

# Providence Missive

*A publication of the Sisters of Providence*



**Cover:**

**Stained glass window of  
the Holy Family, at the  
Chapel of the  
Motherhouse of the  
Sisters of Providence**

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**In this issue :**

<b>Letter from the Congregational Leader</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Special Report</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>SP-world and Culture</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>JPIC</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Providence Treasures</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Short News</b> .....	<b>18</b>
Across the Community	

# Dear Sisters,

Sr. Karin Dufault (left), serving the homeless brothers and sisters at the Comedor Emilia Gamelin in Santiago, Chile, during the Bernarda Morin Province Regional Conference in October, 2018.



December's Advent and Christmas seasons and January's new year are such appropriate times to focus our Providence Missive on the theme: ***Dreams and Hopes of Today for the Future of Providence.*** We reflect on all that has transpired in 2018 and give thanks for how Providence has accompanied us, individually and as a community. We also welcome the year 2019 by praying about our dreams and hopes. R44c of our recently approved *Constitutions and Rules* reminds us:

*"At the close of the year, we express communally to God, our desire for reconciliation, our gratitude and our hope."*

This issue of the *Providence Missive* encourages us to learn about the dreams and hopes for our Congregation expressed by some of our sisters internationally. By sharing our dreams and hopes, we can reinforce, expand, or magnify our own, support others in theirs, and identify our common hopes. Naming them in common

can fortify us for acting together to realize them. We imagine them as God's dreams revealed to us and through us. Doing so also can help us **live** our 2017 General Chapter theme: *"Joyfully welcome and proclaim God's dream."*

While we sometimes use the words "dreams" and "hopes" interchangeably, dreams have been described as the images or sensations that occur in a person's imagination either in sleep or when we are awake but day-dreaming. Dreams are considered unrealistic, unachievable or mere fantasies. However, we do know dreams can come true! Dreams can be transformed into hopes.

Hope is a dynamic life force characterized by a confident, yet uncertain expectation of good that is personally significant and realistically possible. Hope energizes one to action, often within the context of loss and suffering. Hope can be linked to particular objects of aspiration which can



be distant or near. For us as Christians and Providence women, prayer can be considered a school of hope, opening us to greater possibilities as we believe that Providence is acting in us and through us. Pope Francis encourages us to dream and hope in these words:

“Dream of a world which cannot yet be seen, but which will surely arrive. Hope leads us to believe in the existence of a creation which expands until the definitive fulfillment, when God will be everything in everyone.” (General Audience, September 20, 2017)<sup>1</sup>

As we watch and listen in the daily to the suffering in our world brought about by war, poverty, violence, homelessness, devastating fires and floods, we see many people whose dreams and hopes have been crushed. On the other hand, we hear about those whose tiny flicker of hope amid their suffering was rekindled by other peoples’ loving kindnesses, supportive assistance, and attentive listening. Human beings, including Sisters of Providence, have the remarkable ability to impact each other’s dreams and hopes, positively or negatively.

In a January 14, 2015, website article Joan Chittister, OSB, wisely challenged: “We have

no right to hope for what we are not tasking ourselves to make happen. Hope is not meant to deceive us into inertia while we wait for good to happen. It is meant to motivate us to make good what is not.”<sup>2</sup> ([www.monasteriesoftheheart.org](http://www.monasteriesoftheheart.org)). I would add: to make even better what is good in the light of changing realities.

Let us reflect on the dreams and hopes expressed in this Missive. What can we contribute together to making them a reality? New dreams and hopes will flow. Our world needs people with dreams and hopes – and so does our Congregation. What are yours? Naming them is the first step to taking actions that bring us closer to realizing them. Perhaps Providence is giving us this opportunity for sharing our many dreams and hopes as an Advent and Christmas gift which we give to each other. I welcome that sharing! Let us also open our hearts and listen to the dreams and hopes of those to whom we are called to minister, especially those most in need.

Blessed Advent and Christmas! My Christmas hope for you is one Blessed Emilie expressed: “That you may **always love the poor**, and that **peace and union** may always be with you/us.” I also hope that you realize that you are precious to

our community with unique gifts to share for the sake of our Mission.

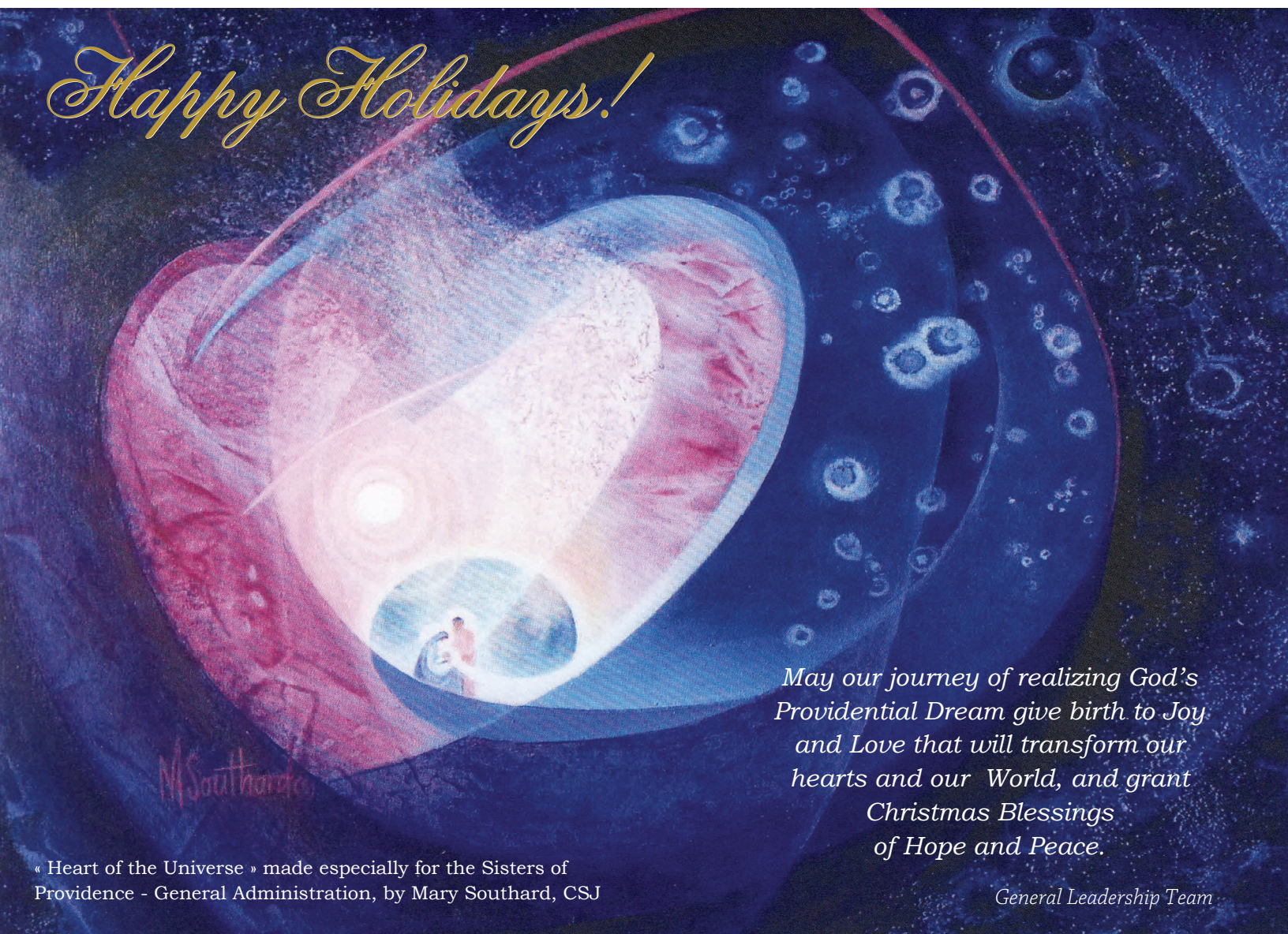
Affectionately with Peace and Hope,

*Karin Dufault SP*  
Congregational Leader

P.S. "Consult not your fears but your hopes and dreams. Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential. Concern yourself not with what you tried and failed in, but with what is still possible for you to do." Pope John XXIII

1. Pope Francis, General Audience, September 20, 2017, [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/fr/audiences/2017/documents/papa-francesco\\_20170920\\_udienza-generale.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/fr/audiences/2017/documents/papa-francesco_20170920_udienza-generale.html)

2. Joan Chittister, [www.monasteriesoftheheart.org](http://www.monasteriesoftheheart.org)



« Heart of the Universe » made especially for the Sisters of Providence - General Administration, by Mary Southard, CSJ

*General Leadership Team*



# SPECIAL Experiences, reflections SREPORT



## Dreams and Hopes of Today for the Future of Providence

*... to learn about the dreams and hopes  
for our Congregation  
expressed by some of our sisters internationally*

### PROVIDENCE DREAMS AND HOPES

Sister Danielle Charron was born in Canada and made her novitiate in 1985. She lives in Montreal at the St. Joseph Residence, where she ministers in pastoral care with seniors. She is also a member of the Vocation Committee in Montreal.



Sister Danielle celebrates  
Christmas with her dad at  
Providence Saint-Joseph

With this short text, I would like to share with you my dreams for the future for the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence. Firstly, what brings me hope on a daily basis is, I discover that our Charism and Mission are, and will always remain, actual and more than ever alive. Our world needs our compassionate charity towards those whose basic needs are not met.

When I take time to look at what people are experiencing in our society today, I continue to believe that the Sisters of Providence still fully have reason to exist. Our world is crying out its need for compassion. The manifestation of a creative solidarity is essential to respond to the new emerging needs of our society in turmoil. Therefore, for me it is to be the voice for the voiceless, following the footsteps of Blessed Émilie Tavernier Gamelin; to be the presence of Love of our Provident God for those I encounter in my ministry at Providence Saint-Joseph; undoubtedly, I can discover the suffering Christ, and make Him known and loved. This is what allows me to continue my mission as a Sister of Providence. Giving the best of myself emerging from whom I am, with my strengths and my human limitations, I have the deep feeling that I participate in the realization of the God's dream for the future of the Congregation



## TODAY'S DREAMS AND HOPES FOR THE FUTURE OF PROVIDENCE

Sister Hilaria Bautista was born in the Philippines, she is a member of the Sisters of Providence since 2006. She now lives in Burbank, California. Her ministry is in pastoral care at Providence St. Joseph Medical Center, Burbank.

At the last General Chapter in which I participated, we shared and articulated our congregational dreams. One of those dreams is “to deepen our sense of belonging to the whole Congregation and the local community by... deepening a life of prayer, and personal and communal discernment...” It challenges us to adopt a lifestyle based on “cultivating dialogue, respectful listening and trust in each other.”

My own personal dream of a loving and discerning community dovetails with this congregational dream. There were formative factors in my life that gave birth to this dream. One of these important influences was my experience in the Sodality of Our Lady which became known as the Christian Life Communities (CLC) after Vatican II. I was entering Senior High School then and just assumed leadership of the group when a team of Jesuit priests and Ignatian trained lay leaders came to our school to introduce the Ignatian model of spirituality. Our group learned and experienced the Spiritual Exercises and consequently, were encouraged to live out the values of a Christian community. In building our Christian community, we learned group dynamics, listening skills, and more importantly, prayer and discernment skills which were useful in our approach to decision making. Our spiritual formation was our foundation in responding to the social concerns of the times. The process was transformative and I was so inspired and taken up by the lifestyle that I continued on with CLC through my college years.



Sister Suzette participating in the 2017 General Chapter at the Motherhouse.

When I decided to become a religious, I had the dream that the religious community would somehow provide the appropriate environment to nurture this “contemplative approach to life” given its structures of prayer and community life. Through my long years in religious life, I have lived through joys, frustrations and pain in the pursuit of this dream. Sometimes, I paid the price.

I have seen how difficult it is to cultivate a contemplative approach to life. We are surrounded by a lot of noise –both internal and external. We are hesitant to let go of the securities of the past. Contemplative listening demands trust, openness, respect and a willingness to take risks; if we do not embrace and live out these attitudes, we will remain to be fence-sitters and to sit comfortably on the “glories of the past.” There must be something more than just maintaining our current lifestyles and ways of thinking. But because I have seen some fruition of my dream and experienced the transformational impact on individuals and communities who live by this contemplative

approach to life, I continue to be passionate in pursuing this dream. I still have hope that our sisters, local communities and leaders will not only pursue the same dream but to live it out consistently in daily life. I will continue to make our dream of living a Providence contemplative lifestyle by modeling respectful listening and dialogue within our local communities. As we grow in contemplative prayer, my hope is that we will develop the habit of personal and communal discernment. I look forward to my aging years when I will actually experience and thereby exult in the joy of living in a local community that has made the contemplative approach a way of life. As to our leadership, I envision a group of contemplative listeners who will model a lifestyle based on “cultivating dialogue, respectful listening and trust in each other.” It is my hope that our future leaders will provide the inspiration and the environment to promote participative leadership, to listen to the

“small voices” in community; to be more relational and caring; and to engrave the qualities of Jesus as servant leader in their hearts.

Given this contemplative process, we are well equipped to make our communal dream, our new model of governance, into a reality. Lest we forget, our dreams were intertwined to give way to this new transformation. There are many questions and doubts as to how we shall go about its implementation. The road ahead is not clear. But didn't Blessed Emilie and our foundresses experience similar challenges in their pursuit of helping the poor? They have shown us the way and this is my hope as Lynn Levo stated: “...we need to believe that wisdom and guidance will come to us if we collectively place ourselves in a listening mode to the Spirit in and among us.” (Lynn Levo, “Leaders’ Roles in Encouraging Members to Dream and Vision Their Future” in *Transformational Leadership*, ed. By Annmarie Sanders, 2015. p. 19)

## DREAMS AND HOPES OF TODAY FOR PROVIDENCE OF TOMORROW

Sister Alba Letelier, a Chilean citizen, has been a Sister of Providence for 33 years. She is currently ministering as an assistant to the Superior of the Bernarda Morin Community in Chile.

When speaking of dreams, two ways of interpreting this word come to my mind. On the one hand, dreams are images that appear at night in our imagination, when our body reaches the rest level and gives way to the unconscious to offer matter for “reflection” and self-knowledge, if we give ourselves some time to read into our dreams.







On the other hand, we call “dreams”, the often ideal long-term vision of any situation or experience that we want to live, either to improve and/or transform the present in projecting it into the future. In most cases, it seems to be a vision completely different from the present, from our desires, from our thoughts, from our aspirations, from our emotions and from our actions aimed at achieving that dream”. At the same time, having this vision, this “dream”, obliges us to give way to inevitable processes, in which we experience dispossession, fear, uncertainty, nostalgia for times past, as we cling to what is already known, not wanting to leave our securities and comfort zones and try to defend ourselves from the unknown by applying rules and regulations that will continue the same pattern and maintain our security.

That being said, I move on to share “my dreams for the Congregation”, that is to say my dream for us, and for which the above experience is part of my reality.

I think that Providence is actual and very present in our history, in the present-day world. And I deeply believe that our call as Sisters of Providence is still valid. I have total confidence in that God continues HIS work and invite us to collaborate on His project for humanity. Our Congregation has the necessary potential to heal, recreate, care, nurture and humanize Creation. Everything is within us, but we are often unaware of it. Our collective unconscious tends to retain the information, waiting for a certain “night”, a

time of “rest and silence” to reveal itself, to make us reflect and engage in its reading, above all, in the adventure of making God’s dream a reality. In a world more and more individualistic, selfish, violent, competitive, intercultural, in search of peace, a world of “global village”, of communications and instant technology, etc., we are counting on our Consecrated Life, our lifestyle and the vision inviting us to transform our way of entering into relationships, not only with interpersonal relationships, but also with power, money, personal ideas, self-esteem, likes and personal choices, etc. My dream is that recognizing our own abilities and possibilities, each of us gives way to new relationships, where global common good is given priority. Where the needs of the most vulnerable are not only recognized but also welcomed and met. Each of us can do it from her own transparency, through attentive listening and respectful dialogue with others.

My dream for the Congregation is my vision of a community of transformed, transfigured women, able to recognize their fragility; and as regards their personal possibilities offer “their last coin” or “their last bit of flour and oil”: that is to say offering what we have so others can benefit from it, have life, an abundant life. I dream of my community freeing itself of structures and relationships that enslave us in unhealthy or toxic situations. That transformed she make space so that joy and life return to Life, because she calls the God of Life to the center of her existence. She



cries out to the Lord Jesus to be healed and saved.

I dream of seeing us so wrapped in the surrounding reality, that it hurts us so much, that the very pain will make us cry, "Enough!" and renew our creativity to respond to the needs that we see emerging. Each of us could do it with a personal answer according to one's own possibilities. I dream that no one feels excluded, rejected or discriminated against. I dream that where there is a need, there will be a Sister of Providence available to listen carefully, dialogue openly, accompany and discern the path to follow, to support and live with the consequences of the choice of life we made and the call to which we responded.

My hope is that each of us having dreams, are able to recognize that our present is all we have to live and trace the future we dream about. There is no time to waste, especially when dreaming is to follow Jesus, a passionate Dreamer about the Kingdom of God, telling us, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father." (Jn 14: 8-9)

May our way of being and relating with ourselves in freedom, interact with God in complete confidence, interact with others in fraternal love and generous friendship, and be in a responsible relation and in solidarity with creation; may these be for us the best way to bear witness of the passionate, infinite and free Love of God, whose name is Providence.

## DREAMS AND HOPES OF TODAY FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR PROVIDENCE COMMUNITY

Sister Mary Phillips, originally from Canada, entered the Sisters of Providence in 2012. Her ministries are at Father Lacombe Care Centre, at St. Patrick Parish, and she is also a member of the Vocation Committee in Calgary.



Sister Mary Phillips (R) with a resident of Providence Care Centre in Calgary, August 2018.

God has a dream for our Providence Community. I believe that he gives us a lot of freedom in that dream to help co-create with Him as Vowed Religious members of the Church, a world of love, compassion, mercy and peace, where all people have equal access to our world resources, to food and water, clothing and shelter, health care and education. He has a dream that our world will be a place where all can pray and practice their faith in freedom as they peacefully and respectfully live among one another. He has a dream that someday all will come to know Him as our loving creator and Father and believe in His Son, our redeemer



whom he sent to save us and lead us on the road of love, the way home to the Father. He has a dream that our Church will be a light for the world and lead in love, compassion and mercy. He has a dream of our world being a place where political decisions are based on Divine wisdom, through prayer, dialogue, contemplative listening and discernment for the good of all. God has a dream that all the poor, those who are suffering and deeply wounded, those who are vulnerable, and those without a voice or a dignified place in our society and in our world will have those who will speak on their behalf and will be vessels of God's compassionate love and mercy, walking with them helping them to know their true dignity and worth as a child of God. Jesus said that "the poor will always be with you." It is the poor, if we are truly open, who draw us out of ourselves calling us to charity, compassion and mercy. It is through them that we begin to realize and become in touch with our own poverty. It is in them that we will see the face of Jesus, the suffering servant, calling us to love. As we reach out to them, growing as vessels of God's compassion, it is they who will draw us closer to the heart of God. When we work in oneness with God and His poor, God's kingdom of love will grow and be manifested. It is here especially, where we as Sisters of Providence, through our Charism and Mission are called to serve.

Our loving Father has a dream that someday soon, we will realize the beautiful gift of creation He has entrusted to our care, and will take responsibility in doing our part in protecting our natural resources, including water and air, our soil, our forests, and our wildlife that future generations will be able to

enjoy them as well. Our Father has a dream that we will take from the earth only what we need so that there will be enough for all to enjoy without taking the share of generations to come. We have a part to play in this piece of God's dream in being a witness in how we live and respond to this in our everyday living.

God's dream is also my dream for our Community and our world.

You may wonder, how can our small congregation respond to such a dream? God has given our Community the gift of our Charism and Mission and our Constitutions (the gift of the acceptance of our newly revised ones) and has given each member natural and spiritual gifts to help this dream become a reality. He has also given us the Church with all its gifts, with Christ as the head, and His Spirit to guide us and give us the graces needed for our journey. He has given us Pope Francis to be its earthly leader who also has this dream. We have been given our General Chapter Orientations (2017-2022) to help us live into this dream. I believe if we help build healthy local communities, living our Religious Vows, through our Charism and Mission according to our Constitutions, and embracing each encounter as a Providence moment with the compassionate love of our Mother of Sorrows, we will be responding to and living this call. If we also live our Community virtues of humility, simplicity and charity, deeply connected in spirit, regular communication and active participation with our larger Community and Church, we will grow and be fruitful. I trust in our God of Providence.

Continuation of the reflection: <http://providenceintl.org/>

## Rome - El Salvador

### *My Experience of the Canonization of Archbishop Romero*

*María Vilma Franco Calles , SP*



On October 12, 2018, I left El Salvador for a pilgrimage to the canonization of Archbishop Romero. I arrived in Rome on October 13, with a heart full of gratitude for this experience in which I participated, with people from all over of the world; a people who all love Saint Romero. I had the beautiful gift of doing this pilgrimage with my Sisters of Providence: María Antonieta Trimpay, Mónica Campillay, Margarita Hernández and two priests who accompanied

us: Father Miguel Mejía, a Mexican, and Father Gerardo, a Chilean, who is currently in Rome. In another group attending were the Sisters of Providence Marita Capili, Marcia Gatica and Ana Dolores Orellana. Our leitmotiv was: "El Salvador has given a Saint to the entire world."

On October 14, the long awaited day for the Salvadoran people, every parish of El Salvador was united with this major event in a vigil,



Romero not only be a saint who was elevated to the heights, but a Saint that invites me to live and to give my all to others as he himself did, following the example of Jesus who gave His all. It prompts me to commit myself so his life story might remain alive for generations to come, to always be with the most needy and be Providence for each of them. Saint Óscar Arnulfo Romero is not only from El Salvador, but from the whole world, as was manifested through the many activities carried out in different parts of the world

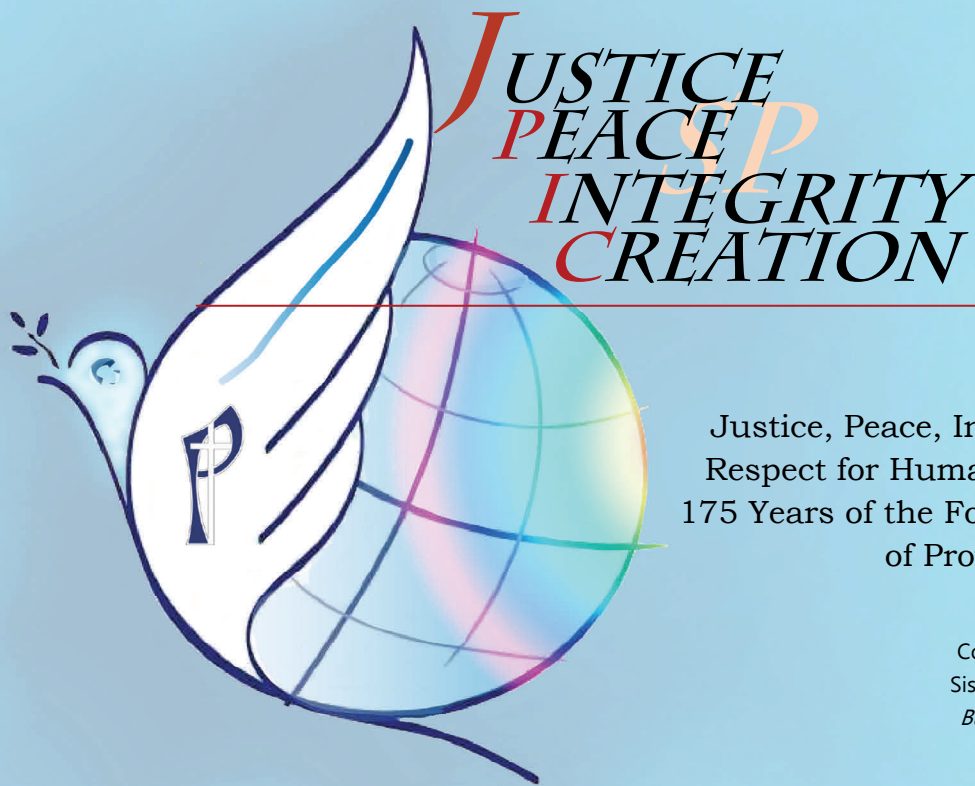
Today, I say that the words he pronounced in his last homily have been fulfilled: "If they kill me I will rise again in the people of El Salvador". Personally, I say he has not only risen in the Salvadoran people, but rather in the

awaiting for the moment when Pope Francis would proclaim the Holiness of Monsignor Romero, while we accompanied them from Rome. I could not believe that I was living such a great moment, when a man was to be declared a Saint, he who was the voice for the voiceless of the Salvadoran people. This man was murdered for defending us from the oppression we were experiencing, a man who gave everything for his people. As Pope Francis said in his homily "We give all or nothing, we love from all our heart or we don't love"; this is exactly what the great experience of life is inviting us to. My commitment is to bear witness to this faith and that Archbishop

whole world.

Providence of God, I thank you for all.





Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation,  
Respect for Human Rights; Since the  
175 Years of the Founding of the Sisters  
of Providence.

Compilation of texts and adaptation:  
Sister Hortense Demia-Mbailaou, SP :  
*Bulletin CRC, Vol. 15, No. 3, fall 2018*

Everything is Connected!  
Everything is Given!

Everything is Fragile!

This issue of the CRC (Canadian Religious Conference) Bulletin is in link with our General Assembly held in May 2018. The articles are inspired by Elena Lasida's presentation on the encyclical '*Laudato Si'*'. She identified three key concepts: *Everything is connected! Everything is given! Everything is Fragile!* Timothy Scott, CSB, introduced these key concepts as a whole. For him, "Everything is connected" calls us to enter into "a network of connections".

The encyclical develops at length the fact that ***everything is connected***. The universe is a network of connections: "Time and space are not independent of one another, and not even atoms or subatomic particles can be considered in isolation." (LS, 138) Disrespect for our common home has particular consequences for the poor and challenges us to be in relation with them. "(...) the principle of the common good immediately

becomes, logically and inevitably, a summons to solidarity and a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters. (LS 158)" Human solidarity and ecology are closely inter-related, for we are called: "to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor." (LS, 49)

For Timothy, everything is connected, means to **"take risks with the other"**. Creatures, including human beings, are linked together to form systems, interconnected to one another. There is a connection between nature and the human, between the environment and the human and between all the dimensions of life: institutions, culture, politics, economy, etc. Becoming aware of the bonds of interdependence that unite us, exposes the illusion of absolute autonomy and puts an end to compartmentalizing which separates and isolates us from one another. The Bible, recalls Elena Lasida, introduces the notion of

covenant or alliance, which is always linked to co-responsibility.

### **Everything is connected! So what are we waiting for?**

Brother Louis Cinq-Mars, Capuchin, thinks that "there are not two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather one complex socio-environmental crisis. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to those excluded, and simultaneously to preserving nature," writes Pope Francis. Towards innovative and unprecedented solutions, *Laudato Si'* draws up a global vision of the world and questions the very foundation of our being-in-the-world. The ecological crisis does not appear as merely a problem of managing natural resources. It questions the meaning of our individual and collective life and we do not need to wait to begin sketching out a "new imaginary for a good life," to use the expression of Elena Lasida.

For Sister Gisèle Turcot, ***everything is given! From gratitude to vigilance.*** This radical, integral gift implies gratitude and communion with all living beings; it invites enthusiasm and creativity. These three elements are found in the singing of many psalms, especially Psalm 104. The psalmist places in the mouth of the person in prayer a hymn to the creator God who takes on the figure of the gardener and the caretaker. He gives and waters the earth (v. 5), gives water to the beasts of the field, the mountains (vv. 11-13), while imposing limits on the water of the seas (v. 6). His work is profound and consistent: He makes the meadows grow for the flocks and the prairies for the farmer's bread (v. 14).

### ***Making a Shift to Better See and Feel***

Beyond the necessary adjustments towards a global ecological transition that must be sought, it is a spiritual challenge and even a call for ecological conversion. As we know, listening deeply to the call for ecological conversion also involves a change of outlook, combining understanding and compassion. The founding charisms of our apostolic institutes were almost always in response to a lack, to a sort of poverty that challenges us today to once again hear and heed to the cry of the poor. Religious communities are already leading the way by encouraging and supporting initiatives and experiences that the 2018 Canadian Religious Conference is being invited to collect. To convert one's self, the speaker said, is to accept "to be displaced for the life of the other."

As for Mary-Ellen Francoeur, SOS, ***Everything is Fragile... Yet Look! New Life!*** Fragility pushes us to surrender. Finally, our experience of fragility is calling us to a new and more profoundly contemplative way of being. Our limitations and even a sense of powerlessness, move us to surrender to Divine Love in whom, as Paul says, we can accomplish more than we could ever imagine.

In summary, "probing Pope Francis' eco-theology, theological anthropology, and eschatology, Elena Lasida has had us discover in *Laudato Si'* a way forward in caring for our common home," concludes Timothy Scott.

Brother Louis Cinq-Mars develops the aspect of ***Everything is connected!*** "The ecological crisis, he writes, questions the meaning of our individual and collective life and we do not need to wait to begin sketching something new." The dimension ***Everything is Given!*** was addressed by Gisèle Turcot, SBC. "This radical, integral gift implies gratitude and communion with all living beings;



invites enthusiasm and creativity”, she affirmed. This implies renunciation and to risk moving towards the unknown. Sister Mary-Ellen Francoeur, SOS focused on *Everything is fragile!* Yes, everything is fragile, but from fragility a new

life can arise, even when it comes to dealing with aging and diminishment of our congregations. Sister Mary-Ellen writes “Through these realities , a new vision reveals itself of what we can leave to the world, the Earth, and future generations.”



Under this heading, we would like to highlight the ministries of some sisters who are ready to be the “Providence of the poor.

# PROVIDENCE Providence Mission in action TREASURES

## Human Trafficking

by Patricia (Pat) McKittrick, SP

The General Leadership Team invited me to participate in the human trafficking “Borders are not Barriers” meeting in Cleveland, Ohio. It was enriching, stimulating and thought provoking learned about the history of Talitha Kum<sup>1</sup> network.

There were eight presentations from the network. As the agenda was very tight, our facilitator helped us to respect the planned schedule. Many of the presentations were in Spanish.

The presentations highlighted the different faces of human trafficking and how various cultures are impacted.

Since 2015, the strategic objective has been: To further develop and strengthen the current projects of UISG and to continue the development of the emerging projects.

**Goal 1:** To continue the work of Talitha Kum.

**Action A:** Continue to develop the Talitha Kum project as a worldwide network against human trafficking in collaboration with others working in this field, in order to highlight the voice of religious (especially women religious and their collaborators).

### **Dreaming: the Present and Future of TK (Talitha Kum)**

**Networking and Formation**  
There is a need to improve skills within our networks, empower women on all levels and strengthen collaboration. What is also needed is a policy regarding the protection of children and other people in situations of vulnerability (including data). The **Talitha Kum Networks** need a standard of ethics and common strategies.

**What role do women religious leaders play in the fight against human trafficking?**  
They provide a biblical approach and motivation.





Sister Pat participating on the T K Conference

They build networks that respect diversity. TK has a formation manual to be used in an interreligious context. Besides a preventive approach, leaders provide new strategies and offer different work alternatives. They can also empower young people and traffic survivors.

**2019 will mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Talitha Kum**

For TK's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary we are considering a possible new branding, including a slide show about Healing Hearts Campaigns by religious congregations. Actually a gathering is scheduled for September 21-29, 2019 to set our 2020-2025 priorities. We will also review our strategies in the areas of networking, formation, communication, data collection, giving visibility to human trafficking, participation in research and studies. Also sustainability: what are our human and financial resources?

**Some common concerns mentioned were:**

-To recognize the dignity of persons

- Love recognizes no barriers
- We have one common call and our common mission is focused on the following:
  - Building a strong foundation on solidarity
  - Increasing awareness
  - Providing support and encouragement
  - Eradicating human trafficking

**What can we do?**

We need to be creative. Let us commit a whole day to prayer and public action (Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>, etc.) inviting Bishops to join with us and make a joint statement about the migration and human trafficking connections. This requires knowledge of how to use the social media.

We can target a business and examine their supply chain so as to improve justice. We can list and share our resources to create a structure for relationships, like a data base to work more efficiently.

We could choose to tackle one cause, increase





male participation, and address the issues of patriarchy and machoism.

To prepare ourselves we must provide constant formation and immersion experiences. We need to prepare a list of foundations, and possibly a hemispheric newsletter. We need to organize group trainings, involve seminaries and train seminarians and priests. Actually we must also increase inter-congregational collaboration, develop lay leadership and promote interfaith. With all this in mind, we should support Talitha Kum with human and/or financial resources, share our best practices and be sure our work is

“survivor informed” if we are to help victims across boundaries.

Pope Francis wrote guidelines for the whole Church with regard to human trafficking. Hopefully, this information gives you an idea about what the meeting was like. Here is another resource: <https://www.collabtoendht.org/>

Thanks again for the opportunity.

1. Female Religious Life has been engaged for centuries in activities against slavery and trafficking in persons. Nevertheless, the seeds that gave birth and growth to Talitha Kum were planted in the late 1990s when consecrated persons realized the importance and value of joining forces and resources in the development of an integrated network. (<https://www.talithakum.info/about/history> )



# SHORT NEWS

Across the Community

## Émilie-Gamelin Province



Eastern Canada and Eastern United States,  
Haiti, Cameroon, Egypt

Academic Year 2018-2019

### Émilie-Gamelin School

by Merci-Christ Sylméon, SP, Principal



The Émilie-Gamelin School welcomes children and teachers for another academic year, 2018-2019, thanks to the support of the sisters of the entire Congregation who have helped with their prayers, encouragement, and have given time and funding. The Provincial Council has the Émilie-Gamelin School project at heart, a work of the Congregation but specific to Émilie-Gamelin Province. The small number of students our school can host this year saddens the surrounding



populations, because the construction of the area elementary school has not yet begun. This year, Émilie-Gamelin School continues to welcome children in the preschool building, which has five classrooms.

Compared to last year, we now see that the ceramic tiles are installed and the painting is completed. On the other hand, some work still remains to be done, such as the playground, the yard and the fence. It looks like the school will be ready to accommodate children on September 3, 2019, as planned and requested by the National Ministry of Education and Professional Formation.

Following are some preparations already carried out:

**Planning Meeting with the Sisters of Providence** On Thursday, August 23, 2018, Sisters Estelle Boisclair, Valiette Messeroux, Marie-Éméline Ezami Atangana, Eugena Nogaüs and Merci-Christ Sylméon gathered for some update and planning for the school year. On the agenda: back-to-school day, information to be presented to the parents, and preparation for a meeting with the teachers.

**With the Parents' Committee:** Sister Merci-Christ Sylméon also convoked the members of the Parent's Committee for the preparation of the meeting with the parents. The members expressed their desire to cooperate with the school. The Committee presented a report of its mandate to Sister Merci-Christ.

**With the parents:** Before the opening of the school year, management saw the need to meet with the parents on Sunday, August 26, 2018. The purpose of the meeting was a reciprocal presentation of both the school staff and the

parents. More than 100 people responded to the invitation. The teachers and the sisters fully participated in this gathering. The Implementation Committee had planned to attend, but were prevented to do so.



**Formation:**

In support to the teachers, a formation was offered: The Émilie-Gamelin School organized a seminar on the preparation and presentation of lessons. Mrs. Kenshina Lajoie agreed to facilitate this seminar for the teachers of the preschool and the first two grades of the elementary school. As included in our vision for openness and mutual support, three schools of the area participated in this seminar. Sisters Mary Emeline Ezami Atangana, SP and Estelle Boisclair, SP also participated for half a day.

During the week, Sister Valiette Messeroux readied the premises to accommodate the children and store school equipment.

**Opening Day:**





The Émilie-Gamelin School opened its doors on September 3, with a Mass dedicated to the Holy Spirit. The children of the elementary grades, the parents and the Sisters of Providence Estelle Boisclair, Eugena Nogaüs, Merline Jude Bernard, Marie Eméline Ezami Atangana, Francine White Valiette Messeroux and Merci-Christ Sylméon, as well as some Providence Associates, participated in this Mass of thanksgiving.



The Reverend Father Émile Octobre presided the Eucharist with great enthusiasm and joy. The Mass was enlivened by the "Bourgeons de la Providence," a choir composed of 2nd graders and directed by Sister Eugena Nogaüs.

The classes began the next day, September 4.

A total of 161 children attended classes the first week. For toddlers and newcomers, this was a difficult time for them; they were nostalgic of their families and their homes. Fortunately, they were warmly welcomed by our sisters, especially by Jude Merline Bernard, Estelle Boisclair and Eugena Nogaüs.

It is a great joy for us to welcome parents and children to Émilie-Gamelin School.



**Building:** To better serve our student body, some adjustments had to be made regarding the classrooms, furniture and location.

**School staff :** This year, we operate with seven Sisters of Providence, taking into account the arrival of two newly professed Sisters: Sister Jude Merline Bernard, collaborator with the children beginning pre-school and Sister Francine Blanc, collaborator with first graders; the latter also teaches arts and craft activities to two classes of elementary education. Sister Eugena Nogaüs, Assistant Principal and Administrator is responsible for the canteen and discipline; Sister Estelle Boisclair works with the 3 preschool classes as an educational consultant; Sister Valiette Messeroux is our Administrator, Sister Marie Emeline is the Secretary, and Sister Merci-Christ Sylméon, the Principal, in charge of teachings methods as well as the contact person for parents and teachers. Two pre-novices have temporarily joined our staff; Manise Augustin and Renette Lalois, they offer support to the teachers in an elementary-grade class and a mid-preschool class.

**The playground:** Now the courtyard is very pretty with the playground equipment, the plants and the lawn. The children will also find more space to play.





**Activity:** We Sisters of Providence are joyfully living this year of festivities celebrating the 175th



anniversary of the foundation of our Institute. A few students participated in the march on September 15, and in the festivities organized by the Sisters and the Providence Associates on September 23.

The students from 2nd and 1st grades participated in the Mass. A girl from second grade, class B participated in the procession of the offerings.

Time elapses and the school year is well in progress; the school management has organized itself along with the staff and the teachers so as to facilitate a smooth running of the school, which benefits from the support of three sisters for discipline, cooking, arts and in the classrooms. This way, the children benefit from more supervision and support.

On behalf of the children, I thank you Sisters of Providence for your dedication, your support, your investment and your generosity for the future of a new world. Haiti is very grateful! "May the charity of Christ urge us!" Providence of God, guide us and accompany us!



## Mother Joseph Province



United States, El Salvador, Philippines

### Sisters present Mother Joseph statue to retiring Providence High School teacher

by Jennifer Roseman

Linda Wyatt, retiring after 44 years of service on the faculty of Providence High School (PHS) in Burbank, California, was presented June 1 with a miniature bronze statue of Mother Joseph, foundress of the Sisters of Providence in the West. The presentation, on behalf of all the Sisters of Providence, was made by Provincial Superior

Judith Desmarais, SP, at the school's Baccalaureate Mass. Sister Barbara Schamber, president of the sponsors of Providence St. Joseph Health, also was present.

Linda was born and raised in Albany, New York, and moved to Los Angeles after high school to



Retiring Providence High School teacher Linda Wyatt (center) is surrounded by Sisters of Providence who came to the school's graduation ceremony on June 1 in Burbank, California, to honor her.

attend UCLA from 1968 to 1972, with an additional year to obtain a California teaching credential. She found her second “family” when she joined the staff at PHS in 1974, the same year that the school founded by the Sisters of Providence became a coeducational campus. She also found a home in the Catholic Church, and she became a Catholic in 1978, with Sisters Mary Hawkins and Susanne Hartung as her baptismal sponsors. Because of the influence of the sisters on her personal and professional growth, she became a Providence Associate in 2012.

In addition to teaching the French language, Linda has served as the World Languages Department chair, Associated Student Body (ASB) advisor, and an adult team member for Kairos, a three-day, overnight retreat for seniors. During her tenure at PHS she has held positions including sophomore class moderator, senior class moderator, California Scholarship Federation (CSF) advisor, Spanish teacher and English teacher. One of the highlights of her career was leading students on summer tours of western Europe for more than 20 years.

Among the accolades she has received for her teaching career is the 1994 Los Angeles Times Teacher of the Year Award. She was honored again in 1999 for 25 years of teaching at a special celebration that included a Mass and reception attended by current and former students.

The mini statue Linda received is one of 100 cast by Felix W. de Weldon, who created the statue of Mother Joseph that has been housed at the U.S. Capitol since 1980. The statue is of Mother Joseph kneeling next to tools she used to make architectural drawings for construction of hospitals and schools in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and southern British Columbia.

The miniature statues are awarded by the provincial superior and provincial council of Mother Joseph Province, and by the co-sponsors of Providence St. Joseph Health, the PSJH health care, education and social-services ministries. The statues are presented “in honor of significant accomplishments and/or contributions to the Sisters of Providence.” Selection factors may include tenure of service, quality of service, or furtherance of the Providence Mission.





## Program sponsored by sisters opens new homes to meet critical housing needs for women and children

by Anita Wilkins, Director of Communications



A walkway between new houses in the Transitions Home Yard Cottages community. Sponsored in part by the Sisters of Providence, Transitions supports women and children experiencing homelessness in Spokane, Washington.

Transitions in Spokane, Washington, has been lifting women and children out of poverty since 1995, when the Sisters of Providence, Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, Sinsinawa Dominicans, and Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia collaborated to bring together several housing and support services under one organization to more effectively serve those in need. The four religious communities continue to sponsor Transitions today, making an impact on homelessness in the Spokane area.

Every day in Spokane, about 1300 people are experiencing homelessness. To help address this issue, Transitions recently opened the Home Yard Cottages—24 small single-family homes providing a permanent, affordable housing option for families and individuals with a low income, who have disabilities or were previously homeless.

“Transitions and the sisters who brought us here had a sense that no one should get left behind,

that a community is everyone,” said Ami Manning, Director of Housing Services at Transitions.

The development was built on land adjacent to the nonprofit’s headquarters in northwest Spokane, on a two-acre grassy site historically known as “the home yard.” Cottages range from 500-square-foot studios to 1,000-square-foot, 3-bedroom houses furnished with beds, dressers, table and chairs, and household basics. Keeping environmental impact in mind, 15 of the homes were built with solar panels and all of them with other energy-saving measures.

In addition to housing, occupants have access to supportive services through case managers, a community building with tech center and laundry, and a future playground and community garden.

The grand opening of Home Yard Cottages on September 12, 2018, marked a new chapter for occupants like Emily and her young son Calvin. “It’s terrifying to not be secure with a child, to not know where you’re going to sleep when you have this little person,” said the single mother. “Now my child has his own bedroom, a room full of toys, he’s fed, and happy, and warm, and safe and secure.”

Just two months after celebrating its first arrivals, the Home Yard Cottages are nearly full, and more than 20 families are celebrating the holidays with gratitude in their own homes.

*Transitions is led by two boards including one that consists of a representative from each of the religious communities that sponsor the organization. Provincial superior Judith Desmarais participates on the Board of Members, and Sister Annette Seubert is active on the Board of Directors.*





During the Regional Conference we past in review the great richness of Bernarda Morin Province



The Regional Conference held in Chile October 7 to 11, 2018, brought together, in a spirit of unity and commitment, the General Leadership Team and the Bernada Morin Provincial Leadership Team. The newer members of the next Provincial Leadership Team, Sisters Gloria García y Ana Georgina Rozas, also actively participated.

These days, filled with much information and discovery of the great richness of the Province, were also the occasion for sharing, consulting one another and evaluating the many realizations that took place throughout the Province. Sister Karin Dufault, General Superior, acted as the main facilitator assisting the members through an extensive agenda. The participants could count on the collaboration of Sister Isabel Cid and Mrs. Anna Novoselcev as interpreters, as well as Mrs. Inés María Ojeda, as recording secretary.

Regional Conferences, as our Constitutions and Rules indicate, seek to encourage and promote cooperation for the good of the provinces, and help promote unity and spiritual apostolic vitality.

## **Members of the General Leadership Team visit the *Comedor Emilia Gamelin***

Among the activities the General Leadership members participated in, while in Chile, was the visit to our brothers and sisters at *Comedor Emilia Gamelin*, and helped serve the lunch.

Sister Karin, who arrived in Chile some days earlier to assist at the Provincial Chapter of Elections, had with Sister Isabel Cid, paid a first visit to the *Comedor Emilia Gamelin*. Both interiorized the experience of the service performed in this ministry, and collaborated in the kitchen and in the distribution of food. The Sisters then met with the group of volunteers, who offered them a beautiful gift.

Later, during the last day of the Regional Conference, the entire Council visited the work, welcomed each guest and gave a small souvenir to each person. In addition, they served at the tables and engaged in pleasant conversation with the homeless brothers and sisters.