



Providence  
Associates



*Dear Providence Associates*

*Y*our love Lord, reaches to the heavens your  
faithfulness to the skies. (Psalm 36:6)

One day, I asked Elizabeth (not her real name) why she had chosen to offer her services for many years in the place that offers second hand and cheap materials to immigrants. Her response was very moving. "Many years ago, I came to this country as a young immigrant. Those early years were very difficult. A lot of people generously helped me and I felt the warmth of the country's welcome. Now, I have adjusted and I have the means to sustain my family's needs. My working here is my way of giving back. A way that the new



## *... continuation of the letter*

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foreign arrivals in need may experience the same welcome that I did." My heart exclaimed: This is generosity received and generosity flowing forward! I always see Elizabeth very attentive, engaging and respectful to all, especially the immigrants who come.

This conversation with Elizabeth led me to realize that:

GRATITUDE reaches its full meaning when the receiver is moved in freedom to give back.

GRATITUDE enables the blossoming of connectedness and of life.

GRATITUDE is an appreciation of life and the happiness with others in the web of life and love.

### *My invitation :*

Every moment,

Be grateful as you rise every morning from your comfortable bed and consider the millions of families living in tents and who are separated or displaced because of violence and war.

Be grateful as you drink and consider the 2.1 billion people who do not have safe drinking water. As well, consider those, who because of greed, have made water as an expensive commodity.

Be grateful as you see a beautiful flower or a scenery and consider those who are endangered because their habitat are contaminated with hazardous substances.

Be grateful as you slice and cook produce of the soil and consider the future when seeds will no longer be used to

regrow produce because of genetic modifications controlled by big, international companies.

Be grateful each time you eat and consider those who labored hard to produce and gather it. Most are unjustly compensated.

Be grateful as you open your purse and consider those who have to sell their body organs to provide the basic needs of their families.

There is much to be grateful for...

Pope Francis mentioned: "Often we take everything for granted! This also happens with God. It is easy to approach the Lord to ask for something, but to return and give thanks..."<sup>1</sup> This is why Jesus so emphasizes the failure of the nine ungrateful lepers: "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was no one found to return and to give praise to God except this foreigner?" (Lk 17:17-18)

May our Provident God help us recognize that everything is God's gift and to be able to say, "Thank you."



Thank you very much for these past five years.

1. Pope Francis, "Homily" Holy Mass for the Marian Day on the Occasion of the Year of Faith, Sunday, 13 October 2013. [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2013/documents/papa-francesco\\_20131013\\_omelia-giornata-mariana.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2013/documents/papa-francesco_20131013_omelia-giornata-mariana.html)

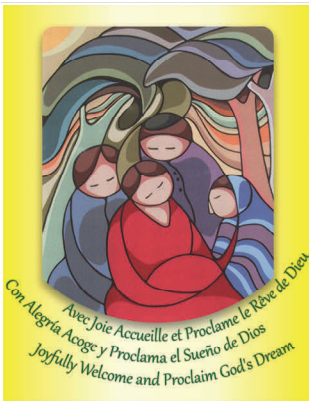
*Josie Levios, SP*

PA General Coordinator

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## Providence Family



### **GENERAL CHAPTER Sisters of Providence Motherhouse, Montreal, July 9-30, 2017**

Every five years, the Sisters of Providence of several countries meet for their General Chapter, a three-week meeting which purpose is to determine the Congregation's orientations for the next five years.

July 9-30, 2017, nearly a hundred sisters working in Canada, United States, El Salvador, Philippines, Chile, Haiti and Egypt gathered in Montreal, Quebec. They were to reflect about a host of important issues ranging



Sisters Karin, Rollande, Hortense, Nancy et Josie form the new General Leadership Team of the Sisters of Providence.

from a new model of governance, to changes to the Constitutions and Rules of the Congregation and not to forget the election of the new General Leadership Team that will serve until 2022. This new team consists of Sister Karin Dufault, General Superior for a second term, Sisters Josie Lerios, Rollande Malo and Linda Jo Reynolds, re-elected as General Councillors, and Sisters Nancy Arévalo and Hortense Demia-Mbailaou, both newly elected as General Councillors.

Under the theme “Joyfully Welcome and Proclaim God’s Dream”, the participating sisters repeatedly pointed out that they worked intensely, but in good spirits. Facilitators Mary Harrington, S USC and Gabrielle Stuart, RSM formed different groups for work and for faith sharing. This helped the Chapter members to get to know sisters from other countries, other cultures. As a result of this mingling, the participants expressed they feel they better understand the Congregation’s reality and challenges. Several Chapter members noted that at the end of the Chapter, they had developed a stronger sense of belonging to the Congregation as a whole; others Chapter members spoke of an invitation to be more generous in their response to differences. All sought to connect in a common quest to make possible God’s dream for the Congregation and the world.

The 2017 General Chapter Orientations are guidelines that will serve as reference points for the Sisters of Providence during the five years to come. We invite you to read them so you may have a better understanding of the choices of the Congregation which were inspired and guided by God’s will. <http://providenceintl.org/en/2017-general-chapter-orientations/>

### MY FIRST GENERAL CHAPTER



*Sister Eugena Nogaüs is a young Sister of Providence from the Pearl of the Antilles, Haiti. She shares with us her impressions of the 2017 General Chapter.*

From July 9 through 30 of the current year, at the invitation of the General Leadership Team,

I participated in the thirtieth General Chapter of the Community which had the theme: "Joyfully Welcome and Proclaim God's Dream". It was a great experience for a young sister like me. I had the honour to work alongside wonderful women on the Liturgy Committee and I learned a lot from them.

A lot of things struck me during this Chapter. It was not only a Chapter of Elections; we also worked on our Constitutions, our bedside book. Indeed, this experience allowed me to understand better what the consecrated life in community is. I marvel at the greatness of heart of each Sister of Providence, and especially of those of a certain age. They are inspired and inspiring women, very open to the signs of the times, and who do not focus on themselves. What compels me to write like this is the fact that I witnessed how the sisters are concerned about the future of the Congregation; they even plan for when they will be gone (I write this sentence with tears in the eyes, they come from the bottom of my heart). They are not only giving us a community which has enough to live on, but rather a whole heritage to maintain. It's a big challenge for me who follows them as a young Sister of Providence.

During this Chapter, I could taste and experience what is called personal and communal discernment. Moreover, the emphasis given to it made this Chapter special. It was my first, I can't compare with others. All I can say is that the Holy Spirit did not miss a day of the Chapter. The Spirit let us feel its presence at every moment: through the facilitators, Father Morrissey, the intervention and action of each participant, the unanimous votes, the choice of the members of the new General Leadership Team, etc.

How could we not magnify God who continues to do wonders in our Congregation through our sisters? Being the youngest professed sister of the community, I felt I was part of everything

that happened during the Chapter. The other sisters regarded me as a full sister, despite the short time spent in the community, and this struck me.

At the very beginning, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we gave ourselves values in order to experience better the Chapter, and they did not remain words only, many can bear witness of this. From this experience, we realized that it is good to identify the values we want to live from day to day as consecrated persons and as Sisters of Providence.

After this experience, I returned to my local community with some knowledge that will help me in my journey, aiming at giving a good testimony, worthy of a consecrated person and a Sister of Providence who lives with others. I also returned with a determination to continue to work and collaborate so that Providence is better known to all and so that the Community may live while welcoming and proclaiming God's dreams.

Providence of God, I love you with all my heart.

Providence of God, I thank you for all.





## CELEBRATION FOR THE 164<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE PRESENCE OF THE SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE IN CHILE AND PROVIDENCE ASSOCIATES' COMMITMENT RENEWAL - BERNARDA MORIN PROVINCE



In the presence of students, representatives, teachers, auxiliary and administration staff, the community of Colegio Providencia of Ovalle celebrated one more year of existence with a Mass presided by the Archbishop of La Serena René Rebolledo. All the attendees prayed in thanksgiving for the fruit that has been harvested in the Limarí Province since 1906 and in Chile since 1856.

At dawn on the 17th of June, 1853, a missionary expedition composed of five Sisters of Providence, among who was a young Canadian named Bernarda Morin, disembarked at the port of Valparaíso, Chile. The small sailboat "Elena" had left San Francisco, California, eighty-two troubled days earlier. This was the beginning of the apostolic activity of the Sisters of Providence in Chile, who in 1906 would extend their ministries north into the Limarí area with a work that is still active today.



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It is the reason why last June 8 a Mass was celebrated by Archbishop René Rebolledo in company of various priests: Father Juan Carlos Godoy, school chaplain, Father Jorge Arancibia, religion teacher at the same school, Father Raúl Marchant, local parish priest, and Father Rafael Rojas, parish priest of San Francisco de Borja, in the town of Combarbalá.



During the presentation of the gifts, the students took to the altar a few objects representing their educational institute and the pastoral work in which they are engaged. For example, the candle, presented the Risen Christ in our Church and the “P” of Providence identified them as a family serving the Church and society. Others brought nonperishables to help families in need and a book about the History of the Congregation in Chile, in which one can read about the countless sisters who bore witness of God’s tenderness for the defenseless, abandoned children, the elderly and many more who needed help. Last, they offered the bread and the wine, those gifts from earth and human work.

After the Eucharist, Sister Rebeca Malhue, Provincial Councillor of the Sisters of Providence in Chile, expressed her joy for the important work that has been performed over the years. “It is a year to give thanks to Mother Bernarda who, being nineteen, moved away from her family and country to bring the great seed of faith to sow in Chile, where the Lord had prepared everything so that Providence could be born. We carry out our ministries in various works, not all of them are in the area of education, even if it is a very important one. The Congregation also serves in social work, helping children living in difficult conditions, and we must

not forget that we also minister with the elderly. That is why I firmly believe in following the right path, the path of work and love of God," she emphasized.

Father Juan Carlos Godoy, for his part, mentioned: "The most important is to continue with what has been carried out, such as accompanying the most vulnerable, the families and the college staff. Currently there is a strong spiritual work being done and this is the first characteristic of a Catholic entity."

**New lay PA for the community:**

During the celebration, the lay members of the family, the Providence Associates, renewed their commitments for another two years, committing to live the mission that unite them in Christ and the spirituality and charism that characterize them in order to help those who in need. On the same occasion, five more new members joined the group, strengthening the movement and the presence of Providence in the Limarí community.

Sources: Communications La Serena



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING -- AUGUST 26-27, 2017**  
**PROVIDENCE ASSOCIATES OF**  
**MOTHER JOSEPH PROVINCE**



The annual PA Board of Directors' meeting on August 26-27, 2017, was held in Renton, Washington, at the Chuck Hawley Conference Center. The theme was "Community in Service." There were 25 participants including the liaison sisters for each region.

Margaret Bauer, executive secretary of the association, facilitated the meeting in the absence of Kathe Boucha, executive director due to health issues. Laurie Tanita, executive treasurer, took the minutes. The group started the first day reflecting on certain words related to community service (teamwork, sharing, togetherness, generosity, respect, caring, etc. . .). It was an opportunity for an in-depth sharing, followed by the regional representatives' reports. There was a feeling of better connection among the participants after the days' sharing.

The presentation for the day was "African Solidarity in Action" in Cameroon, given by Marie-Thérèse Gnamazo. It was a very moving experience. On the second day, Sunday, Sister Virginia ➡

## *Continuation of the News...*

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Miller was invited to do Communion Service and the Memorial for the deceased members that followed.

It was announced that Geri Ann Johnson, PA, who is the province liaison, will be moving to Georgia and connecting with the region there. She will be missed in Seattle, but will continue to be the province liaison.

At the end of the meeting, associates from different religious congregations of the Greater Seattle area were invited, for the first time, to join the Providence Associates of Mother Joseph for afternoon tea. There were about 12 who responded, including associates from Sisters of the Holy Names, St. Joseph of Peace, Franciscans of Philadelphia, and Tacoma Dominicans. They enjoyed sharing their personal experiences together and getting to know one another. The visit was a great success. They decided that they would like to get together next year again.

*Communications*, Mother Joseph Province  
AUGUST 2017

**WOMEN OF PROVIDENCE IN COLLABORATION  
ASSOCIATE AND LEADERSHIP GATHERING –  
SEPTEMBER 17- 21, 2017  
MOTHER JOSEPH PROVINCE PARTICIPATION**



September 17-21, PA Provincial Directors Sisters Josie Ramac and Jo Ann Showalter attended a Women of Providence in Collaboration associate and leadership gathering (WPC A/L/G) at Genesis Retreat and Spirituality Center in Westfield,

Massachusetts. The gathering was hosted by the Sisters of Providence of Holyoke. There were about 25 associates and sisters present from various congregations that belong to WPC associate and leadership groups.

One member of the planning committee was Margaret Bauer, PA, from Anchorage, Alaska who is executive secretary of Providence Associates of Mother Joseph Province. Pauline Lally, a Sister of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul, Kingston, Ontario, Canada, was the keynote speaker. Her topic was "Providence Spirituality and the Call to Justice." A second presenter was Sister Jo Ann Showalter, who spoke about the study completed in 2015 by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) on behalf of the North American Conference of Associates and Religious (NACAR). The title of her presentation was "You ARE the Dream of God: You are the presence of Love which brings transformation and life."

The next WPC A/L/G meeting will be September 2019 in Kentucky.

**THE 4 ELEMENTS**  
**GUIDE FOR GATHERINGS AND INSPIRATIONAL SOURCE**  
**FOR THE PA OF THE ÉMILIE-GAMELIN PROVINCE**

Every year, the Providence Associates of the Émilie-Gamelin Province receive their “exercise book”. It is written, edited and printed by a team composed of Sister Berthe-Alice Colette, Marielle Sylvestre, PA and René Lefebvre, PA in order to guide and inspire the PA meetings throughout the year.

In 2017-2018, the exercise book will “lead us to discover the biblical message through the natural forces that surround us: ... the water that quenches our thirst, the air we breathe, the fire that heats us and give us light, and the soil on which we stand.

When talking about one of these elements, we always speak of the same energy presenting one of its four different aspects: it is soil under its mineral shape, water when melted, air when rising, and fire when agitated.

For each of these elements, it is requested to be in accordance and to live in harmony with them. To achieve this, it is necessary to know them, feel them, test them, serve and honour them...

They form, all four together, our internal, external, and subtle constitution. Nothing of ourselves is made up without them. Each molecule of ourselves and of what



surrounds us is formed from one of them. This reminds us of our own existence. We are born, live, create and die, all transformed at the same time, as they are. "

*Resourcing Team*

*Émilie-Gamelin Province*

"Let us not let the Earth die,  
Let us not let the fire die,  
Let us extend our hands towards the light  
To welcome the gift of God." Jo Akepsimas

*Les 4 éléments*  
*Année 2017 - 2018*



*Associées et Associés*  
*Providence*

*We would like to introduce you to two young women who are in initial formation with the Sisters of Providence of the Holy Angels Province, Canada. They generously contributed their reflection on recent conferences they attended.*

### ***The Call to Love***

by Mary Truong, Novice



I had the opportunity to attend the S.P.I.C.E Conference in Kananaskis, Alberta, Canada, in spring of 2017. The conference was focused on *Amoris Laetitia* – the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on love in the family with keynote speaker David Wells. The following is my reflection on love in the family from the perspective as my role as a teacher.

The joy of the family is LOVE. It is in the family that we first experience love, unconditional love. Love is not just a feeling, but a commitment. It is a choice, a choice to love, even in the most difficult situations. As teachers, that is also our call, to love all the children that come through our door and make sure that they know they are the beloved children of God. We do not replace the family, but we are support for the family in journeying with their child in becoming who God created that child to be.

I followed my call to teaching first, before I answered the call to religious life. Both are calls to love, to dedicate my life in loving service for others. That is what I was reminded of

during the SPICE Conference. Why are we here? What is our purpose? To love God and one another. Father Pedro Arrupe, SJ said: "Fall in Love, stay in love, and it will decide everything." That is what impels us to reach out to others. How can we look at others with the eyes of Christ? With the eyes of tenderness? Wouldn't the world be a better place if each encounter, though simple and seemingly small, carried the gaze of love. Let us go forth with the heart of compassion as, "[t]he love of Christ urges us." (2Cor 5:14)

### ***Sacred Water***

by Rezebeth Noceja, Pre-Novice



*Sister Isabel Cid, SP and Rezebeth Noceja, Pre-Novice attended a conference entitled: Sacred Water. Below is an abridged version of an article written by Rezebeth after the conference they attended in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, June 6-8, 2017.*

The conference entitled "Sacred Water" was the very first conference I have attended that focused on indigenous spirituality, social justice, and ecological issues in connection with water. Water is the string that connects all areas of our society. When we talk about the spiritual aspect of respecting water we also find ourselves discussing the social need to utilize water. During the conference, it was mentioned numerous times that water is exploited politically. For someone like me who is very new to this scenario, the amount and kind of information were very enlightening. I was used to buying bottled water even before coming to



Canada, not knowing its damaging effect ecologically; I was completely unaware of the social injustice being committed by large companies that commercializes the natural supply of water. Thankfully, there are people who are committed to educate on the real situations surrounding the exploitation of water. The role of women, particularly indigenous women, in the protection of water is rooted from the fact that when women conceive life, this life sheltered for nine months is cradled in water inside a woman's womb. Water is synonymous with life.

One of the speakers of the conference was Elder Josephine Mandamin, an Ojibwe grandmother. She witnesses how we, as stewards of Creation, should respond with gratitude and respect to the wonderful gift of nature that God has given to us. Water is an indispensable part of Creation that was entrusted to us humans so we can be stewards of it. We must relate to nature with as much respect as we would with other human beings. We need to realize that all parts of Creation have value simply because God is the source of Creation and the author of everything.

For me, Elder Josephine is an image of hope for the future of Mother Earth. Her faith in the Creator, her heartfelt prayer for her children and her children's children to have clean life-giving water, and her reverent appreciation each time she drinks water enkindles in me and other conference participants a passion to protect our water as well as, personal appreciation and examination on the use of water. When asked how she sees hope in the future of Mother Earth

and of water, Elder Josephine said, "Ask our Creator in a good way, always in a good way." This is a confession of how water and the rest of Creation are from God, and how God is the ultimate healer of a planet that is hurting.

Rezebeth Noceja's unabridged text will be available in the December issue of Providence Missive, available on <http://providenceintl.org/en/cat/providence-missive/>

**United in prayer:** let us pray for all PAs who are sick or in need around the world.



**Did you know?**

**There is a lot of information and news regarding the Providence on:**

<http://providenceintl.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/Providenceintl1843/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgwryhZJL5r0owWh32XJr1w>



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