



*Women of Providence
in Collaboration
Governing Board
members gathered for
their March meeting.*

Headline News from WPC

from S. Ann Margaret O'Hara, SP, WPC director

New Board Leaders Elected

At their March meeting, the Governing Board members elected leaders for the next two years:

Jane Ann Slater, CDP, San Antonio, Texas, Chair (2nd term)

Pauline Lally, SP, Kingston, Ontario, Vice-Chair

Mary Francis Fletcher, CDP, Allison Park, Pa, Secretary

Fran Moore, CDP, Melbourne, Ky, Treasurer, (2nd term)

Many thanks to outgoing Board leaders:

Elizabeth Oleksak, SP, Holyoke, Mass, Vice-Chair

Mary Lou Barba, MCDP, San Antonio, Texas, Secretary

Next Providence Event Planned for 2012

The next Providence Event will take place June 15-17, 2012, at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind. The theme will be around Providence mystics, contemporary and past, calling us into the future. There will be some emphasis on ecology and social teachings. The core planning team is being organized.

Corporate Actions Statement further implemented

At the June 2008 Providence Event, "Providence People Tread Lightly on Earth," participants made a commitment for corporate actions as WPC.

To date there are two actions in the area of education and networking that have moved forward.

Brother Barry Donaghue, cfc, developed a follow up power point to Brian Swimme's presentation. It is entitled Cosmogogenesis and Sustainability and includes a resource script. Copies were sent to all WPC Board members last fall.

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Headline news, *continued from page 1*

The Governing Board established a Corporate Actions Resource Team to expand education regarding ecology and eco-spirituality. The planning team will facilitate the development of resource teams to offer educational presentations, materials, and hands-on experiences for our community members, associates and all interested in eco-spirituality.

Members of the Corporate Actions Resource Team are: Janet Folkl, CDP, Barb McMullen, CDP and Kathleen Popko, SP.

Initial Formation gathering set for July 2010

At their Vocations/Formation/Leadership meeting in March, the group proposed a 4-day meeting of members in initial formation for the 2nd or 3rd week in July, 2010 in the Northwest. The purpose is to reflect together on Providence and to get to know each other. Scholarships are available.

The planning committee is: Bev Dunn, SP, Beatrice La Framboise, SP, Mary Beth Klingel, SP, Josie Ramac, SP and Vilma Franco, SP.

Associates and Directors to gather at NACAR JUNE 2010

Associates and their directors will be invited to a social gathering during the NACAR annual meeting June 4-6, 2010 in St. Louis. This will allow them to get to know associates among all member congregations.

WPC Website: new design and updates

As of early June, the WPC website, www.wpcweb.org, will have a new look and will be in the process of being updated.



New features include:

- New graphic design using WPC event photos
- Introduction to meaning of Providence on welcome page
- Congregation photos and logos

with list of Member Congregations

- Past and current newsletters easily accessible on site
- Link to White Violet Center for Eco-Justice
- Potential for advertising members' events

The web site continues to include links to vocations and associates contacts of all congregations.

Ann Margaret

WPC Vocation/Formation/Leadership update

The annual meeting of the Women of Providence in Collaboration's Vocation/Formation Leadership (VFL) personnel took place at Immaculate Heart Retreat Center in Spokane, Wash. March 11-15. Twenty-six members attended the event titled "Contemplation: Deepening into Providence."

Nancy Sylvester, IHM, returned for a second year building on the previous year's theme of contemplation with a new focus on dialogue. Nancy introduced the participants to the Powers of Centration, Creativity and Cataclysm. We reflected on these powers as they are taking hold in the universe and trying to find expression as Providence unfolds in our lives. Utilizing a process of personal reflection, simple sharing and contemplative inquiry, small groups arrived at new insights regarding the work of Providence in our world and universe and discussed the relationships these insights might have to our formation ministries and programs.

Participants spent quality time in focus groups – vocation,

formation, leadership – enabling much sharing and resulting in some decisions.

the Mother Joseph Province and the work of the planning committee chaired by Marilyn



One decision of the formation focus group was to plan a gathering during the summer of 2010 for our women in initial formation. Great desire for such a gathering was expressed by those women during a short meeting held during the Providence Event last summer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind. The dates and a location will be forthcoming.

Participants offered praise and gratitude for the hospitality of

Charette, SP. The 2010 gathering of Women of Providence in Collaboration VFL will be in Montreal, Canada March 17-21.

Above, members of WPC's vocation/formation/leadership group gathered in March in Spokane, Wash.

**Start planning now
for our July 2010 gathering
of WPC's women in initial formation.**

You're not going to want to miss it!

When VFL meets, they make a donation to local charity. The letter below is from the women's shelter that was this year's recipient

Dear Women of Providence,

Thank you for your generous donation to the Women's Hearth. This is a wonderful ministry, and I am proud to be part of it. The Providence Sisters have been so instrumental and supportive of all the transitions ministries since its beginning.

Mary Rothect, OP

The La Roche experience



At right, Sister Elena Almendárez (center), Associate Campus Minister for Service and Justice, with La Roche College students.

La Roche College, founded by the Sisters of Divine Providence in 1963, has instituted a new program: The La Roche Experience, which provides students with the opportunity to experience and share in the spirit, mission, and rich heritage of the Sisters.

The cornerstone experience focuses on global perspectives, Catholic tradition of justice and peace, history of the congregation, and the development of the college.

Content is to include information pertaining to peace and justice, incorporating a strong experiential component, collabora-

tion between the college and the Congregation. There are service learning opportunities through the campus ministry's office for service and justice or through the sponsored ministries of the Sisters.

In addition, students will be provided with opportunities for spiritual enrichment through the programs of the Kearns Spirituality Center, a ministry of the Sisters. Each student involved in The La Roche Experience will be matched with a Sister companion who will be available to mentor the student.

Reconnecting with Lenten reflections

The Office of Mission Advancement launched a project for the Lenten season. Every day 350 individuals received a Lenten reflection written by a member of the Community, Associate, or staff member.

The reflections were also posted to the Community website for Internet visitors.

The undertaking was initiated as a way in which to stay connected with donors and friends. It was a great success; a similar initiative is being planned for Advent.

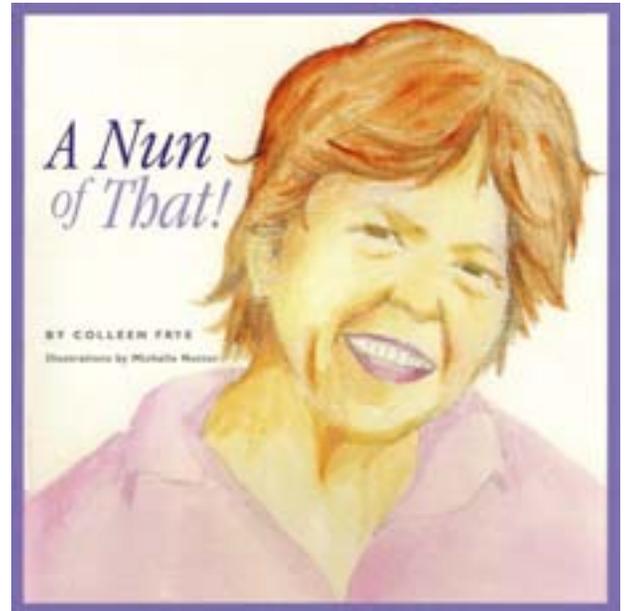
A Nun of That

Claire Hayes, CDP, was a hospital chaplain at the Boston Medical Center and the face of Providence to the people around her. She died of leukemia in 2003. Now her ministry and memory are kept alive in a new children's book, *A Nun of That*, by first-time children's book author Colleen Frye.

The book is the fictional story of a young boy, Carlos, who finds himself in the hospital after a car accident. He meets hospital chaplain Sister Claire who shows Carlos how she uses the different gifts God gave her to help people in the most trying circumstances. In the process, Carlos learns that everybody has a gift from God to use, that everybody can talk to God, and that God is always with us — even when it doesn't seem that way.

This book serves as an accessible introduction to religious vocations, prayer, service, acceptance and Providence. While a work of fiction, it is based on the true ministry and personality of Sister Claire. The book's illustrator, Michelle Nutter, is a student at Sacred Heart High School (a ministry of the Congregation) who donated her artwork.

A Nun of That is available online at Amazon.com and information about the book can be found at www.nunofthat.com. Proceeds benefit the Sacred Heart Schools, Boston Medical Center, or the Sisters of Divine Providence.



The book jacket to the new children's book honoring hospital chaplain Claire Hayes, CDP

Korean visit

On April 13 Sisters Theresa Stegman, Ana Lydia Sonera Matos and Carol Stenger from the Marie de la Roche Province ventured to Seoul, South Korea, to join other Sisters of Divine Providence from Peru and Germany and the Sisters in the St. Joseph Korean Province for an international formators meeting. Following a visit to local sites were four days of meetings in which many new insights and understandings emerged. Many in attendance found it enriching to see the similarities and differences among the cultures within the congregation.

Next the sisters visited the ministries of the Sisters in Korea. First they visited Chuncheon, where the sisters minister in a rehabilitation center and a nursing home. Next they went to Uijeongbu where the sisters minister in St. Mary Hospital. Finally, they visited a small nursing home called Charity House where three sisters live and work with 14 elderly women. During the memorable experience, the three sisters found a greater understanding of the diversity of cultures in our international congregation and how this diversity enhances our mission of living and ministering to make God's Providence more visible in the world.



Sisters of Divine Providence gathered for an international formators meeting in Seoul, South Korea.

*Father Paul
Hansen of ISARC
and General
Superior Sister
Pauline Lally at the
March 11th vigil in
Toronto.*



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

General Superior speaks at prayer vigil

A band of two dozen Kingston vigil keepers and friends traveled by bus to Toronto on March 11. Our goal was to participate in the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition's prayer vigil at Queen's Park.

Ontario's faith communities prayed for the poor at Queen's Park during a series of pre-budget vigils outside the provincial legislature in March. Provincial politicians were also be in the prayers of Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims and representatives of other faiths during the seven-hour vigils. It was such a blustery March day that we found ourselves having to shout to make ourselves heard above the sharp snap of the flags in front of the "pink palace."

With the Provincial seat of government as the backdrop, Sister of Providence General Superior Sr. Pauline Lally delivered a passionate speech to the gathering.

Sister Pauline evoked Mahatma Gandhi: "No matter what you do will seem insignificant;

but you must do it and be the change you wish to see in the world." She also insisted that it all begins with awareness and religious social teaching has long been animated by religious values that transcend charity and individual giving.

"Biblical justice means ensuring human dignity, fairness, solidarity, equity, participation and respect for human rights and the need to assume our responsibilities."

"One of the greatest learnings for me when I went into our Justice and Peace Office has been that... **POVERTY IS POLITICAL.** Poverty is not necessarily the result of individual moral failure or poor life choices entirely, but of governments and corporations that idolize the market and put profits before not only people, but indeed before all creation. Therefore, **WE HAVE TO BE POLITICAL.** Because the problem is political, the solution has to be political.

Be attentive - Know what's going on
Be intelligent- Make connections

Agenda Camp discusses agriculture

Agriculture is a hot topic these days as evidenced by the turn out for TVO Ontario's special program in Kingston in mid-January. In fact, more people attended the forum in Kingston than at any other stop across the province.

The Sisters of Providence were well represented at the two-day event, dubbed "agenda camp" which ended with a live televised segment at Grant Hall at Queen's University. In attendance were Tara Kainer from the Justice and Peace Office and organic gardeners Carol and Robert Mouck and Cate Henderson. Local farmers, food promoters and politicians also attended.

"TVO AgendaCamp was a unique opportunity to discuss food security issues from the perspective of social justice with a broad spectrum of participants — farmers, food activists, politicians, and concerned citizens," remarked Tara Kainer.

TVO hopes the On the Road series will encourage people to discuss the pressing issues



Organic gardeners Robert Mouck, left, Carol Mouck centre, attend the "Agenda on the Road" event.

within their communities. The program is available at the Resource Centre at Providence Motherhouse.

Organic gardener Cate Henderson, an employee at the Heirloom Seed Sanctuary, was disappointed the debate ignored the issue of access to healthy food for our low income neighbours.

"I felt that a great public education opportunity was lost, since it is clear that the

future of the agricultural economy lies in small-scale, community-supported farms using sustainable practices, rather than those represented on TVO's panel."

Carol and Robert said they have some concerns. "If growers and governments don't engage in spiritual and sustainable commitments like organic methods and saving their own seed, the future may not happen."

Prayer vigil, *continued*

Be a critical thinker - Ask why

Be responsible - Get involved

Learn to be a voice for the voiceless

A society is judged by how it treats its most vulnerable. Referring to the reading from the prophet Micha, we see that iniquity is very complicated, while the virtues of justice are very simple: Love Tenderly, Act Justly and Walk Humbly with your

God. This is the attitude we want the politicians to take to the budget. Simplicity is self-sustaining. Complexity carries its own death sentence because shaky affluence is always built on sand."

Historical marker honors Saint Mother Theodore



Above, members of the Thralls family, whose ancestors housed Mother Theodore Guerin and her companions in their farmhouse when she first arrived at the Woods, stand with Sister Denise Wilkinson, general superior (left to right): Doug Thralls, Ashley Vermillion, Jenna Thralls, Sister Denise, Ruth Thralls, Fred Thralls, Kim Thralls, Robert Thralls and Fred Thralls.

Saint Mother Theodore Guerin, foundress of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind., was honored during a public dedication ceremony of an Indiana historical marker April 29. More than a hundred sisters, representatives from the business community and friends joined the Congregation for the unveiling of the marker now located across from the Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto, near where Saint Mother Theodore Guerin is believed to have arrived with her five companions from France in 1840.

The two-sided state marker text reads: "Born Anne-Thérèse Guerin in 1798 in France. In 1823, she entered the Catholic congregation Sisters of Providence of Ruillé; received the name Sister St. Theodore.

Noted for her teaching, she led a mission from France to establish schools and orphanages in the Indiana wilderness; arrived here fall 1840 and established the Sisters of Providence in U.S. Guerin opened a female academy in July 1841, the predecessor of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College. Initially, she and the sisters endured anti-Catholic sentiments and harsh frontier conditions. At her death in 1856, she had directed the opening of 11 schools in 9 Indiana towns. Pope Benedict XVI canonized her in 2006, naming her Saint Theodora Guerin."

The marker is part of the State of Indiana Historical Marker Program which is administered by the Indiana Historical Bureau. State historical markers commemorate significant individuals, organizations, places, and events in Indiana history. These markers help communities throughout the state promote, preserve, and present their history for the education and enjoyment of residents and tourists of all ages.

Saint Mother Theodore Guerin Fest 2009

Save the date for the Saint Mother Theodore Guerin Fest 2009, Oct. 23-25!

The Sisters of Providence and Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College will host the Saint Mother Theodore Guerin Fest Oct. 23-25, 2009. The theme of the Fest is "Live with purpose! Energize your faith!"

Junior high to retirement-age pilgrims are welcome! Anyone interested in joining the Congregation for a weekend of prayer, music and inspiration are encouraged to attend. There will be opportuni-



ties to learn about Saint Mother Theodore Guerin, the first saint of Indiana and the eighth saint who worked and

SPSMW launch newly designed web site

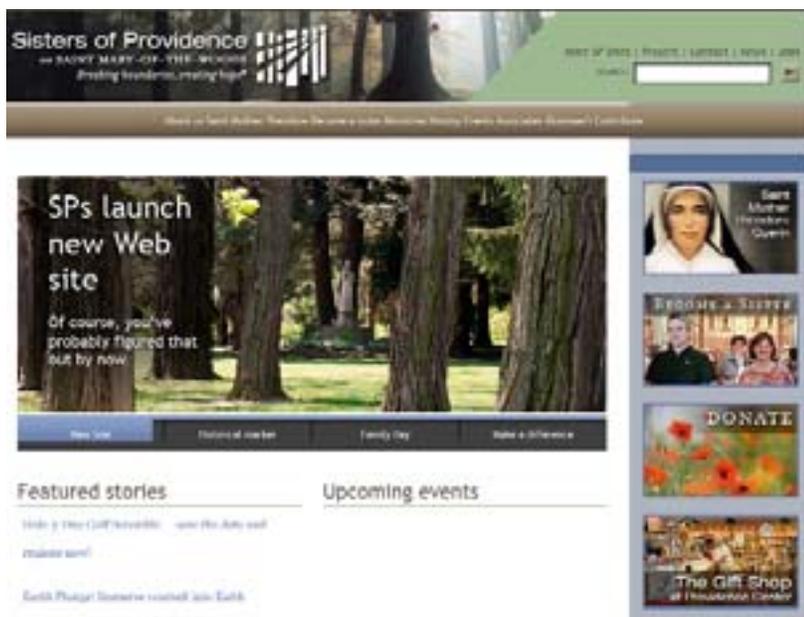
The Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Wood have launched a totally revised Web site with up-to-date design and revised content that can be viewed at www.sistersofprovidence.org. The Web site is open after more than a year of planning and implementation.

"Anyone with a Web site knows it's a process of constant change and we've been part of that process ourselves since the first Sisters of Providence site launched in 1997, but this is a full-scale overhaul of our site," said Rosie Blankenship, Sisters of Providence Web site manager.

"We actually are going from three sites (the Sisters of Providence site, WoodsUp and Woods Day Care/Pre-School) to 14 different sites. We believe this will accommodate our friends, companions, sisters, staff and donors with better information that is more easily accessible," Rosie said.

"Essentially, we had an extensive site of more than 1,000 pages of incredibly valuable and useful information. Now that information will be easier to locate in our new network of sites," she added.

WoodsUp.com is a children's Web site that is created to meet educational needs primarily for fourth- through eighth-grade students. It is mostly a non-denominational site that is suitable for classroom use, and it has a significant focus on historical information.



The new network of sites is devoted to Sisters of Providence ministries, education, prayer and more. The network offers information about the Congregation on its main site including information about becoming a sister and joining Providence Associates, plus additional material from Archives, Green Projects, Guerin Outreach Ministries, Peace and Justice, Providence Self Sufficiency Ministries, Providence Center, Providence Volunteer Ministry, Spirituality and Prayer, Taiwan Mission, Volunteer Services and White Violet Center for Eco-Justice, in addition to WoodsUp.com and Woods Day Care/Pre-School.

The newly designed and re-worked Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods web site, above, launched at the beginning of May.

lived in the United States. Mother Theodore welcomed people of all faith traditions and there is something for everyone during this weekend retreat.

Join with others for:

- Candlelight procession of song and prayer.
- Keynote speakers.
- Adoration in the historic Blessed Sacrament Chapel.
- Time for personal and group prayer and reflection.
- Information on how to live sustainably.

•Time to visit the gentle alpacas; learn about their place in the circle of life. •Experiences of Providence through art and entertainment.

•Opportunities to learn more about Saint Mother Theodore Guerin.

The cost for the weekend (excluding housing and food) is \$25 per person or \$100 total for families of four or more. Hotel accommodations are available just 15 minutes away in Terre Haute and special rates have been arranged for people attending the Fest. Food will be onsite for purchase. Questions? Visit www.SistersofProvidence.org or contact Sister Barbara Doherty at bdoherly@spsmw.org or 812-535-2925.

Congregation welcomes new candidate



Elizabeth Ann Guerrero, left, enters the Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence as a candidate in formation.

On September 26, 2008, the Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence welcomed Elizabeth Ann Guerrero as a Candidate in formation. Candidacy marks the formal entrance into the formation phase of the Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence. During this stage of formation, the young woman comes to know herself in light of her spirituality, studies, personal growth and development.

Elizabeth is from Crystal City, Texas and a member of Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church. She has two sisters, and three brothers, one being Fr. Toby Guerrero from the Diocese of Laredo. Her parents, Jesus and Elida Guerrero, passed away several years ago.

Elizabeth began her journey of discernment with the MCDP's about four years ago when she participated in a discernment retreat with the Sisters. After that she visited several religious communities and attended several other discernment retreats before requesting to become an Affiliate with the Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence about seventeen months ago. An initial Affiliate ceremony was held in her home with many of her family members around her. During the Affiliate stage, she met monthly with the Vocation Director, Sr. Sylvia Garcia, MCDP, and continued with her discernment of her spiritual and personal growth. She also visited monthly with the sisters at St. Andrew's Convent, the motherhouse of the MCDP's,

participated in the Biblical Catechetical Program as well as attended special ceremonies and activities held with the Sisters at St. Andrew's Convent.

"I am very excited about beginning this stage of formation. Although I have been in Edinburg, Texas for about a week, I already feel like I have been blessed by the people here at Holy Family Parish. I also am grateful for the opportunities that my family has had to get to know the sisters and be with them at various events. This has allowed them to journey along with me as I continued with my discernment and help me grow in my love of God and the MCDP community. I also am thankful to the people of Crystal City, Carrizo and Asherton for their support and prayers during my time of discernment," Elizabeth said.

Elizabeth will be living and continuing her Candidacy stage of formation in Edinburg, Texas at Holy Family Parish with Sr. Rose Carmel Garay, MCDP, Formation Director of the Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence.

New officers selected

Congratulations to the newly elected General Administration of the Oblate Sisters of Providence in Baltimore, Maryland:

Sister Mary Alexis Fisher, OSP,
Superior General

Sister Mary Clarice Proctor, OSP,
Assistant General and First Councillor

Sister Mary Constance Fenwick, OSP,
Second Councillor

Sister Dora Fernandez, OSP,
Third Councillor

Sister Mary Trinita Baeza, OSP,
Fourth Councillor

Upcoming retreats at

White Violet Center for Eco-Justice

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind.

July 12-18: **Earth Plunge**

A week of immersion into Earth and its impact on your spirituality. \$600 includes room and board.

August 9-13: **Praying with Cosmos, Christ and Consciousness**

Presented by S. Sharon Zayac, OP, and Margaret Galiardi, OP. We will discover the Christian story offering hope for the future for God's imperiled creation. (pre-requisite: some exposure to the New Story of the Universe.)

May 6 -11, 2010: **A retreat with Judy Cannato**

Judy is the author of *Radical Amazement* and soon to be published *Journey of Compassion*. Registration open Jan. 1, 2010.

Individualized Earth Sabbatical Program

Program tailored to participant's needs; can last from one month to one year. Includes physical labor on farm, work with animals, guided reading, videos and discussions, spiritual direction, art integration, and time at strawbale retreat house.

To register or for more information, contact Sister Maureen Freeman at 812-535-2930 or mfreeman@spsmw.org or visit www.WhiteViolet.org

Upcoming retreats at Genesis Spiritual Life & Carriage House Conference Center

Westfield, Mass.

June 19-21 (Friday - Sunday)

**Mystery of Evil: Shadow Work for
Spiritual Directors and Others Who
Wrestle with Darkness**

Leader: Don Bisson, FMS, SMin

June 22-27 (Monday - Saturday)

Contemplative at the Heart of the Cosmos

Leader: Gail Worcelo, SGM

July 17-19 (Friday - Sunday)

**The Art of Leisure: Weekend Guided
Retreat**

Leader: Rev. Warren Savage

July 28-31 (Tuesday - Friday)

**Celebrate the Summer Name of God:
Mini Guided Retreat**

Leader: Nancy Seridan, SASV, MEd, CAES

August 9-16 (Sunday - Sunday)

**Guided Retreat: Mysticism of The
Universe...One Life in Awe**

Leaders: Marion Honors, CSJ, MFA;
Elizabeth Oleksak, SP; James Profit, SJ, MA

August 17-24 (Monday to Monday)

7-Day Silent Directed Retreat

Leaders: Joseph Bachand, MS, ThD;
Sylvia Comer, RSM, MA, STM; Mary
Horgan, SP; Regina Whalen, SND

August 28-30 (Friday to Sunday)

**Summer's End Weekend Guided Retreat:
Nature's Walk Through the Bible**

Leader: Katie Pinard, MA

*For more information, contact Kristen Mackey at
Genesis Spiritual Life Center, (413)562-3627 or
visit www.genesiscenter.us*

WPC publications for sale

Texts:

Providence: God's Face Toward the World

Proceedings of the Women of Providence Colloquium, May 1984, Pittsburgh, Penn.

On Keeping Providence

Proceedings of the Women of Providence Colloquium, March 1991, Mount Holyoke, Mass.

Come and Dance a New Song at Cana: Providence and Discipleship through Mary

Making Providence Visible, proceedings of the Providence Event, June/August 2003, Spokane, Wash./Allison Park, Penn./Kingston, Ontario.

The Cosmos within the Providence Dance

Proceedings of the Providence Event and 25th Anniversary Celebration, June 2005, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind. (includes DVD)

Video/Audio Recordings

Providence People Tread Lightly on Earth

Proceedings of the Providence Event, June 2008, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind. (DVD or VHS)

Our Vows through the Prism of Providence

Proceedings of the WPC/VFL Conference 2005 (cassette tapes)

Shall We Dance? Our Life in Community as Vowed Women Religious Named Providence

Proceedings of the WPC/VFL Conference, 2006 (DVD)

COLLABORATION

is published by the

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