

LIVING PROVIDENCE

The Newsletter for Sisters, Associates and Supporters of the Congregation of Divine Providence

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"In the Church, no one is left out or left over. There is room for everyone. Just the way we are. Everyone."
Pope Francis



Sister Frances Lorene Lange, CDP, receives ashes from Sister Jane Ann Slater, CDP, on Ash Wednesday, February 14, 2024

A Letter from the Desk of the Superior General

Responding to God's Call



Dear Sisters, Associates, and Partners in Ministry,

Reading through these pages, this edition of “Living Providence” newsletter encapsulates not just the events or moments that have unfolded but the deep, resonant spirit, values and virtues of our Congregation. As we step into this time of reflection, celebration, and forward movement, I invite each of you to delve into these pages with open hearts and minds. Let the Holy Spirit keep inspiring you too to live and celebrate Providence in your lives.

Within these articles, you will find stories of our Sisters embodying the spirit of Divine Providence through relationships, collaboration, tradition, service, and the unwavering commitment to the communities we serve. From marking a significant milestone with the centennial of the Sacred Heart Conventual Chapel to embracing the rich traditions of Lent, All Saints Day, and All Souls Day, we continue to weave our legacy with the threads of faith, hope, and love.

This edition serves not only as a reminder of where we have been but also as a flame illuminating our path forward. It reflects our shared journey—a journey characterized by the wisdom to understand our heritage, the courage to embrace change, and the unwavering belief in the guidance of Providence.

As we turn each page, let us remember the lessons of the past, cherish the present moments of connection and service, and look forward with hope to the opportunities that lie ahead. May this newsletter be a source of inspiration, a moment of contemplation, and a call to action as we continue to live out our mission in service to God and each other.

In Divine Providence,

Sister Rose Kruppa, CDP

Sister Rose Kruppa, CDP
Superior General

Embracing the Flame of Providence

The Sisters of Divine Providence carry within themselves the flame of Providence. This flame is a guiding light to be the loving face of God, illuminating the charism of Providence into their daily lives. Providence is not a distant concept but “an ongoing, evolving gift from God.” (CDP Constitution) It is seen as God’s act of continuing creation, drawing all things in love to their Creator. They are confident that the movements of history and their personal journeys are under the loving guidance of God.

Their embrace of Providence translates into a life of active engagement with the world. This service is their way of participating in God’s creative redemption. They believe that God works in and through them, to co-create a world that reflects the glory of God.

Their daily lives thus become a living testimony to their faith in Providence. Whether in prayer, in community, or in service, they embody the belief that they are part of

something greater – a divine plan that they actively help to unfold. In embracing the flame of Providence, they commit to being more than just witnesses to God’s love; they become bearers of that love, channels through which it flows into the Congregation and communities they serve. The flame of Providence is a beacon for all they encounter. In embracing Providence with abandon, they invite others to experience this same joy and unbounded trust.

The Sisters’ commitment to community is a radiant aspect of their mission. In community meetings, shared celebrations, and mutual support during trials, the flame of Providence shines brightly. It’s within this community that the charism becomes tangible, as they witness Providence bringing people together with just the right gifts at the right moments.

The following quotes are from Sisters responding to questions about Providence, like “How do you define Providence in your own words?”

“God’s gentle AND powerful loving, tender care for all God’s creation tailored to each one’s uniqueness while also strengthening its interconnectedness.”

“I have to acknowledge to God my fears and doubts and then place my trust in God’s abundant blessings to help make my efforts fruitful, for the sake of others.”

“I sometimes experience community members, colleagues, students, etc. whom I found to be difficult to work with. In circumstances like this, I discovered that if I really trusted that out of all the people in the world, Providence brought these very individuals into my life, when they did, for a purpose, my attitude improved greatly.”

“God brings all things to good.”

“It is because we know God’s abundance, that we trust in that Providence with abandon --- without limit.”



Listening with Open Hearts

CDP in Action

The Sisters of Divine Providence live out a mission of "Listening with Open Hearts." With empathy, attentive presence, and a profound spirituality, 'listening' extends into every facet of their ministry and life.

At a dinner hosted by Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller, M.Sp.S., the CDP Leadership team gathered with members of the archdiocese, their hearts open. They were fully present and attentive to the narratives within the diocese, echoing their commitment to understanding and supporting the spiritual leaders and faithful of the community.

The Sisters' active engagement was further exemplified at a COPS/Metro meeting at St. Margaret Mary's. The event symbolized their dedication to social justice—standing in solidarity with community members to champion the "Ready to Work" initiative. This program, promising new job opportunities, reflects the Sisters' responsiveness to community needs and their role in facilitating meaningful dialogue with city stakeholders to uphold the dignity and potential of every individual.

Their embodiment of "Listening with Open Hearts" shone brightly during the Interfaith Hanukkah Celebration at San Fernando. In a beautiful display of interfaith harmony, the Sisters joined with people of different faiths to light the menorah, a testament to their openness to diverse perspectives and traditions. The Providence Catholic School choir singing Hanukkah songs was a reminder of the Sisters' extraordinary music history and the uniting power of music.

Delegates from the Congregation networked with community organizers and influencers at the Project Quest award ceremony, they

recognized and celebrated the communities collective efforts to enhance the lives of San Antonians. This event was not just about acknowledging achievements but also about renewing their commitment to the work that lies ahead.

Perhaps one of the most heartwarming examples of listening was during a game of Bingo with Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU) campus ministry and students.

In the simple joy of this shared experience,

the



Sisters exemplified the delight of Providence—connecting across generations, sharing laughter and companionship, and fostering a sense of community that radiates the love and care of a Provident God.

The Sisters of Divine Providence extend their empathetic engagement beyond local concerns to the complexities of international conflicts. Their presence at a prayer service for peace in Gaza was a poignant embodiment of their commitment to global compassion. In a world often torn by strife,

their prayers for peace rise, in hope for reconciliation and healing in regions fraught with turmoil.

Moreover, their quest for understanding and solidarity led them to attend a lecture hosted by Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU) on the intricate history of Gaza. This educational pursuit, fueled by a desire to deepen their insight into the roots of conflict, further exemplifies their dedication to informed action and dialogue. By

educating themselves on historical and cultural contexts,

the Sisters are better equipped to stand in solidarity with those suffering from afar and to bring informed prayer and advocacy.

Their actions underscore the belief that every prayer uttered, every note of harmony sung, and every effort toward understanding is a step closer to a world embraced by the Providential love they so fervently embody.

In every one of these events, the Sisters of Divine Providence demonstrate that listening with open hearts is an active, vibrant, and transformative practice. It is a listening that leads to action—be it in the quiet solidarity of a prayer or the vigorous advocacy for justice. It leads to an opportunity to experience the profound love and trust in the Providence that guides us all.



COLLABORATING FOR CHANGE

A Path of Compassion and Impact

The Sisters weave their charism of Providence into the fabric of their work, their actions transcend conventional boundaries, offering a blueprint for how faith and collaboration can spearhead transformative change. The Sisters' journey of collaborative efforts address urgent societal needs and foster a future brimming with compassion, equity, and collective well-being.

In a poignant example of solidarity, the Sisters participated in the Memorial to the Lost. This event, a somber reflection on gun violence, showcased their empathetic approach to societal woes and their commitment to work for change in laws. By standing with those affected by such tragedies, the Sisters not only acknowledge the pain but also foster a sense of communal healing and awareness. Their presence at this memorial goes beyond participation; it's an act of bearing witness to the grief and advocating for a safer, more compassionate society.



The Sisters' efforts extend deeply into nurturing life-giving communities, particularly on San Antonio's West Side, as highlighted in their Chapter Statement. This commitment manifests in various initiatives that directly impact the local community. The Madonna Center Gala and the Kitchen Ribbon Cutting, for instance, are not just events but pillars of support combating food insecurity and enhancing community health. The Sisters' involvement in these projects, both as sponsors and board members, exemplifies their dedication to creating sustainable solutions for community needs.



Moreover, the distribution of "Snack-Sacks" under the Commerce Street bridge, in collaboration with ACDPs and various community partners, demonstrates their hands-on approach to addressing immediate needs.

These snack sacks, accompanied by handwritten notes from the Sisters, are more than just meals—they are messages of hope and solidarity to those facing hardships.

The Calle 24 Mercado at Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU), with its vibrant mix of art, craft, food, and cultural celebration, further exemplifies their engagement with the community. By supporting these events, the Sisters and their associates help in preserving cultural heritage and promoting local artisans, thus fostering a sense of community pride and togetherness.

In all these collaborations, the impact of the Sisters of Divine Providence extends beyond the tangible outcomes of their initiatives. They create spaces where empathy, solidarity, and a deep respect for the dignity of every individual flourish.

By standing with the vulnerable, they address the immediate need and challenge societal norms and inspire others to take action for broader change.



Their approach to collaboration is deeply infused with their charism of Providence—seeing and responding to the needs of the world with faith, hope, and an unyielding belief in the goodness of creation. In doing so, they set a powerful example of how to be catalysts for positive change, embracing and shaping the future with courage and compassion.

As the Sisters of Divine Providence continue their journey of collaboration, they light a path for others to follow—a path marked by love, service, and commitment to a just and sustainable world.

HERITAGE AND HISTORY

A Century of Faith and Celebration

A Centennial Celebration and a Legacy of Faith

As OLLU and the Sisters of Divine Providence marked the 100th anniversary of Sacred Heart Conventual Chapel, it was more than a commemoration of a historic structure; it was a celebration of a century-long journey of faith, service, and community.

When Mother Florence first obtained the land for Our Lady of the Lake Academy, in 1895, she envisioned a large Chapel with two spires reaching into the blue Texas sky. It took 28 years with great effort and numerous sacrifices before the Chapel became a reality.

This centennial celebration resonated deeply, exemplifying the Sisters' enduring commitment to their mission and the communities they serve. Its spire, say students and some civic leaders who call the West Side home, continues to be a symbol of hope for them. It is also a witness to the continued presence of the Congregation of Divine Providence and Our Lady of the Lake University on San Antonio's West Side, a beacon of hope and resilience.

Embracing Tradition with Joy and Remembrance

The Sisters' celebration of a triduum of traditions – Halloween, All Saints Day, and All Souls Day – further underscores their heritage. These festivities, brimming with joy, remembrance, and communal spirit, reflect the Sisters' connection to the traditions of their broader community. The vibrant costumes and spirited camaraderie during Halloween, the homage to sanctified lives on All Saints Day, and the poignant remembrance of departed souls on All Souls Day and Dia de los Muertos, all highlight the Sisters' profound respect for life in all its stages and facets.

A Living Fabric Woven from the Past

The most touching aspect of these celebrations was the procession and ritual at the CDP cemetery. The Sisters prayed the rosary and blessed the graves of those who came before them. It was a powerful reminder of the enduring legacy they uphold. Each headstone marks a lifetime of service and continues to inspire and guide the community. This ritual was not about remembering the past but about recognizing how the legacy of those departed continues to weave into the living fabric of the Sisters' mission today.

Impact Beyond a Century

The impact of these celebrations and remembrances goes beyond mere acknowledgment of history. They serve as a reaffirmation of the Sisters' commitment to their journey of life, faith, and service. These reinforce the Sisters' ongoing presence as a visible sign of God's Providence. Through these events, the Sisters recommit to a path laid by generations before them, guided by the same spirit of Providence, compassion, and communal harmony.

In essence, the Sisters of Divine Providence, through their celebration of heritage and history, continue to illuminate the path for future generations. Their actions remind us that while they honor and learn from the past, they remain firmly rooted in the present and committed to co-creating a future filled with love and hope.



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Celebrating our CDP Jubilarians

We rejoice with our Sisters celebrating a Jubilee and commemorate their combined 565 years of devoted service as Sisters of Divine Providence.

80 Years

Sister Mary Ann Phillipp

75 Years

Sister Jule Adele Espey
Sister Bernadette Phillipp

70 Years

Sister Mary Laverne Mettlach

60 Years

Sister Pearl Ceasar
Sister Barbara Lynn Hyzak
Sister Agnes Mary Klar
Hermana Estela Guadalupe Tovar

25 Years

Hermana María Guadalupe Valle Herrera