

RECOGNITION BESTOWED



Seattle University President Stephen V. Sundborg, S.J., congratulates Sister Shirley Smith (left) and Provincial Superior Margaret Botch at the university's undergraduate commencement ceremony.

Seattle University honors SPs

On June 15, a beautiful sunny morning in Seattle, the Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province, were presented with an honorary degree at Seattle University's undergraduate commencement ceremony. Shirley Smith, SP, accepted the honor on behalf of the Sisters of Providence, and Provincial Superior/Leadership Team Coordinator Margaret Botch, SP, addressed the gathering.

Seattle University President Stephen V. Sundborg, S.J., made the presentation recognizing the Sisters of Providence for their compassionate service and commitment to social justice. "...we marvel at the Sisters of Providence for continually and creatively living out the Gospels and bringing healing and justice to those who need it most," Fr. Sundborg declared.

continued on page 4

Seed sanctuary honored with awards

It's been a year of recognition for the Heirloom Seed Sanctuary. On the heels of receiving a National Environment Award, the sacred gardens have earned the highest ranking in the Communities in Bloom contest — 5 blooms — from the contest judges. Kingston is the reigning



On hand to receive the award are, left to right: Cate Henderson, organic gardener, Sr. Susan Pye, General Superior Sr. Pauline Lally and Sr. Reinalda Kloosterman.

Communities in Bloom champion among cities of similar population.

This year's Kingston's

continued on page 5

Women of Providence in
COLLABORATION

FROM THE DIRECTOR

I wish you all the blessings of Providence as we continue together this journey of Women of Providence in Collaboration. There are several possibilities in progress that I would like to recognize.

Statement of Corporate Actions

At their Executive Committee meeting in Holyoke, Mass., the WPC officers began an in-depth conversation about the implementation of the Statement of Corporate Actions adopted by the participants at the Providence Event '08 last June. The Governing Board will continue the conversation at their meeting in March and make decisions concerning the calls to action.

One resource for the education calls to action is available now. Brother Barry Donaghue, cfc, Director of Providence Center at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, has developed a power point presentation expanding on Brian Swimme's message. The titles are: Cosmospirituality and Sustainability. Barry brings more spirituality into the content as well as other educational information. The disc also includes the explanation with photos and diagrams of the biomass process used at the Woods as a practical application. A disc of this power point along with printed copies are being sent to each Governing Board member for use in individual congregations. Some may want to use sections for a prayer service or focus on the educational aspects.

Translation

One of the common requests on the evaluation forms from the Providence Event was translation of the proceedings of past Events into Spanish. Sisters in the Congregation of Divine Providence in Columbia have translated **On Keeping Providence** into Spanish. We can have reprints of the book available.

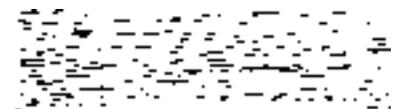
Vocations/Formation/Leadership (VFL)

The VFL members will gather in Spokane in March to continue their reflection on "Contemplation: Deepening into Providence." Nancy Sylvester, IHM, is the presenter. They will also reflect on their specific ministries in focus groups.

Incorporation/Directory

The WPC is in the process of becoming incorporated in the state of Indiana and included in the Official Catholic Directory in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis listing. When we moved the office from the St. Louis Archdiocese, we had to reapply for inclusion in Indianapolis. The Board agreed to keep the current address as the permanent address, even though the office may be located in other areas.

In Providence,



Retirement facility a leap of faith

BY George P. Matysek Jr., used with permission of The Catholic Review

They devoted their lives to educating and ministering to others, often in some of the most troubled urban areas of the country. Now the retired and infirmed Oblate Sisters of Providence are getting a state-of-the-art retirement facility that will allow others to minister to them.

In a joyful Oct. 5 ceremony, the nation's first women's religious order for African-Americans broke ground at their Arbutus motherhouse on a three-story building that will accommodate nearly 40 Oblates with room to spare.

The new \$8 million facility will provide much more space than is currently available at their nearly half-century-old building on Gun Road, allowing the sisters to pursue a healthier lifestyle.

The Oblates have a partnership with Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center's Programs of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly.

Once the building is completed, the sisters plan to renovate the existing facility to provide more space for a wide assortment of spiritual programs, retreats, workshops, educational programs, a day care center and the Oblate archives.

"The building we have now is deteriorating and does not adequately take care of our aging sisters," said Sister



Butch Toms (left), Sister Hortensia Fernandez, OSP, Sister Annette Beecham, OSP, and Bill Gaudreau break ground for a new facility for aged and infirmed Oblate Sisters.

Annette Beecham, OSP, superior general of the Baltimore-based order. "We cannot accommodate the many groups that come for retreats. If we have a large group, the plumbing breaks down."

Since Mother Mary Lange, the order's foundress, is under consideration for sainthood, Sister Annette added that more space is needed for the motherhouse's Mother Mary Lange Center, where increasing numbers of people come to learn about Mother Lange.

The sisters have launched a

capital campaign and have already raised \$500,000. Sister Annette acknowledged that with the struggling economy, it's a difficult time to undertake a major capital project. But a priest friend reminded her that another religious order in Baltimore successfully undertook major capital projects during the Great Depression.

"We are women of providence," she said. "If God wants it, it will happen. We pray and step out looking for God's will in all of this."

Sisters travel to Vietnam to explore vocations

In March, Sister Clare Lentz (center) made a 3-week trip to Vietnam to visit with the families of two pre-candidates living in Seattle and to meet with several women who have expressed an interest in learning more about the Sisters of Providence.

Sister Beverly Dunn also made the trip. The two Vietnamese pre-candidates, Rosa Sen Nguyen (left) and Hong Nga Nguyen, were accepted as candidates in August.

"Visiting with the families of Hong Nga and Sen Nguyen was the highlight," Sister Clare says. Hong Nga, from South Vietnam, is the second-oldest of five children. Rosa is from North Vietnam and is the youngest of nine children.

"Both families were extremely loving, hospitable and very positive towards us," says Sister Clare, adding that both have religious among their family members. Among the questions discussed was how comfortable the parents were with having their daughters in the United States.



In August, Mother Joseph Province welcomed two candidates, Rosa Sen Nguyen (left) and Hong Nga Nguyen (right). Vocation Team member Sr. Clare Lentz (center) visited with their families on a trip to Vietnam to explore vocations.

Being able to visit with other women beginning the process of arranging a Come and See with the Sisters of Providence was a bonus on this trip. They included a 32-

year-old who traveled 6 ½ hours with her parents and an aunt who is a sister; a 23-year-old who teaches sixth-grade biology, who came by bus and motorbike; and a 21-year-old who made the 2 1/2-hour trip from Saigon with her father.

Now that Sister Clare and Sister Beverly have returned, the next step is to share their experience with the Sisters of Mother Joseph Province. The trip has provided material for lots of communication and discernment, Sister Beverly says. "I learned many things about the reality of the situation for women in Vietnam.

he religious communities in Vietnam have lots of vocations because faith is so strong, but they only admit 18 to 25 year olds. There are no opportunities and no cultural place for single older women. That was a revelation."

Seattle University honorary degree,

continued from pg. 1

"Your order has been tremendously generous to Seattle," he continued. "In 1878, you opened the city's first hospital, and in 1907 you launched the Providence Hospital School of Nursing. The school would later help form the Department of Nursing Education at Seattle University in 1935, the forerunner of what we call today our College of Nursing. In 2005, the college returned to its roots by opening the Clinical Performance Laboratory in

the historic Providence Hospital building. The laboratory is at once a state-of-the-art enhancement of our nursing curriculum and a symbolic reminder of this university's long-standing connection with and admiration for the Sisters of Providence."

In accepting the degree, Sister Margaret responded: "Our community is honored to be called Doctor of Humanities. It feels like you are recognizing the wisdom of the pioneers who preceded us. Remembering how they lived and worked, like studying the great stories, ideas and decisions of scholars, helps us respond to challenges we meet today. Thank you for calling us to this, and thank you for honoring these sisters and all of us by conferring this degree."





SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL, KINGSTON, ONTARIO

Seed saving brings forth fruit

The local movement to save seeds is apparently growing judging by the number of people who visited the annual Heirloom Tomato Day at Providence Motherhouse on a perfect summer day in late August.

Close to 300 people were treated to a cornucopia of brilliantly coloured heirloom tomatoes — a rare opportunity to taste varieties other than the usual grocery store selections.

In 1999, organic growers and seed savers Carol and Robert Mouck joined forces with the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul to invest a lifetime's experience in safeguarding a sustainable food source. The Moucks hope to inspire people to start saving seeds and to grow their own food.

The Heirloom Seed Sanctuary recently received national recognition for its contribution to the environment. The prestigious Canadian Environment Awards program, founded by Canadian Geographic, honoured the Sanctuary with a silver award in the Sustainable Living category.

Tomato Day also featured garden tours and a seed saving workshop.



Organic seed savers Carol and Robert Mouck collaborated with the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul to create the heirloom seed sanctuary.

Bloom award

continued from pg. 1

Communities in Bloom gardening competition received 131 entries — 42 of whom have won the coveted 5-Bloom rating for their gardens and other beautification efforts. Awards were handed out during a garden party held by the city in late August at the Colonade Country Club.

Associate award; novitiate news; mural unveiled

Providence Associate Award

During this year's Marie de la Roche Annual Assembly in Pittsburgh, the Providence Award was presented to St. Louis Associate Gil Weyhaupt. Gil received an extra-special surprise as his wife, children, and grandchildren made the trip to Pittsburgh to be present at the ceremony. Gil, grant writer for Room at the Inn, was selected as a person who, through his life and ministry, makes Providence visible in the world. The criteria for selection stipulates that the awardee manifests trust in Providence spirituality, lives with a spirit of joy, hospitality, and hopefulness, and demonstrates justice by word and service to those in need. Gil volunteered as photographer at the Providence Event in June. Congratulations, Gil!



Novitiate in St. Louis

On Aug. 11, 2008, the community joined in welcoming Bertshabé Palomino Montalvo into the novitiate. The eldest of four children, she grew up in Abancay, Peru. Bertshabé earned a degree in business administration and after working in the field for ten years, answered the call to religious life. She entered the community in Peru and recently transferred to the Marie de la Roche Province.

The Sisters of Divine Providence have re-established a novitiate house in the St. Louis area. Novice director Sister Theresa Stegman, and Bertshabé moved to Granite City in July. The novitiate is a two-year program. Sister Theresa is an experienced novice director, having launched the novitiate program in Puerto Rico 30 years ago. She and Sister Bertshabé came to Granite City after ministering to the Hispanic population of Lorain, Ohio.



Mural Dedication at Providence Connections

In early October, Providence Connections dedicated a beautiful mural on the side of its building in the Marshall-Shadeland area of Pittsburgh. Mural artists Fran and Dave Hawbaker were funded through a grant from the Sprout Fund, a Pittsburgh nonprofit group that supports innovative ideas and grassroots community projects to catalyze change in Pittsburgh. Each summer Sprout pays artists to paint large-scale murals on buildings around Pittsburgh. The Providence Connections site was selected because of its location as well as the fact that the building serves families, children and youth and thus offers an opportunity for children to be exposed to public art. The dedication was attended by board members, political figures, media and neighbors. Providence Connections serves families by strengthening them and helping individuals reach their full potential.





Christine Cox and Patricia St. Amand of the SP communications office in Holyoke present at the National Communicators Network for Women Religious Conference in September.

SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE, HOLYOKE, MA

Providence communicators present

Two Providence Communicators, Patricia St. Amand and Christine Cox, of the SP Communications Office in Holyoke, Massachusetts were among Best Practices Presenters at the National Communicators Network for Women Religious Conference held at Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza, Cincinnati, Ohio, last September.

The two worked very closely with film producer Elizabeth Wilda of the University of Massachusetts during her production of *Spirit of Providence*, a historical documentary on the Sisters of Providence of Holyoke. The production of that film led to Wilda producing *Faith in Providence*, a more encompassing film on the contributions of Catholic Sisters to the fabric of American Society. The expanded film

has aired on PBS, earned a regional Emmy nomination, and two national awards from the Telly Organization for TV documentary and TV religious/spiritual program. The film has also been picked up for educational distribution by Insign Media of New York City.

The Best Practices followed by the two Providence Communicators included:

- Establishing a strong working, cooperative relationship with the producer;
- Mentoring the producer relative to the history of the Congregation and the culture of religious life prior to and following Vatican II;
- Networking producer with key personnel and contacts throughout the Sisters of Providence Congregation, its sponsored ministries,

- benefactors and supporters;
- Providing producer with names of members, Associates and others for interviews;
- Preparing producer's interview questions and/or consulting with producer on interview questions for SPs, Associates, Health System Personnel Benefactors, etc;
- Scheduling in-house interviews and making suggestions and arrangements for the locations of interviews;
- Accompanying producer to location shoots.
- Playing role of an earlier SP in film's historical reenactments of earlier SPs;
- Scanning historical photos;
- Providing editing services—reading initial script for historical accuracy and assisting in final stages of film's text editing.

Readers of WPC Newsletter will find it "providential" that producer Elizabeth Wilda, previously unknown to the Sisters of Providence before her film undertakings, is now a very active SP Associate!!

Environmentally friendly technology

The Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods are on the cutting edge with the new energy source that this fall will begin heating and powering the nearly 550,000-square-foot of buildings they call home at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. The mountains of

Environmentally, the choice of biomass uses materials that are sustainable and alleviates the dependence on oil or gas. The Congregation and Earth benefit because biomass is a fully renewable energy resource. Carbon dioxide is a byproduct, but with the planting of poplar trees and Miscanthus, there is an effect of no greenhouse gas.

Economically, the SPs hope to save about \$400,000 a year with this new energy system. For example, instead of buying 241,200 decatherm of natural gas for a six-month period, 3,000 tons of biomass will be used.

The Sisters of Providence also have been making their own off-road biodiesel, a clean-burning alternative fuel, to be used in their lawn mowers and off-road trucks at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. Since biodiesel has fewer harmful emissions than petroleum diesel it is part of the efforts to live more sustainably. A blend of 20 percent biodiesel to 80 percent petroleum diesel, known as B20, is being used in the biomass program Tub Grinder.

It takes only 48 hours to create a batch of ready-to-use fuel, said Sister Dana Augustin, who has been working with this project for about a year. She said 40 gallons of used vegetable oil becomes about 40 gallons of fuel. "Essentially you add methanol and lye to the vegetable oil, mix it for an hour and let it sit overnight," she said. "It's messy and it can be frustrating, but I like this project."

Since January, Sister Dana has been working with Providence Volunteer Minister Nicole Engels, of Phoenix, on perfecting the recipe. Nicole has a chemistry degree from Creighton University in Omaha, Neb.

"I've learned a lot. Towards the end of college I was taking all of these classes but it wasn't affecting anyone and I was getting frustrated," Nicole said. "Now that I'm making the biodiesel I am doing something that is beneficial to society. Even if biodiesel is not the answer to the future it is part of the bigger picture and something that will go on helping."



Sister Dana Augustin, at left, and Nicole Engels, Providence Volunteer Minister, pour some used vegetable oil collected from the Sisters of Providence kitchens into a storage unit. Behind Sister Dana is the equipment used in making the off-road biodiesel fuel.

donated construction debris, downed trees, wood palettes and wood chips are a testament that something big is going on. Installed last year, the biomass boiler that replaced two old, inefficient boilers is finally being put to work.

Sister Dana Augustin is the supervisor of biomass processing. "We're hoping economically this will be much more viable than gas," she said. "We're taking waste we and others have and making it into a product."

The estimated three to four truckloads of byproducts burned in the biomass boiler, such as downed trees, trimmings and scrap wood from construction projects, are being donated from local tree services, cities and manufacturing companies.

"Biomass comes to us free or we are paid to take it," Sister Dana said. "Obtaining the materials to burn has been successful."

POVERTY AND JUSTICE FUNDS AVAILABLE

Purpose of fund

The Poverty and Justice Fund was created to assist the efforts of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind. to promote social justice and the integrity of the earth. It welcomes proposals from national and international groups who organize, educate and advocate for one or more of the social justice issues of the Congregation.

In the words of our foundress, Blessed Mother Theodore Guerin, "We are not called upon to do all the good that is possible, but only that which we can do." This Fund allows us to partner with others who are doing good work in an

effort that together we can create a more just and sustainable future. The grants are modest and are meant to be seed money for not-for-profit systemic change groups with limited access to other funding.

Social justice is the condition in which the structures of society enable persons individually and collectively to have what they need for life with dignity, and which promotes ecological sustainability.

Criteria for funding

Contributions from the Poverty and Justice Fund related to Congregational level funding will be given to national and international groups who:

Address one or more of the

Congregational social justice focus issues—women in church/society, eco-justice, racism, nonviolent strategies for peace and disarmament, immigrant rights, and persons living in poverty.

Are known by a Sister of Providence.

Are not-for-profit organizations working for systemic change.

Have limited access or availability to other funding sources.

Guidelines for Application

National and International Grants

Application forms from groups requesting funds must be received on or before June 1st each year.

Grants ordinarily will not exceed \$1,500.00.

Application forms are available from any Sister of Providence or from the Poverty and Justice Fund Office c/o Cathy Taken (See address on bottom)

8 copies of the application form must be submitted.

All applicants will receive a response to their request following the committee's decisions in late spring/early summer.

Other Grants:

Smaller time-sensitive grants for local/regional groups are considered as they are received.

Grants ordinarily will not exceed \$500.00.

Requests for time-sensitive grants should be submitted to the 8th Day SP Staff Liaison – Email: Kathleend8@gmail.com - Phone 312/641-5151 (w) 773-235-6202

Grantees will receive a response as quickly as possible after the requests have been processed

Poverty and Justice Fund

c/o Cathy Taken

Owens Hall

1 Sisters of Providence

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana 47876-1089

Ph. 812-535-2859, - Fax 812-535-1011,

Website: www.spsmw.org

Play honors St. Mother Theodore, SMWC professor

Sister Ann Casper played the wise, mature Mother Theodore Guerin in the play, "I Sleep, But My Heart Watches," which was performed Oct. 16-19 at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College. The play, written 10 years ago by Sharon Ammen, theater director of the Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, was originally penned to honor then Blessed Mother Theodore. Ammen adapted the play from the life and letters of Mother Theodore and it was originally produced in 1998 to celebrate Guerin's beatification. On Oct. 15, 2006, Mother Theodore, foundress of the Sisters of Providence and the college, was canonized

a saint by Pope Benedict XVI during a celebratory Eucharistic Liturgy at the Vatican. Ammen adapted the play for her canonization and this year it featured four young students exploring ways to celebrate Guerin's canonization.

"I Sleep, But My Heart Watches" included comedy, music, tragedy and farce and even allowed for audience participation. This year's production was also a tribute to the late Sister Sue Pietrus, SP, a professor of music at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College who died Sept. 13 at age 57.

WPC members at the Leadership Conference of Women Religious



Available from WPC...

Video Recordings

Providence Event 2008 VHS tapes and DVDs are available for private use: \$15 per set.

Books

Custodiar la Providencia (On Keeping Providence) Newly translated into Spanish.

The Cosmos Within, The Providence Dance, the proceedings of the Women of Providence in Collaboration's Providence Event 2005

All are available through the WPC office. Contact Sister Ann Margaret O'Hara at 812-535-2502 or aohara@spsmw.org for more information.

Dates to Remember:

- 2009 -
- March 11-15, VFL meeting Spokane, WA
 - March 29-30, (travel days 28,31)
Governing Board Meeting, San Antonio, TX
 - Oct. 16-17, (travel days 15,18)
Executive Committee, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, IN
- 2010 -
- March 17-21, VFL, Montreal
 - March 24-25, (travel days 23, 26)
Governing Board, Melbourne, KY

COLLABORATION

is published by the
**Women of Providence
in Collaboration**

One Sisters of Providence
Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, IN
47876

812-535-2502
aohara@spsmw.org

**Sister Ann Margaret
O'Hara, SP —**

Executive Director
www.wpcweb.org

Member Congregations:

Congregation of the Sisters of
Divine Providence: Allison
Park, PA ✕ Congregation of
the Sisters of Divine
Providence: Melbourne, KY
✕ Congregation of the Sisters
of Divine Providence: San
Antonio, TX ✕ Missionary
Catechists of Divine
Providence, San Antonio, TX
✕ Oblate Sisters of
Providence, Baltimore, MD ✕
Sisters of Providence,
Holyoke, MA ✕ Sisters of
Providence, Montreal,
Quebec, Canada ✕ Sisters of
Providence, Seattle/Spokane,
WA ✕ Sisters of Providence,
Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, IN
✕ Sisters of Providence of St.
Vincent de Paul, Kingston,
Ontario, Canada ✕ Sisters of
Providence, Edmonton,
Alberta, Canada

VOL. IV — ISSUE 4
FALL 2008