doctrine of Discovery (13 minute Video)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=drLnI_k5b6s
What is the Doctrine of Discovery? (in 7 minutes)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3oc84aLC-Q>
Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery
Professor Robert J. Miller (27 minutes)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0qO6JoqcrgQ>
Chief Oren Lyons on Doctrine of Discovery (14 min.)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yVZDbqh7WgM>

Books and Articles:

Fresh off the press: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/vatican-apology-doctrine-of-discovery-residential-schools-colonization-1.6399836>
March 23, 2022 <https://www.catholicregister.org/item/34176-doctrine-of-discovery-stands-in-reconciliation-s-path>

The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story
by Nikole Hannah-Jones (Creator)
The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story offers a revealing vision of the American past and present. In late August 1619, a ship arrived in the British colony of Virginia bearing a cargo of twenty to thirty enslaved people from Africa. Their arrival led to the barbaric and unprecedented system of American chattel slavery that would last for the next 250 years.

Unsettling Truths: The Ongoing, Dehumanizing Legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery

by Mark Charles and Soong-Chan Rah (InterVarsity Press)

You cannot discover lands already inhabited. Injustice has plagued American society for centuries. And we cannot move toward being a more just nation without understanding the root causes that have shaped our culture and institutions.

In this prophetic blend of history, theology, and cultural commentary, Mark Charles and Soong-Chan Rah reveal the far-reaching, damaging effects of the Doctrine of Discovery.

Listening to Indigenous Voices

A Dialogue Guide on Justice and Right Relationships
Edited by Mark Hathaway, Victoria Blanco, Jayce Chiblow, and Anne-Marie Jackson

Continued on page 15

Genesis Names New Executive Director

Spring is here, the worst of the Covid pandemic seems to be passing, and guests and groups are returning to on-site participation in Genesis Spiritual Life and Conference Center's programs in Westfield, MA. Through the years, many WPC Governing Board meetings, Associate gatherings and retreats have brought WPC Sisters and Associates to Genesis. In this rebirthing time, we want to share the good news that Jennifer Schimmel is joining the Genesis team as Genesis' new executive director. The Board of Trustees made this announcement as she began her tenure on April 20.

Most recently, Jenn served as development associate for Hartford International University for Religion and Peace in Hartford, Connecticut, and as executive director of the Omega Phi Alpha Sorority and Foundation in East Lyme, Connecticut. She has over 22 years of experience in nonprofit leadership and management, including serving as executive director for the Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity in Massachusetts from 2007 to 2019. Following the 2011 Springfield, Massachusetts, tornado, Jenn successfully raised \$600,000 to fund four homes for tornado victims. Her focus on relationships helped her establish robust volunteer and internship programs, and her creativity inspired her to open an affiliate Re-Store, selling affordable reuse merchandise to the public.



"We are excited to have Jenn Schimmel come to Genesis Spiritual Life and Conference Center," said Kevin O'Connor, board chair. "We searched over several months to find just the right person to lead Genesis and we believe Jenn is that person. She has many great qualities that are in line with the Genesis mission."

Sr. Kathleen Popko, SP President, who served on the search committee, said "Jenn brings enthusiasm, passion and commitment to all that she does. Her successful background in nonprofit management, hospitality management, and fund development find their roots her strong faith and her own spiritual journey."

"It is a privilege of a lifetime to join Genesis," Jenn said. "Life is a journey and not a destination. It is like the river that winds through the canyons, it gently smooths out the edges, pushing along the path to create a place of beauty and an opportunity for all to be as God intended."

A native of Western Massachusetts, Jenn received a Master of Science in Management degree from Rensselaer Hartford in Hartford and a Bachelor of Arts in Fine and Performing Arts from Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts.

Justice Workshops: The Doctrine of Discovery

Continued from page 14

Available through: https://jesuitforum.ca/dialogue_guides/listening-to-indigenous-voices/ As the Truth and Reconciliation Commission reminds us, "reconciliation is not about 'closing a sad chapter of Canada's past,' but about opening new healing pathways of reconciliation that are forged in truth and justice." This process entails "awareness of the past, acknowledgment of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour."

The guide features writings from authors such as Arthur Manuel, Beverly Jacobs, Lee Maracle, Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair, Sylvia McAdam Saysewahum,

John Borrows, and Robin Wall Kimmerer, along with works from a variety of Indigenous artists including Christi Belcourt and Kent Monkman.

<https://mitchellmuseum.org/> The Mitchell Museum of the American Indian is one of only a handful of museums across the United States that focuses exclusively on the art, history, and culture of North American and First Nation peoples throughout the United States and Canada.

WPC Board of Directors Meeting Report

by Sister Barbara McMullen, CDP

The Women of Providence Board of Directors met March 31-April 2, 2022, for their annual spring board meeting in Terre Haute, IN. The Sisters of Providence at St. Mary of the Woods hosted us in one of their newer residence buildings. This was the first time we have met in person due to Covid since 2019.

Initially there were to be nine of us in attendance. However due to a funeral, health issues, travel restrictions, and delayed and/or canceled flights, we were a small but mighty group of six! We had Orientation with one newer member (though she is a recycled leader and was on the Board some years ago). Following dinner the group had a Prayer and sharing session about what is happening in each congregation. Each Sister was also invited to share one challenge and one joy.

The next day the Board convened for the meeting and attended to tasks of approving minutes, hearing the Executive Director Reports (which cover a host of topics for discussion as well), and reviewed the Treasurer's report, discussed future financial concerns, and approved the budget for the next fiscal year. The Board also did some visioning about the future evolution of WPC.

This meeting, with some of the officers completing their leadership terms and going out of office, an election of new officers was needed. Sr. Dawn Tomaszewski was elected as Board Chair, Sr. Kathleen Popko as Vice Chair, and Sr. Barbara Schamber as Secretary. The Treasurer is still to be determined since some members were unable to attend.

That evening the Board had a farewell for outgoing Board members, Karin Dufault, and in absentia-Alice Marie Lyon, and Maria Fest. At this time the Board also had a very nice farewell for Executive Director Barbara McMullen. There was a special dinner, prayer, and blessings from each one present to Barbara along with a wonderful vase of beautiful flowers and a gift card. The

blessing from the Board included this message, written and delivered by Karin Dufault.

Dear Barbara,

May the hinges of our friendship never grow rusty. We wish you health, We wish you well, and happiness galore. We wish you luck for you and friends; what could we wish you more?

May your joys be as deep as the oceans, your troubles as light as its foam. And may you find, sweet peace of mind, where ever you may roam.

May friendship, like wine, improve as time advances. And may we always have old wine, old friends, and young cares.

There are good ships, and there are wood ships, the ships that sail the sea. But the best ships are friendships, and may they always be.

*With Love and Gratitude,
WPC Board of Directors Ditatatio
ommolet re estia quatur aut optae-
catus aut fugit re dolumquibus.*



Additional photos on last page.



Board meeting farewell dinner: special catered meal



*Sr. Barbara and Sr. Dawn Tomasweski, SP,
at the Board meeting farewell.*



*Board meeting farewell with
Sr. Karin Dufault SP, and Sr. Barbara.*



Calendar

2022

Fall: WPC Executive Committee Meeting via Zoom, Dates TBD

2023

September 14: Associate Conference

(Save the date on your calendar, details to follow.)



**WOMEN OF
PROVIDENCE**
IN COLLABORATION

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