

Women of Providence in

COLLABORATION

VOL. VI ISSUE 2 • FALL 2010



Holyoke sister speaks up for reform with Catholic Health Association

“Health care justice—we’ve been waiting a long time,” is the recurring theme in the Catholic Health Association’s (CHA) YouTube video marking the milestone March 23, 2010 passage of health care reform in the U.S. and CHA’s own decades-long advocacy role in the effort. Holyoke Sister of Providence Mary Caritas Geary, CHA Board Chair, 1978-1979, is one of the featured speakers on the film which includes, among notable others, Sister Bernice Coreil, DC, CHA Board Chair, 1989-1990, Senator Bob Casey, D-PA, and an appearance by President Barack Obama, who thanked CHA for its efforts.

Sister Caritas appears early in the production stating: “We are our brother’s keeper and we have to be concerned for the poor and marginalized.” Later in the video she looks back some 17 years to recall another momentous occasion in the pursuit of legislation for more equitable health care when she and Sister Bernice attended a celebration of what the Clinton

Administration “...thought,” said Sister Caritas, “was going to be the (nation’s) final health care package.”

The video closes with the message, “And so the work begins, again, and the people of Catholic health care will be there to see it is done right, again.”

To view the complete nine-minute video visit <http://bit.ly/g2elx>.

Missioning Day for Holyoke SPs

Sister Myra Rodgers, CDP, former General Superior of the Congregation of Divine Providence in Allison Park, PA, served as guest speaker at the Missioning Day ceremonies for the Sisters of Providence of Holyoke and their Providence Associates. The Sept. 26 event took place in Our Mother of Sorrows Chapel at Providence Place.

Sister Myra chose “Providence: A Global Spirituality,” as her

Sister Mary Caritas Geary is a featured speaker in the CHA YouTube video on US healthcare reform. (photo courtesy of Catholic Health Association.)

FROM THE DIRECTOR

I wish you the blessings of Providence in this time of autumn beauty. I want to share with you several experiences of our collaboration since our last newsletter.

PROVIDENCE EVENT, June 15 – 17, 2012: THEME - PROVIDENCE AND MYSTICS

Ron Rolheiser, OMI, key note presenter, met in October with Jane Ann Slater, CDP; Diane Langford, CDP; and Ann Margaret O'Hara, SP to discuss the content and process for the Providence Event which will be held at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind.



The Initial Formation members will meet for three days prior to the Providence Event and for one day following to integrate the experience.

The Providence Event core team filled some of the roles needed to assist with the process. Facilitators will be Denise Wilkinson, SP and Paula Damiano, SP; weavers will be Irene Wilson, SP; Diane Langford, CDP; and Elizabeth Oleksak, SP. The core team still needs to select a ritual coordinator and local arrangements coordinator. They will meet at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods May 10-11, 2011 with the facilitators and ritual and local coordinators.

Core team members are: Julie Crane, SP; Jeannette Filthaut, SP; Diane Langford, CDP; Marie McCarthy, SP; Marilyn Webb, PA; and Mary Alice Zander, SP.

ADVENT REFLECTIONS

WPC will offer Advent reflections similar to the Lenten reflections we did earlier this year. WPC members will be asked to reflect on quotes from past Providence spirituality presentations in the context of Advent.

VOCATIONS/FORMATION/LEADERSHIP

The Vocations/Formation/Leadership members will meet March 2-6, 2011, at San Antonio, Texas. Michele Bisbey, CDP of Allison Park will be the presenter on the topic: "Providence and Prophecy: Bringing Good Things to Light." Scholarships are available.

INITIAL FORMATION GATHERING

The July Initial Formation gathering in Spokane was highly inspiring and helpful to newer members of our congregations. The women enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about Providence, one another, and the varied histories of foundations. They will meet again before and after the Providence Event.

DIRECTORS OF ASSOCIATES AND LEADERS GATHER Sept. 13-15, 2011

There will be a gathering of directors of associates and leaders who relate to them at Kearns Spirituality Center in Allison Park, Penn. The theme is "Partners in Providence Spirituality." The purposes of the gathering are:

- To reflect on Providence spirituality and charism in a layperson's context
- To share experiences and resources
- To plan for shared opportunities across geographic areas

The program committee members are: Joan Coultas, CDP and Ellen Lavender, co-chairs, Allison Park, Penn.; Michele Bisbey, CDP, Allison Park; Penn.; Donna Esposito, Melbourne, Ky.; Dianne Heinrich, CDP, San Antonio, Tx.

PROVIDENCE RETREATS

Elizabeth Oleksak, SP and Ruth McGoldrick, SP are refining the Providence themes for retreats to be developed for WPC congregations and others. Retreat directors could develop the themes further. Retreats could have varying formats and lengths and processes and resource personnel could be shared.

Please see page 16 for dates of Governing Board and other WPC gatherings during the next few years.

Ran Margaret

Save the Date

Associates and Religious: Partners in Providence Spirituality

a Conference for
Directors of Associates and
Community Liaisons
of Providence Congregations

Sept. 13-15, 2011

at

**Kearns Spirituality Center
Allison Park, Pa.**

Cost \$250 per person (includes room
and board)

For more information contact Ellen
Lavendar at 412-487-3891 or by e-
mail at eelpgh@verizon.net

*See the spring WPC newsletter
for registration information.*

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Website: genesiscenter.us

Group from US walks in Emilie's footsteps

On June 7 and 8, 2010 we received members of Providence Ministries and some administrative personnel of Providence Health & Services. This group of women and men from the Western USA were accompa-

and immediately they were called to deepen their spirituality. Sister Judith explained: "We are here for a journey, a special type of journey, a pilgrimage, to a sacred place. But it is more than just a place, it is a quest that has an external/physical part, but more importantly: an internal/interior focus. Let us discover more of who we are as Providence people, in a particular tradition that was begun by Émilie Tavernier-Gamelin."



"The reflection time in the chapel at the Motherhouse allowed us to quietly and prayerfully center ourselves and identify how we are continuing to further the Providence mission to the poor and vulnerable. The time for sharing extended my own insights and prayer." Ellen Wolf

Staff from Providence ministries in the US traveled to Montreal in June to learn about the history of the Sisters of Providence.

nied by Sister Judith Desmarais, SP, currently a Provincial Councillor of Mother Joseph Province.

Before arriving at the International Centre – Sisters of Providence, the participants visited the parish in Laval where Mother Joseph grew up and studied. Then, the pilgrims were welcomed at the General Administration by Sister Kathryn Rutan, General Superior, the General Council members and the employees of the International Centre.

"We Sisters of Providence were founded for the Mission. We came from the generous response of compassionate lay persons to the needs of the times, and we organized as a way to give stability and permanency to the accomplishment of the Mission. Is that not what we continue to do today? Is not our adoption of a new model of sponsorship totally in line with that understanding of the beginnings of it all?" Lucille Dean, SP

With her explanations and her invitations to reflection, Sister Judith, who knows Montreal and its surroundings very well, contributed to the enrichment of the visit far beyond its historic and religious aspects. The participants came from different places

Participants watched an engaging Power Point presentation of the early days of the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence which put the birth of the community's works in context. The first day of the pilgrimage was dedicated to a visit of the different rooms of the Providence Museum, dinner in the cafeteria of Carrefour Providence (the Mother House) with some of the sisters and a special time of reflection in the Mother House chapel. Later, the group shared a supper in the Providence International Room with the members of the General Leadership team and the personnel of the Émilie-Gamelin Centre, Nancy Prada and Lorena Otero, who commented: "This process for the renewal and deepening of the Providence Charism gave the pilgrims an opportunity to know better the life and journey of Émilie Gamelin and the Sisters of Providence from the very beginning, including the history of the Congregation and of the city where it began as well as some of its early works. The experience was enriching to us as well as we met people who are deeply involved in the works of Providence elsewhere, in a differ-



US staff members of Providence Ministries learn about their roots with a tour.

ent context, but still enlivened by the same Providence spirit. These were two days of sharing with the great Providence family.”

“As I reflect on our visit the words of Emilie Gamelin, “Simplicity, Humility, and Charity” resonate today just as they did many years ago. The sisters continue to live out those traits every day and I continue to be inspired by them every day.” Greg Van Pelt

The following day, the pilgrims toured Mary

Queen of the World Cathedral where Bishop Bourget is buried. Then they walked in the footsteps of Émilie Gamelin in Old Montreal.

“For me, the visit was a study in resilience and strength. From their founding moments to their present days’ concerns, the sisters have shown a rare combination of wisdom, faith and a willingness to work hard to serve their mission.” Keith Marton, MD

SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE, HOLYOKE, MA

Missioning Day, continued from page 1

topic. In her presentation, she invited the sisters and associates to look outward and “to see the world and the universe through the eyes of hope.” Quoting Tony Gittins, she challenged them “to dismantle the boundaries of exclusion, to allow God’s realm to break through,” and thus to be “signs of God’s great love for our world.”

Afterward Congregation members recalled their vows of poverty, celibacy and obedience and their mission and reaffirmed Vision and Chapter Directional Statements.

The Associates also renewed their annual commitments and, following chapel ceremonies, signed individual commitment pledges.

At the dinner social that followed in the Kingston Dining Room, Sister Kathleen Popko, SP President, marked another milestone in the Congregation’s history when she announced the names of the first Associates honored with the title of Associate Emerita/us: Associates Ralph and Anne-marie Ferraro, Joseph and Mary Niedzielski and Viola Mish. These 5 were the first to become Providence Associates 28 years ago in 1982.



Above, the Holyoke SP Congregation prays a blessing at Missioning Day. At right Guest Speaker Sister Myra Rodgers at left with Sisters Geraldine Noonan and Julie Crane.

Kentucky sisters with and for immigrants

By Sister Barbara Patrick

The immigrant experience is part of our congregational history. Our founder, Jean Martin Moye, was an immigrant for the sake of evangelization. Our first sisters in the United States came as immigrant missionaries and many served the immigrant communities. From this beginning until today, we continue to have immigrant women among



El Centro de la Divina Providencia is a newly inaugurated ministry of the Sisters of Divine Providence that allows them to reach out to their immigrant neighbors in Kentucky.

us. We have seen in our ministries the human consequences of the present immigration policy: separation of families, exploitation in the

workplace, and violations of other human rights.

The provincial governing body voted to develop a plan for the implementation of a new ministry in support of immigrants by the next Assembly in Dec. 2009.

In Aug. of 2009, the provincial council chose a sister to be the director for this initiative for immigrants and named several sisters to form a steering committee. The director, who speaks Spanish and has experience in school administration, was a missionary in Ecuador and worked in social services in the Northern Kentucky area. The steering committee includes two primary school teachers, a pastoral minister, the director of a peace and justice center, the former director of a nonprofit organization, and a family nurse practitioner/midwife who works with the Hispanic community.

The steering committee met for the first time Sep. 19, 2009. At this meeting they

chose the name "El Centro de la Divina Providencia" and began planning.

The mission of El Centro de la Divina Providencia is to provide a Catholic Christian atmosphere in which to respond to the needs of the inner city immigrants of Northern Kentucky, in particular women and children. Educational and pastoral services and referrals to service agencies that facilitate immigrant adjustment in the community and improve the quality of their lives will be provided.

As Sisters of Divine Providence we are compelled by our spirituality, our history, and our experience to stand in solidarity with our immigrant sisters and brothers. We know that in God's loving Providence each human person is deserving of a life of respect and dignity. We pledge to work for immigration reform that facilitates legal status and family unity, respects the rights of workers, and upholds the dignity of immigrant people. We commit to continued education of both ourselves and others in matters that concern immigrants. We will pray for conversion of heart and for a just and compassionate immigration system.

"Lord, when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you?"... He will answer them, "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least ones, you did for me." (Mt. 25:38-41)

"El Centro de la Divina Providencia" was inaugurated June 16. The Bishop of Covington blessed the center. This "significant ministry with today's excluded people" (General Chapter 2008) was able to be implemented thanks to collaboration with various parties in the Diocese, other religious communities and administrative personnel in Northern Kentucky.

There are many educational needs in the immigrant population. Even before the opening of the Center, Sisters had begun their mission: language classes were offered in places where the people worked. The whole process of planning and working with others has been marked by the presence of Providence.





Sister Margarete St. John, seated, pronounced perpetual vows as a Sister of Providence on Aug. 14. Pictured with her is General Superior Sister Kathryn Rutan.

SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE, EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA

Community offers cross-cultural experience

The Sisters of Providence of Montreal, an international community, incorporate into their initial formation program an experience of living community life and doing ministry in another culture in the community.

The Sisters of Holy Angels Province, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada welcomed four sisters-in-formation for their cross cultural experience. Sister Mimose Jean, a temporary vowed Sister originally from Haiti, arrived Sept. 16. She immediately began English classes with Mrs. Charlotte MacDonnell, a Providence Associate who is a ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher. Sister Mimose has been missioned to minister at Father Lacombe Care Centre in Calgary.

On Oct. 4 we welcomed Sisters Hong Nga Thi Nguyen and Sen Thi (Rosa) Nguyen originally from Vietnam, who are apostolic novices in the American province. They are presently missioned far north of Edmonton to McLennan and Wabasca respectively. McLennan is a French community and the sisters' ministries are in a nursing home and the parish. Wabasca is a First Nations reserve; the sisters minister in the parish and are available to the people.

Sister Sandrine-Aimée Tsélikeme, a temporary vowed Sister originally from the Cameroon, arrived Oct. 6 from Montreal. She is presently missioned at Providence Centre and Anawim, a food bank in the inner city.

The four Sisters were introduced to the Sunday worshipping community at our Providence Chapel.

The Sisters in Holy Angels Province welcome these sisters who are here to know and experience our Province and the different ministries.

Perpetual Vows

Sister Margarete St. John pronounced Perpetual Vows as a Sister of Providence at Providence Centre, Edmonton on Aug. 14, amongst family, friends and Sisters. Sister Kathryn Rutan, General Superior of the Sisters of Providence, accepted her vows. It was a simple and joy-filled celebration.

Congregational retreat participants from Mother Joseph Province and Our Lady of Providence Vice-Province come together in June.



SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE: SEATTLE/SPOKANE WASH.

US and Filipino sisters join for retreat

Below: shown in traditional Vietnamese dress at the Provincial Chapter are (from left) candidate Huong Nguyen, and Srs. Gabrielle Nguyen, Hong Nga Nguyen, Anna Loan Nguyen, Rosa (Sen) Nguyen, and Lang Tran.

Six sisters from Our Lady of Providence Vice-Province in the Philippines joined with 99 sisters from Mother Joseph Province to participate in a congregational retreat in Spokane in June. Another 44 sisters were prayer participants.

Together, they engaged in contemplation of who Sisters of Providence are today in light of the 2007 General Chapter Orientations and entered into dialogue in a communal listening to the Holy Spirit. Through group reflection and sharing, including a separate

group for the sisters from the vice province, participants explored how to live out their charism and common mission within their own province realities.

Sister Nancy Sylvester, IHM, trained facilitators for the retreat, at which General Councilors Elizabeth Kaczmarczyk, SP, and Alba Letelier, SP, also participated.

The presence of the sisters from Our Lady of Providence Vice-Province was a special grace for us; there was a feeling of belonging and solidarity with each other. In the opening session, with 111 of us in one big circle facing each other, no one could deny that we are an intergenerational, international and multicultural congregation.

Provincial Chapter: giving many voices equal voice

Amid the Leadership Team reports, the table discussions and the family reunion atmosphere of the Provincial Chapter in Renton, Wash., in August was a wonderful celebration of cultures. It built upon the earlier much-talked-about Multicultural Integration Workshop conducted by Father Anthony Gittins, CSSp. Each day focused on a culture (with Monday for the USA, Tuesday for El Salvador, Wednesday for the Philippines and Thursday for Vietnam), with sharing led by sisters in the traditional dress of their homelands, and a lunch buffet that included traditional cuisine.



SPs act in a world in evolution

In a world that is crying out for peace, justice, nonviolence and compassion, Sisters of Providence in Mother Joseph Province are responding with education, advocacy and direct action as we live out our General Chapter directions. Providence Associates mirror our concerns and our engagement as they focus on Providence spirituality and creation spirituality.

Mother Joseph Province formally endorsed the Earth Charter back in 2006. In 2009 we affirmed water as a basic human right. This life-giving resource is in extremely limited supply. The Reclaiming Earth Committee has assembled and shared a resource binder full of vital and useful information on the importance of water.

Our sisters also are actively bringing the growing problem of human trafficking squarely into the public eye through a monthly prayer vigil and a bus sign campaign which took place in both Seattle and Tacoma, Wash. Sister Charlene Hudon keeps us aware of developments on this and other social justice issues through alerts, calls to action and updates sent via broadcast email. Sisters and associates faithfully respond, signing letters circulated on both sides of the mountains by Sisters Sue Orlowski and Joan Campbell, making contacts, and participating in an annual visit with legislators in the Washington State capitol in Olympia.

We seek opportunities to enhance our understanding. The basis of all our attention and activities is our charism to meet the needs of the poor and the vulnerable. The sisters' local community alms funds offer opportunities to research those needs where they are and to act to make a difference.

International Experience: sisters in initial formation visit

Since late September, the sisters of Mother Joseph Province have been thrilled to open their arms and hearts to two sisters in initial formation from Haiti and from Cameroon. The first to arrive was Sister Mirlande Desire, from Haiti, followed by Sister Hortense Demia Mbailaou, from Cameroon. They are spending several months in the province as

part of an international experience for sisters in initial formation who have not yet experienced an international/cross-border cultural immersion.

Sister Mirlande is in her first year of temporary profession and was in pastoral ministry and catechetics before the earthquake in Haiti last January. Sister Hortense, second-year professed, concluded her BA studies in philosophy in June at the University of Central Africa.

Two other sisters in initial formation from Chile, Marcia Gatica and Marisol Avila, will arrive in the province in December for a similar visit. Sister Marcia is in her fourth year of profession and is studying psychology while teaching and serving as a campus minister at Colegio Sagrados Corazones in La Serena. Sister Marisol, also fourth-year professed, is in pastoral ministry in Comodora Rivadavia in Argentina.

The length of stay for the temporary vowed sisters will be from three to six months, depending upon their individual visas.

The invitations to visit came out of plans for the three-month international formation program for temporary vowed sisters that will begin in Montreal in April 2011. Our province's visitors have an opportunity to share their cultures with us as we share our lives with them.

International sisters in initial formation visit Washington. Pictured below are (left) Sr. Mirlande Desire, of Haiti, and Sr. Hortense Demia Mbailaou, of Cameroon.



A place to honor her 90 years

In June, more than 70 women traveled from Illinois, Michigan, Puerto Rico, Ohio, Florida, North Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, New Jersey, Maryland, West Virginia, and California to honor Sister Genevieve Brandstetter. The occasion was two-fold: commemorating Sister Gen's milestone 90th birthday (December 14, 2009) and reuniting a group of women who initially knew her as postulants during their first year of religious life. The women wanted to show their appreciation for a woman who nurtured them and had a memorable impact on their lives. To celebrate Sister Gen, the women contributed to the purchase of a granite bench engraved with the words: Honoring Sr. Genevieve Brandstetter - You have touched our lives and remain an inspiration! Your postulants 1958-1968.

Congratulations special women

Within the Annual Assembly this year, two women were recognized for their lives of witness to God's Providence. Sister Doris Kretzler, co-director of the Pittsburgh motherhouse at Providence Heights, was presented with the Marie de la Roche Award, named for co-founder Mother Marie de la Roche and presented annually to a sister in internal ministry. The recipient is one who best exemplifies the spirit and virtues of the co-founder of the Sisters of Divine Providence, a spirit of contemplation combined with action, humility, gentleness and simplicity in the midst of demanding duties, deep faith and total openness in acceptance of the will of God, and trust in Divine Providence.

Linda Hoefflin received the Providence Award, presented to an Associate of the Community who, through his or her life and ministry makes Providence visible in the world. The Providence Award recipient manifests trust in Providence spirituality, lives with a spirit of joy, hospitality and

hopefulness, and demonstrates justice and compassion to others. Linda is a nurse working at the Cardinal Glennon Hospital in St. Louis. Linda exhibits the living out of justice by her willingness to travel to different countries to serve the poor. She has worked in the Philippines,



China, Puerto Rico, and worked among those who are poor in Puerto Rico for six months. She recently returned from China where she volunteered with Doctors without Borders. Linda does all this work at her own expense and uses her vacation time to help those less fortunate.

Top: Sister Genevieve poses on the engraved bench purchased in her honor by her former postulants.

Above left: Provincial Director Sister Mary Francis Fletcher presents the Marie de la Roche Award to Sister Doris Kretzler.

Above right: Associate Director Ellen Lavender (right) is pleased to present Linda Hoefflin with this year's Providence Award.

More news from Allison Park on next page

Welcome, Karina!

Below: From left: Sister Paulita Kuzy, Karina, Sisters Veronica Gumja Kim, Elena Almandaréz, Patty Baker and Carole Riley



Pre-Novitiate Candidate Karina Conrad was formally welcomed into the Community at an entrance ceremony on August 2, during Assembly. Sisters Patricia Baker, Veronica Gumja Kim, and Paulita Kuzy, have graciously welcomed Karina to join their local community. Her mentor will be Sister Donna Tracy. We give thanks

Mission Seminar in Korea

Last year at the General Leadership Board meetings in October, Sisters Barbara McMullen and Augustina Seo, provincial of the Korean province, met and were talking about some of the things in which they were involved in addition to their council work. One of the things Sister Barbara mentioned was her responsibility for mission integration; the orientation sessions she did for employees of La Roche College, of the Sisters of Divine Providence, staff at Room at the Inn, and members in initial incorporation. At that time, she learned that each year the Korean community chooses a theme, and this year's theme was Mission. So there was a conversation about the possibility of Sister Barbara doing some mission presentations for the Sisters in Korea. Sister Augustina returned to Korea and spoke with her council about this idea,



Above: Sisters visit the Buddhist Temple of Woljeong, the first temple in Korea, built in 643 A.D. Left to right: Augustina Seo Soonyonim (provincial of the Korean province), Ann Pairn, Barbara McMullen, Lisa Paffrath, and Hanna Park Soonyonim

to our Provident God for Karina and all the Sisters who have been and will be directly involved in her initial community experiences, especially Sister Carole Riley, who introduced Karina to the Community.

and soon the invitation came, dates were selected, and emails across the ocean began. Sisters Ann Pairn and Lisa Paffrath accompanied Sister Barbara and shared in some of the presentations.

First a saint, now the queen of spades

The oil painting photo of Saint Mother Theodore Guerin, foundress of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind., now has a place of honor in a deck of cards!

The Vigo County Historical Society contacted General Superior Sister Denise Wilkinson

concerning this fundraising project highlighting local historical personages from the Wabash Valley. Since the prime cards in the deck, the Aces, were already spoken for, the face cards were offered and the Queen of Spades chosen (see photo at left).



over a year now. Most staff members spend a minimum of 5-10 hours per week using Facebook, Twitter, several blogs, Flickr and YouTube sites to engage various audiences for vocations, educational purposes and fundraising/donations. Rosie Blankenship, website manager, and Christina Blust, photography coordinator/graphic designer, were presenters at the NCNWR conference in Denver, Colo. The Sisters of Providence efforts were chosen based on the criteria of originality, impact on target, and quality of product and process.

Providence Pavers program

The Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods recently began a new program designed to share a bit of the acreage at the Sisters of Providence motherhouse with family, friends and visitors.

People can purchase a brick paver with their tax-deductible gift, which can then be engraved with a name, the name of a loved one or a special message. These pavers are now included in the landscape around the Our Lady of Campus status and the fountain at the end of the Avenue, two places known to be particularly meaningful to people.

Various-sized bricks are available and are a wonderful way to memorialize or honor a loved one, remember a favorite Sister of Providence or celebrate a special occasion. Individuals memorialized or honored on a paver are also enrolled in the Blessed Sacrament Association and are prayed for daily in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

To date, 284 pavers have been sold and additional pavers are being requested weekly. The first pavers have been engraved and are in place around the Our Lady of Campus Statue and the fountain at the end of The Avenue. Donations for Providence Pavers are accepted anytime and are tax deductible. For more information, contact Ruth Hallam at (812) 535-2806 or at rhalham@spsmw.org. Pavers can be ordered online as well at www.spsmw.org

Communicators share strategy

The National Communicators Network for Women Religious (NCNWR) chose the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods communication team from the Office of Congregational Advancement (OCA) as a presenter for the Best Practices session at its annual conference held Sept. 21-24. Diane Weidenbenner, director of marketing and communications, and her staff have been working on a social media campaign for





At left Sister Jane Ann Slater speaks at the opening of the new social services school at Our Lady of the Lake University. At right Steve Saldaña, presented a Centennial Medal from National Catholic Charities to the school.

CONGREGATION OF THE SISTERS OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

New school of social service dedicated

At the Oct. 1 opening of the Worden School of Social Service at Our Lady of the Lake (OLL) University, a picture of Sister Immaculate Gentemann, CDP was unveiled and dedicated.

Archbishop Robert E. Lucey of San Antonio had encouraged Catholic Colleges in the area to open a school of social work as there was not one in Texas or anywhere west of the Mississippi River. Mother Angelique Ayres, Superior General of the Texas Sisters of Divine Providence, committed to this project immediately, leading to its completion Oct. 1. The Worden School is located on the first floor of the Science Building at Our Lady of the Lake College.

The date was also 68th anniversary of the school's opening. In recognition Mr. Steve Saldaña, Director of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, presented a Centennial Medal from National Catholic

Charities to the Worden School in recognition of its historical and ongoing commitment to community service in the area of social work. Mr. Will Rainford, Director of the Worden School accepted the award.

Although Sister Immaculate was not the first Dean of the School, she began to teach there in 1945 while at the same time serving as Director of the Madonna Neighborhood Center on San Antonio's West Side. Sister Immaculate said that even though her two "part time" ministries added up to much more than one full-time ministry, she was happy to have the opportunity to put the social work theory she taught in the classroom into practice at Madonna Center. She became the Dean of the Worden School in 1959 and served in that position for 10 years. During her tenure as Dean, Sister Immaculate oversaw the building of the present facility in which the school is now located.



Sister Immaculate Gentemann did everything she could to support students in their quest for higher education. She was a woman who got things done. She led by example and was at the front line of events on the OLL University campus.

The Worden School's first students with the picture of Sister Immaculate Gentemann.

Yoga aids in fullness of life

by Katrina Geenevasen
(originally published in the
Napanee Guide)

Fullness of life is one reason to begin a routine of yoga and massage, says Sister Marie Dundon.

"Yoga helps to better integrate the mind, body and spirit, which aids in a deeper sense of responsibility towards maintaining health and well-being," says Dundon.

A Sister of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul for the past 56 years, Dundon says her congregation focuses on compassionate services in response to the needs of the times. Each sister has an area of expertise, which can vary from nursing to teaching.

Dundon is currently looking forward to celebrating her Diamond Jubilee in three years.

"I teach piano, theory and vocal classes, but decided in recent years to teach less music and focus more on health modalities. I have a strong appreciation of the benefits of healthy body work, and maintaining a sense of well-being. I've been a certified teacher of music since 1956, so I knew through my teaching abilities that I could help others," said Dundon.

With this goal, she became a registered member of the

Natural Health Practitioners of Canada, and continues to immerse herself in on-going education courses.

"It's important to learn something, and keep up with it," says Dundon.

Yoga is consistently praised for its various health benefits because of its restorative qualities.

"Yoga is considered a movement and meditation which can help in deeper awareness and meditation," says Dundon.

This summer, Dundon is beginning to teach mini-sessions on chakra yoga and workshops related to well-being.

Chakra yoga is when energies of the body are unified to create peace of mind and ultimate health. It stems from the more well-known practice of Hatha yoga.

"I consider this the foundation for various kinds of yoga, such as yoga for emotional well-being and restorative yoga," says Dundon.

Chakra yoga focuses mainly on emotions.

"Chakra yoga is more deeply involved within the emotional realm. If people are able to balance all their systems, they can benefit. Even a little practice of yoga can aid in fullness of life. And you've got to live fully," said Dundon.

Aside from yoga lessons, Dundon also practices Thai massage therapy.

"Throughout the time of the massage, a unifying effect of energy and relaxation is usually achieved."



Sister Marie Dundon, above, teaches yoga to help others achieve meditation, relaxation and fullness of life.





Dundon teaches regular classes for men and women, but also leads pre-natal classes, Mom and Tot classes, and sessions for older adults and prisoners.

She has been a regular teacher at Bath Institute for the past eight years involved in a program called "Freeing the Human Spirit.

"The prisoners' response is amazing," says Dundon.

Dundon also hosts regular yoga classes at the new 55 Plus Seniors Centre in Napanee with a meditation session following .

Poetry project

(story and photo by Christine Ross)

The idea for a poetry book was born two years ago

after a casual conversation between Sisters Pauline Lally and Anna Moran.

Sister Anna Moran only turned to writing poetry long after retiring from a teaching career that spanned five decades. She believes her poetry has become more of a passion than a hobby.

Her desire to publish some of her poems prompted a call to all members of the congregation, inviting them to submit poetry. Seven Sisters responded and the resulting book, *According to Your Word*, was published.

The book was launched during a special gathering prior to pre-Chapter on Sunday, August 22.

The seven Sister poets read and offered reflections on their writings.

The seven sisters pictured above collaborated in the creation of a poetry book "According to Your Word" out this past August. From left to right they are: Sisters Kay Morrell, Pauline Lally, Mary Bernadette, Catherine Casey, Jeannette Filthaut, Anna Moran and Peggy Flanagan.

Together we are heard



Members from Women of Providence in Collaboration congregations join with other women religious at the Leadership Conference for Women Religious in Dallas this past August. In the photo above, the group demonstrates against the death penalty.

WPC Calendar of Events

March 2-6, 2011 Vocations/Formation/Leadership in San Antonio, Texas.

March 28-29, 2011 Governing Board meets in Allison Park, Pa.

May 10-11, 2011 Providence Event Core Team meets, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind.

Sept. 13-15, 2011 Associate Directors and Leaders meet in Allison Park, Pa.

March 14-18, 2012 Vocations/Formation/Leadership at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind.

March 27-29, 2012 Governing Board meets in Westfield, Mass.

June 12-14, 18, 2012 Initial Formation Gathering, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind.

June 15-17, 2012 Providence Event: Providence and Mystics (new name to come).

COLLABORATION

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