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Providence *Missive*

A publication of the Sisters of Providence

Providence Missive is the bulletin of the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence published by the General Administration three times a year. It presents news, activities, articles for reflection, and personal testimonies of the life and mission of the Sisters of Providence throughout the world.

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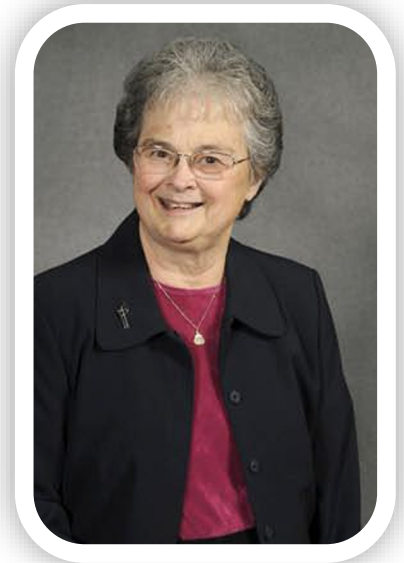
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COVER: First Christmas time in Bethlehem

Dear Sisters,

*“Love impels us towards universal communion...
love calls for growth in openness and the ability
to accept others as part of a continuing adventure
that makes every periphery converge in a greater sense
of mutual belonging....*

We were created for a fulfilment that can only be found in love.”¹
(Pope Francis in Fratelli Tutti)



The Advent Season is a time of watchfulness; a time to be attentive and not miss the face of Providence in everyone and everything around us. With such preparation, we expect and hope to see God in the presence of Jesus, a vulnerable child born on Christmas Day to loving parents in a humble stable far from home. Once again, we will be amazed that God chose to become one of us in order to show us God’s dream for humankind of how to live and to be of service to others.

This 2020 Advent and Christmas find us in a space unlike any other in our lifetime. We cannot deny our individual, community, and world-wide fragility and vulnerability brought about by the microscopic COVID-19 organism that has caused the pandemic. So many people have been suffering great losses of every kind because of the global pandemic, economic crises, social isolation and also because of social injustices.

Mental illnesses and conflicts within relationships have intensified due to rising lockdowns.

At the same time, we have witnessed great acts of self-giving, self-sacrifice, and solidarity by so many including our own sisters, Providence Associates and caregivers within our ministries. There were many creative ways of reaching out to others and of maintaining connections. Through technology, we have crossed the distances to convey messages of hope saying: “We are one. Together we shall rise.”

We recognize that the pandemic requires changes in the ways in which the world has traditionally celebrated Christmas and the feasts of other world religions. The gatherings in our parishes, in our chapels, in our congregation and in our homes will be small and simplified as we follow the recommendations of the health officials in each of our countries. Those of us used to

celebrating Christmas Eve or Christmas Day in some way with those served by our ministries, including volunteer ministries, will celebrate in spirit with them this year. I personally will deeply miss the opportunity to celebrate Christmas Eve Liturgy with the women at Leclerc prison and afterwards to visit them seeing their joy as they receive the filled Christmas gift bags made available through funds donated by sisters of our Mother House and by our International Centre colleagues.

Covid-19 posed challenges as well as an invitation and opportunities for creativity in learning, communicating and interacting with others, especially those most isolated. These new ways surely will continue especially at Christmas time. Many will gather virtually through the miracle of technology and through the willingness to learn how to use it. Celebrating Christmas is all the more important this year of 2020 as we remember that God **lives with us** amid the pandemic joining us to one another in love and care for all humanity and creation. Jesus' coming and living with us re-enchants our hope and expands our sisterly love to all regardless of physical proximity. As our brother, Pope Francis, reminds us, "love transcends the barriers of geography and distance and declares blessed all those who love their *sisters and brothers* 'as much when ...far away... as

when with' them."² (Pope Francis in *Fratelli Tutti* quoting St. Francis of Assisi). St. Vincent de Paul and Blessed Emilie voiced a similar theme in their writings.

Pope Francis gifted us before Advent and Christmas with his encyclical *Fratelli Tutti, On Fraternity and Social Friendship*. While the writing of this social Encyclical started before the pandemic, Pope Francis wrote most of it during the height of the pandemic. It has significant universal messages for all humanity as we experience the sufferings brought by the pandemic and awaken to its opportunities. Grounded in the teachings of Jesus, the encyclical provides us with much to reflect upon during the Advent and Christmas Seasons. Pope Francis reiterates many of the themes of his papacy with special emphasis on the importance of remembering and acting on the fact that we are one human family, sisters and brothers and neighbors in service of the common good. He calls on us to expand "friendship" from the personal to the political and global, a call to conversion, to think and act with "a new vision of fraternity and social friendship."³

In this issue of *Missive*, you will read the reflections of Sisters of Providence who pondered parts of *Fratelli Tutti* in relation to how we, as individuals and as a congregation in our own process of



transformation, can contribute to building a more just and benevolent world in our daily relationships, in social life, in politics and in our institutions. I encourage you, if you have not done so already, to read, pray with, and discuss this Encyclical. As Father Tom Reese has advised us: "If you want to understand Francis, take your time. Do not try to read more than a chapter in one sitting. Give the text time to marinate. Each chapter takes time to digest."⁴ Our liturgical scripture readings during the Advent and Christmas Season shed additional light on what God expects of us.

I recently participated in a UISG webinar for congregational leaders on **Leadership in Religious communities during Covid-19**.⁵ the presenter, Professor Antonio Cantelmi, spoke of the physiology of stress and the role of leaders during times of great uncertainty such as these. He stated that new leadership is required to manage suspended time with flexibility while moving to a new reality. He identified the service of leadership as primarily to assist a group to reach for a vision with the least anxiety and the greatest happiness. Said another way, the leaders' role is to minimize anxiety, generate compassion and increase happiness, allowing a vision full of meaning to emerge.

We see in Pope Francis that kind of leader

and teacher as reflected in *Fratelli Tutti*. Jesus, whom we welcome again this Christmas was and is such a leader. We have much to learn from Francis, who models himself after Jesus, our Servant Leader. I pray for the grace that we can help each other to be such leaders, wherever and however we are called to lead, now and into the future.

In conclusion, dear Sisters, "each day offers us a new opportunity, a new possibility."⁶ As our Constitutions state: "attentive to the Spirit, we remain in search of better ways to incarnate the Providence of God in our lives" (C10). Let us open our hearts and minds to the wonder of the Incarnation as we give gratitude to our God-Providence for sending Jesus, the Christ, to be one of us. He continues to bring a vision of peace and hope for our world in every age.

On behalf of the General Leadership Team, I send best wishes and prayers for your safety, health, happiness, true joy and hope as we enter 2021. Thank you for your prayers and support for us. Let us love each other as God has loved us and extend that Love locally and globally to suffering humanity.

I close with the *Prayer to the Creator* that Pope Francis used at the end of his encyclical.⁵ I modified it slightly with *inclusive language*. →

Provident-God, Father/Mother
of our human family,
You created all human beings equal in dignity:
pour forth into our hearts a spirit of
sisterhood and brotherhood
and inspire in us a dream of renewed encounter,
dialogue, justice and peace.
Move us to create healthier societies
and a more dignified world,
a world without hunger, poverty, violence
and war.

May our hearts be open
to all the peoples and nations of the earth.
May we recognize the goodness and beauty
that you have sown in each of us,
and thus forge bonds of unity, common
projects,
and shared dreams. Amen

Affectionately with peace, hope and love,

¹ Pope Francis. Encyclical letter: Fratelli Tutti. Vatican website, Paragraph #95 and #64.

http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/fr/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html

² Pope Francis. Encyclical letter: Fratelli Tutti. Vatican website, Paragraph 2.

³ Pope Francis. Encyclical letter: Fratelli Tutti. Vatican website, Paragraph 6.

⁴ Reese, Tom. "Five things to look for in Pope Francis' new encyclical, 'Fratelli Tutti'". National Catholic Reporter, October 6, 2020.

⁵ UISG. Video presentation by Antonio Cantelmi. Webinar on Leadership in Religious Communities during Co-Vid-19. <https://youtu.be/4BZjLx5skvY>

⁶ Pope Francis. Encyclical letter: Fratelli Tutti. Vatican website, Paragraph 7.

⁷ Pope Francis. Encyclical letter: Fratelli Tutti. Vatican website, Paragraph 289.

Karin Dufault SP
Congregational Leader





By Carmel of Reno - Sister Sa Ra, OCD

The birth of our Savior invites us into the circle of tender Love.
May this presence embrace our world with Hope, Joy and Peace.
Joyful Christmas Blessings to you and your loved ones.

Karin, s.p.

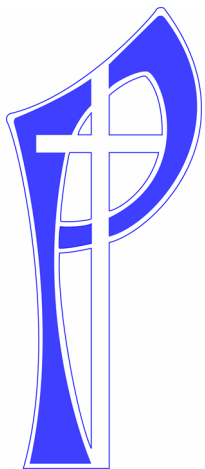
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Special SP Experiences, reflections report



Encyclical Letter – **Fratelli Tutti** On Fraternity and Social Friendship

What are the great ideals, but also the concrete paths travelled and to be travelled as Sisters of Providence to build a more just and fraternal world in our daily relationships, in social life, in politics and in all institutions according to *Fratelli Tutti*? Here are some answers...

DARK CLOUDS OVER A CLOSED WORLD Introduction and Chapter 1, by Sister Isabel Cid, SP



The most valuable gift that continually gives life is the inspiration that comes from God. Pope Francis, attentive to this gift and united with St. Francis of Assisi, receives, transmits, and proposes to the world today his Encyclical:

"FRATELLI TUTTI" on "Fraternity and Social Friendship". The Pope says that St. Francis used the expression *Fratelli Tutti* when addressing all the people, whether men or women, to propose to them a new way of life with a Gospel flavour, a life of love that transcends barriers of geography and distance. With few and simple words, St. Francis expressed the essence of fraternal openness that allows us to acknowledge, appreciate and love each person, regardless of physical

proximity, or regardless of where he or she was born or lives.

In the **introduction** to the encyclical, we read accounts **of concrete experiences** that **St. Francis** lived in their historical context and that testify to "his openness of heart, which knew no bounds and transcended differences of origin, nationality, colour or religion." In these experiences the Saint also "welcomed true peace into his heart and freed himself of the desire to wield power over others". He became one of the poor and sought to live in harmony with all. "St. Francis has inspired these pages," the Pope explained, then adding: "issues of fraternity and social friendship have always been a concern of mine. "The reflections sent by many people have stimulated him to write the encyclical. Pope Francis cites in particular the reflection of the meeting with the Great Imam Ahmad Al-Tayyeb in Abu Dhabi, because





instead of this meeting being a mere diplomatic encounter, it was a reflection made into a dialogue and joint commitment, on the theme, "God has created all human beings equal in rights, duties and **dignity** and has called them to live together as brothers and sisters."

The following words in the last part of the introduction point to a great dream of Pope Francis, "It is my desire that, in this our time, **by acknowledging the dignity of each human being**, we can contribute to the rebirth of a universal aspiration to fraternity. Fraternity among all men and women. 'Here we have a splendid secret that shows us how to dream and to turn our life into a wonderful adventure. No one can face life in isolation... How important it is to dream together.'"

This social encyclical is marked by the See-Judge-Act method, that is, to pay attention, to look around yourself, to see the reality and analyze it, to discern and wisely carry out actions that modify this reality.

The first chapter **DARK CLOUDS OVER A CLOSED WORLD** begins as follows: "Without claiming to carry out an exhaustive analysis or to study every aspect of our present-day experience, I intend to simply consider certain trends in our world that hinder the development of universal fraternity."

The concept of DIGNITY, which appears fifteen times in this chapter with different modalities, calls for our attention. It can be found in numbers 5; 8; 18; 20; 22-23; 25; 27; 32; 37- 39; 55, in other places where it is expressed in

different phrases, throughout the whole document. In the background of the **shadows** that are named and clearly analyzed, it is perceived that among the causes of this **darkness** are contempt, manipulation, injustice, slavery, oppression, indifference, selfishness, misery, ignorance, and other abuses that make the right to **human dignity**, inherent in every person, unrecognizable. These are **shadows** that today burden many people and challenge our reflection: *shattered dreams, the end of historical consciousness, the lack of a common project, the disposable world, human rights that are not universal enough, conflict and fear, globalization and progress with no concerted direction, the pandemics and other conflicts of history, without human dignity at the borders, the illusion of communication, aggressiveness without shame, information without wisdom, submissions and self-contempt.*

It is striking to notice in the text that for every **shadow** a small light is glimpsed. In number 48 of the encyclical, we read: "The ability to sit down and listen to others, typical of interpersonal encounters, is paradigmatic of the welcoming attitude..." "At times, the frantic pace of the modern world prevents us from listening attentively to what another person is saying. Halfway through, we interrupt him and want to contradict, even though he has not yet finished speaking. We must not lose our ability to listen."

There were also shadows in Emilie Gamelin's time, but respect for the dignity of human



beings was palpable in her encounters with the most despised and neglected people, as well as in her meetings with those who, even without knowing it, already respected and helped their brothers and sisters. Emilie considered all people **WORTHY of being heard**.

*The culture of encounter, the art of listening, effective communication, and paying compassionate attention **dignify us** and are within our reach.*

A STRANGER ON THE ROAD

Chapter 2, by Sister Yvette Demers, SP



These days, when our planet is facing a pandemic with the most disastrous and worrying consequences, our God-Providence has

inspired our Pope Francis to propose to us the ways towards a better, more just and more peaceful world, relying on everyone's commitment.

And the Encyclical "Fratelli Tutti" was born! ...

Chapter II, "A Stranger on the road", particularly challenged me. First of all, the Lord himself experienced this condition... He had to flee to Egypt with Mary and Joseph, in almost inhuman conditions, because his life was being threatened.

Two thousand years have gone by ... and "migrants" are more and more numerous; they have to flee their countries because of wars,

natural disasters, unscrupulous traffickers, etc. Uprooted from their communities of origin, migrants must be welcomed, protected and integrated.

In the countries that receive them, a fair balance must be struck between protecting the rights of citizens and guaranteeing reception and assistance for migrants. In detail, the Pope indicates some "indispensable steps" especially for those fleeing "grave humanitarian crises". What is needed above all, the document states, "is a global governance with regard to movements of migration that can open up mid-term and long-term planning which is not limited to emergency responses, in the name of development in solidarity with all peoples".

We no doubt remember how our foundress, Blessed Émilie Tavernier-Gamelin, at the time of the typhus and cholera epidemics, with her daughters, Sisters of Providence, brought welcome, help, comfort and health to those who had had to flee their country because of illness and who often died upon arriving in Canada leaving many children orphaned.





Sisters of Providence, let us keep our eyes and hearts open to see and get closer to all the sufferers of our world who are prey to isolation, indifference, anxiety, and even rejection; let us keep our eyes open and our ears attentive to the invitations of organizations, to the calls of

our leaders, to participate in certain actions in favour of justice and integration of the migrants. May our prayer help them find a land of welcome and adoption where they can live in safety. Let us remember our motto;

The charity of Christ urges us!

ENVISAGING AND ENGENDERING AN OPEN WORLD

Chapter 3, by Sister Rosa Nguyen, SP



In Chapter 3, Pope Francis emphasizes the value of human existence and growth in relationships with one another. Every human person is valuable and has a right to live with

individual dignity. We are called to promote the good, which means promoting human values. The values include thinking and acting in terms of one community; no one is excluded.

Today, Pope Francis invites each of us as Sisters of Providence to see the world in a concrete way by experiencing and putting into action how we relate to society. The loving dimension of human life is universal and natural. In reality in our whole world today we participate in social distancing due to the pandemic. Pope Francis reminds us that we ought to love our brothers and sisters as much when they are far away as when we are with them.

As an apostolic community, we live a prayer life of contemplation and action in the midst of society. "The love of Christ impels us." Although, during this time of pandemic, we are not able to minister to people in person, we still find creative ways to serve with and for others. Knowing we need to keep a distance and not reach out our hands, we need to reach out our hearts by reaching out with our words of support and reaching out with our whole being with compassionate caring.

Love is a verb, which has to be alive and active; love draws us out of ourselves and draws the ones we love into ourselves. True love also "impels us towards universal communion... By its very nature, love calls for growth in openness and the ability to accept others as part of a continuing adventure that makes every periphery converge in a greater sense of mutual belonging"(95). We are social creatures, fundamentally self-opening to others and made for love. There is no life when we claim to be self-sufficient and live as islands. For this reason, we always have to grow and change by moving beyond ourselves.



Love and charity need to start initially with our own local Sisters, those with whom we live, then flow out to the world. Sometimes, we move backwards; we love and serve people outside with a great deal of effort before being available for our own Sisters. We need to balance our life, the life of ministry and the life of community. God chose us to be brothers and sisters for one another on this planet. We ARE brothers and sisters. This movement toward solidarity does not eliminate differences but celebrates the beauty of diversity.

An authentic human fraternity must be based on recognition of the inherent dignity of all persons, especially those who are vulnerable, poor, or suffering. Providence Saint Joseph Health states its mission powerfully: *“As people of Providence, we are expressions of God’s healing love, witnessed through the ministry of Jesus, we are steadfast in serving all, especially*

those who are poor and vulnerable.” Serving all means that we love and serve people regardless of gender, age, race, religion and nationality.

Loving others and respecting individual human dignity has to be tangible and active. In economic terms, human dignity also entails the right to “sufficient opportunities for one’s integral development” (118). Pope Francis reiterates the Church’s teaching of the “common destination of created goods,” which states that “if one person lacks what is necessary to live with dignity, it is because another person is detaining it” (119). Pope Francis invites you and I to simplify our lifestyle, to live simply, so others may simply live. Our individual daily choices reflect our priorities in life. We have free choice and responsibility for our own actions. We are invited to live in interdependence and share responsibility in the whole human family.

A HEART OPEN TO THE WHOLE WORLD
Chapter 4, by Sister Mariana Pena, SP



I am impressed, perhaps because of my profession, by how Pope Francis invites us to be alert to a “false openness to the universal, born

of the shallowness of those lacking insight into the genius of their native land or harbouring unresolved resentment towards their own people. Whatever the case, ‘we constantly have to broaden our horizons and see the greater good which will benefit us all. But this has to be done without evasion or uprooting.’” (145)

I am fully convinced that to be and to do we must acknowledge our life history, our family history, our national history, our community





history, our provincial history, our congregational history. We can do great things, but never without roots nor without a rock as our foundation, as this would lead us to death, to the destruction of our identity and mission. We need Sisters of Providence that are resolved, reconciled, masters of themselves, because in order to welcome others, we must first welcome ourselves; to love others, we must first love ourselves; to forgive others we must first forgive ourselves... It is when we start from the outside inwards that we risk personal and spiritual collapse and consequently community collapse. To return to the source is to return to ourselves, it is not

egocentrism, but wisdom, since by finding myself, I find God and by finding God I find my sister and brother. I do not dream of great works, I dream of authenticity and coherence, like Emilie, who meets her pain, suffers it, cries it, contemplates it, integrates it and transforms it into providential action. It was not the other way around; her action is born from the heartrending force of assuming her history and transforming it into love, a compassionate and providential love for the needy of her time, hence our legacy: humility, simplicity and charity... Charity above all. To be a Sister of Providence is to be a woman with "a heart open to the whole world" (title of chapter 4).

A BETTER KIND OF POLITICS

Chapter 5, by Sister Suzette Bautista, SP



Our long history has shown how our sisters from different cultures and religious backgrounds and varying ages responded to that ONE CALL from God to transcend differences in order to live out a shared vision.

That shared vision is our mission of charity - to respond to the urgent and multiple needs of those who are poor and vulnerable" (Const. 6). Our mission continues to be relevant until today. It is an understatement to say that during this time of the pandemic, our mission of charity is all the more urgent as multiple needs arise day by day and we are challenged on how we are called to respond to the needs that are requested from us.

How do we make our mission alive in the context of the encyclical? In describing "Political love", Pope Francis states in #181" ...



charity finds expression not only in close and intimate relationships but also in 'macro-relationships: social, economic and political'. For me, it means to go beyond our own selves, our local communities or our own province and to seek "the good of all people." We are moving toward a new governance model that I hope will renew our structure which will enable us to live out our vision of intercultural community. I see this to be a hopeful pathway of responding to global needs in more effective ways.

Pope Francis acknowledges charitable acts directed to individuals or groups. But he added something else, "commanded love"-- "those acts of charity that spur people to create more sound institutions, more just regulations, more supportive structures." It is

not enough to pray for someone who is sick, or to give money to those in need but we are called "to work to change the social conditions that caused the suffering" of these people. In our province, we are doing some of this work in our shared ministries with other congregations. But perhaps, today, the call for us, Sisters of Providence, is to re-assess our current shared ministries and to consider ways by which we can initiate mission partnerships with our sisters from other regions and provinces. As Pope Francis aptly described: "an exchange of gifts for the common good." Our ministries can then be more focused, coordinated and strengthened. This is also an opportunity by which we can live out our shared identity and deepen our unity as Sisters of Providence.

DIALOGUE IS THE ART OF ENCOUNTER

Chapter 6, by Sister Snyrve Valencia Pierre, SP

The Holy Father published the encyclical "Fratelli Tutti" on Saturday, October 3, 2020, on the occasion of the feast of St. Francis of Assisi. This document contains eight chapters.

Allow me to share with you my reflections on the sixth chapter entitled "Dialogue and Friendship in Society."

My reflection is based on the importance of dialogue in our world, in our society and in our Congregation, and then on the tendencies of our indifference or more precisely our tendency to remain silent.

In this encyclical the Pope tells us clearly that knowing how to dialogue is the way to open the world and build social friendship; and it is the foundation for better politics and the good functioning of a country. To dialogue is to get closer, to express oneself, to listen, to look at each other, to get to know





each other, to try to understand each other. It also means looking for points of contact in order to meet and help each other. Dialogue promotes, to the highest degree, social friendship. In the culture of encounter, we can learn something from each other, no one is without merit, no one is superfluous. A pluralistic society that invites dialogue respects the dignity of others in every situation, recognizes the others' right to be themselves, rediscovers kindness and integrates differences thus guaranteeing real and solid peace.

However, there are certain attitudes that do not favour a true and social dialogue, such as the aggressiveness that we sometimes display, the monologues that do not stop to listen to the other and that remain closed on their own ideas; the instantaneous and humiliating disqualification that imprisons us. We often forget that we, human beings, reach our plenitude by coming out of ourselves, by giving ourselves to others. Authentic social dialogue presupposes the ability to respect the other's point of view, in all charity, it also requires a contemplative listening. Genuine dialogue is a guiding thread in any constructive relationship.

All the affirmations that were made in the sixth chapter seem so recognizable, also within our intercultural, intergenerational, international and interdependent Congregation. We are more than ever invited to live a healthy dialogue! That is to say, we must learn to take

the risk of opening ourselves to our own reality and that of humanity and to offer our friendship to the poor, to the migrants who are current victims. I sincerely believe that we must continue to denounce social injustices so that all humans find their place in the world. Thus, dialogue will always allow us to find a balance between having our own vision and knowing how to put it into perspective when we willingly listen to the arguments and reasoning of the other. It will also help us to realize and accept that there are certainly universal truths that cannot be negotiated. Nevertheless, we must also welcome the new, because to dare to trust the new generation is to welcome the future and to give Providence the chance to continue its work on us.

This last point is perhaps the most difficult and the most contested today, because some dialogues are rather difficult, sometimes we do not dare to approach certain conversations. We can easily be challenged because we no longer accept that universal values still exist. I think we have to ask God for the grace of "letting go". The idea to keep the dialogue open and to arrive at a renewed form of being together, where respect for the other takes precedence over a continued fixation on differences.

As Emilie's daughters of our time, we cannot be insensitive to a certain relativism where we too easily close our eyes to what is objectively false, and we blur the distinction between good and evil, in our own lives and in the society of which we are a part. Even today, in some countries



where some of our Sisters live, fear and corruption prevent people from having a healthy and open dialogue. In spite of the dishonest acts that we, too, suffer in silence, we must have the courage to sometimes go against the tide and not let ourselves be carried away by a deadly relativism in spite of ourselves. We must know how to risk because humanity is called to a universal brotherhood that is open. Dialogue is therefore the most effective weapon. It destroys the barriers of heart and mind. It opens up spaces for forgiveness and it promotes reconciliation. Let us thank the Lord for

Transformative Governance. It liberates speech in our Congregation, gives the Holy Spirit the chance to be at work in us, remains connected to our roots while welcoming the present so that we bear fruit in the future!

As we approach the feast of Christmas, may we draw closer to the little ones of our local community, the one with which we live so that we manifest to them the love of God who-became human to call us his brothers and sisters.

On this note, I wish each one of you a Merry Christmas, and a year of healthy dialogue!

PATHS OF RENEWED ENCOUNTER
Chapter 7, by Sister Annette Aspirot, SP



In many places in the world, avenues of peace, we needed leading to the healing of wounds. We need capable peace makers willing to wisely and boldly develop processes to heal and to connect with one another. Learning to cultivate a penitential memory, one can accept the past to prepare for the future.

The difficult path to world peace is not a path where all differences must be eliminated, but a path of collective work for the promotion of the common good. Peace does not only mean the absence of war, but also the desire to grow towards greater mutual tolerance, where respect for the dignity of each person as a human being must always come first. Thus, only a culture of closeness to the rejected groups in a society will make it possible to develop mutual understanding. Forgiveness and reconciliation are themes that have a strong influence in Christianity, but are also present in other religions. But Christ does not speak





of cheap forgiveness, peace and social agreements. That is why his statement: "I have not come to bring peace, but the

sword" (Mt 10:34) is strong. These are precisely the fundamental values discussed in the previous chapter.

RELIGIONS AT THE SERVICE OF FRATERNITY IN OUR WORLD

Chapter 8, by Sister Margarete St. John, SP



This encyclical is written for the whole world, not only the church.

Fratelli Tutti chapter 8 sends out the sublime invitation to all our sisters and brothers in the world, of all

religious faiths, to unite in dialogue and dream together for peace, justice and fraternity. "A journey of peace is possible between religions (281)." "It follows that we believers need to find occasions to speak with one another and to act together for the common good and the promotion of the poor (282)". It is wrong when the only voices to be heard in public debate are those of the powerful and 'experts' (275)".

Religions have an important role in building fraternity and leading society to peace and justice for all.

What a wonderful and beautiful invitation from Pope Francis to help shape a future of hope together with God's light in openness, newness and strength.

Together with the Spirit of God leading us in "reawakened spiritual energy that can contribute to the betterment of society" [276], and in loving communion and respect, we become true companions on the journey in this world. Fratelli Tutti indeed!

- What invitation do you hear to transform our world?
- What are you willing to do as a Sister of Providence?



*Here we introduce you to the experience lived by Sister **Annette Aspirot, S.P.**, of making an "interior and personal journey" in the complete analysis of the Encyclical Fratelli Tutti, in the way of a Sister of Providence.*

FRATELLI TUTTI. Brothers and Sisters All!



FRATELLI
TUTTI.
Brothers and
Sisters All!

Through the
eight chapters
of the
encyclical
FRATELLI
TUTTI, Pope
Francis
addresses the
realities
inherent in the

life of all human beings. For each of these realities, the encyclical reflects a teaching which, inspired by the good that each person derives from it, teaches us how to recognize one's brother and sister in this great human family. All have some attachment to each other. These realities call for wise guidance to achieve a noble and promising growth that is defined in fraternity and social friendship.

"Fratelli Tutti" were words Saint Francis of Assisi, wrote in addressing all his brothers and sisters, in order to propose to them a way of life that is in keeping with the Gospel. Along

with this advice, Pope Francis also emphasizes two things in particular. He invites us to a love that overcomes the barriers of geography and space. He expresses the essence of an open fraternity that allows us to recognize, value and love each person regardless of physical proximity, and no matter where they were born or where they live.

To illustrate the encyclical in a brief summary, the following is a glimpse into each of the eight chapters that compose it:

1. DARK CLOUDS OVER A CLOSED WORLD:

This chapter invites us to become aware of certain tendencies of the current world that hinder the promotion of universal fraternity. History is giving signs contrary to human fulfillment and growth.

2. A STRANGER ON THE ROAD:

Before presenting any avenues for action, the encyclical devotes a chapter to a parable told by Jesus Christ two thousand years ago. The parable is presented in such a way that each one of us can feel implicated. "What is written in the Law?" He replied, "You shall love the [...](#)



Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself." He replied: "You have answered correctly; do this and you will live."

3. ENVISAGING AND ENGENDERING AN OPEN WORLD:

Human beings are made in such a way that they are fulfilled, developed, and reach their full potential through the selfless gift of self. There is no life where one can claim to belong only to oneself and to live as an island: in this attitude, death triumphs.

4. A HEART OPEN TO THE WHOLE WORLD:

To live in harmony among brothers and sisters, to accept the challenges that we face, is to promote understanding and assistance towards others; for instance, for a migrant person, there are many complex challenges. Our efforts in regard to arriving migrants can be summed up in four verbs: welcome, protect, promote and integrate.

5. A BETTER KIND OF POLITICS:

A better kind of politics, at the service of the common good, is necessary to allow the development of a world community, able to achieve fraternity among peoples and nations. Pope Francis expresses this as follows: "Lack of concern for the vulnerable can hide behind a populism that exploits them demagogically for its own purposes, or a liberalism that serves the economic interests of the powerful. In both cases, it

becomes difficult to envisage an open world that makes room for everyone, including the most vulnerable, and that shows respect for different cultures."

6. DIALOGUE AND FRIENDSHIP IN SOCIETY:

Coming together, expressing oneself, listening to each other, looking at each other, getting to know each other, trying to understand each other, looking for points of contact, all this can be summed up in the verb 'to dialogue.' In order to meet and help each other, we need to dialogue, to look for solutions, to recognize the values of the other.

7. PATHS OF RENEWED ENCOUNTER:

In many places in the world, avenues of peace, leading to the healing of wounds are needed. We need capable peacemakers willing to wisely and boldly develop processes to heal and to connect with one another. Learn to cultivate a *penitential memory*, capable of accepting the past to prepare for the future.

8. RELIGIONS AT THE SERVICE OF FRATERNITY IN OUR WORLD:

The different world religions offer a valuable contribution to the building up of fraternity and to the defense of justice.

The dialogue between people of different religions is not achieved through mere diplomacy, kindness, or tolerance. The aim of dialogue is to establish friendship, peace, harmony and to share moral and spiritual experiences in a spirit of truth and love.





FRATELLI TUTTI is an exhortation that proposes the way to live social friendship in a world where so many opposing currents seem to attract human beings. May this commentary be an encouragement to refer to all the chapters of the encyclical. In the face of all that threatens good understanding among peoples, let us learn to discover a wise and fruitful application of our experience to achieve fraternity and social friendship. Then

we will have attained the ideal of our human and Christian vocation. This encyclical could be our sole bedside reading and the document that inspires our meetings, our meditations and our resolutions.

This article is only a summary of FRATELLI TUTTI, and how much we will learn as we go through all its chapters to the end. The document is an excellent guide for our experiences and those of our brothers and sisters around the world.

Sister Annette Aspirot, SP



Sister Hortense Demia-Mbailaou, SP
JPIC liaison person for the
General Leadership Team

Peace to you in Providence,

It was with joy that we received Pope Francis' encyclical "Fratelli Tutti". The Pope presents it to us as a "Social Encyclical". This encyclical takes its title from the Admonitions of St. Francis of Assisi, which was addressed to all his brothers and sisters, to propose a way of life in keeping with the Gospel. The new Encyclical has the objective of promoting a worldwide aspiration

to fraternity and social friendship. Pope Francis shares with us: "When I was writing this letter, the Covid-19 pandemic suddenly erupted, exposing our false certainties". But the world health crisis has shown that "no one saves himself" and that the moment has truly arrived to "dream of one humanity" in which we are "all brothers" (7-8).



In fact, Pope Francis looks at humanity and he draws from it this very strong conviction that we are all equal, we are all brothers and sisters, we are all children of God and that therefore we are all fundamentally, radically, called to live together to love one another without borders. In the encyclical "Fratelli Tutti" Pope Francis pleads for an open fraternity that, honoring differences, makes dialogue prevail over all forms of exclusion. Dialogue destroys the barriers of heart and mind, it opens up spaces for forgiveness, it favors reconciliation.

Moreover, the purpose of the encyclical is to know how to make "us", how to recreate living

together. The Pope exhorts us that it is through fraternity that we will arrive. Doing "us" is effectively today a challenge of survival for our planet. It is a starting point to building our sense of us as Sisters of Providence; to "make us" which translates into the Unity that we want in the Congregation.

From this point of view, the Pope's choice of the parable of the Good Samaritan is significant. It is not a question of who is closest, who is "my brother" who is my "sister", the priest, the Levite or the Samaritan. It is about who we should be close to, who we should make brother and sister. The difference is important because it calls us to become co-



responsible in the Community and in the world. It is a matter of opening our hearts to the world, of reflecting with our hearts. The Good Samaritan, wrote Pope Francis, unlike many others before him, "knew how to put everything aside in front of this wounded man and, without knowing him, considered him worthy of receiving the gift of his day" (63); time that has become so precious in our day. The parable, in response to the question of who our neighbor is, "invites us to resurrect our vocation as citizens of our country and of the whole world, builders of a new social bond" (66).

In order to realize the fundamental right of every human being to live in dignity, we must fight the virus of individualism, which is actively spreading. The Encyclical is concerned about "the tendency towards an ever-increasing demand for individual rights" (111) to the detriment of the common good and the rights of all. The challenge is therefore to build a "culture of fraternity" through which "Pope Francis calls everyone to love the other people, the other nation, as his own, and thus to build relationships, rules and institutions, abandoning the mirage of force, isolation, closed visions, selfish and partisan actions," because a better world cannot be built by the addition of particular interests. But it is from "a future shaped by interdependence and shared responsibility throughout the human family" (127).

The Pope tells us again that "the educational mission of the family is first and

essential" (114), he names the two central ingredients in the construction of a better world: benevolence and solidarity. This is what we as the Providence Family have as our mission: to be benevolent in every action for a fraternity in solidarity, to revive a universal desire for humanity. We are called to live in a fraternity and social friendship in the ways indicated by the Pope to build a better, more just and more peaceful world. The Pope gives us advice and among his counsels, I would like to highlight one in which he invites us to a love that overcomes the barriers of geography and space. He declares the one who loves the other is happy "as much when he is far from him as when he is with him".

In short, the Pope expresses to us Sisters of Providence the essential of an open fraternity that allows us to recognize, value and love each sister and each person regardless of physical closeness, no matter where they were born or where they live. Highlighting some of the key teachings of Fratelli Tutti: what is clear is that new systems must be imagined, new ideas must be considered, new ways must be built, and the only way this will happen is to open our hearts by acting together for justice, dignity, solidarity and the common good.

Merry Christmas in fraternity with the Child Emmanuel, God With Us.





Emilie Gamelin Province



Eastern Canada and United States,
Haiti, Cameroon and Egypt

Pierre-Laurier Baribeau 1950-2020

by Claire Houde, s.p., Provincial Leader



Collaborator and strategic advisor to the Sisters of Providence, Province Emilie-Gamelin, Mr. Pierre-Laurier Baribeau, in addition to being a mediator accredited by the Barreau du Québec,

has acted as counselor to executives and boards of directors of companies and organizations in the private and public sectors, both in Quebec and in the other Canadian provinces. He was also a legal advisor in class actions in Quebec, Canada and the United States.

His funeral, which took place on November 28, 2020, at 2:00 p.m. in the chapel of the Motherhouse of the Sisters of Providence, was broadcast live on the Congregation's Facebook

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

The celebrants were: Cardinal Gérald Cyprien Lacroix, 25th Bishop and 15th Archbishop of Quebec, whom we welcomed for the first time in our chapel; Monsignor Christian Lépine, 10th Bishop and 8th Archbishop of Montreal, since 2012 and Fr. Miguel Castellanos, P.S.S., priest of Notre-Dame Parish in Montreal.

Sister Claire Houde paid tribute to Mr. Baribeau in words that we share with you: "Paying tribute to Pierre-Laurier Baribeau is easy and at the same time very difficult. A contrast, however, woven of truth.

Without enumerating all the places of Pierre's involvement as a professional and as a volunteer, it must be noted that he has given love, interest and dedication as a member and president of boards of directors, for the elderly, youth, hospital services, heart, lung



and mental health, class action allegations of various types, including Canadian residential schools', an international foundation for the most disadvantaged in life, church organizations and others.

I have benefited from the contribution of a legal and strategic advisor who has provided me with knowledge, solutions and very important assistance in sometimes labyrinthian files, and this, for 35 years. Pierre,

you have been a generous and appreciated professional for the Congregation, and we could say much more about that!

Pierre, we thank you for your deep personality. Please remember to ask me often: "Is your list already finished?" No, it is not finished yet and we would still welcome your good advice, your sometimes surprising strategies and your innate sense of responsibility! Goodbye, Pierre".

Whom shall I send? Who will go for us? Here I am, I said; send me. Isaiah 6:8

by Nagwa Gameel, SP

It is a pleasure for me to express my deep gratitude to God, after three years of demanding work at the University of Notre Dame of Haïti, God who has granted me health, perseverance and courage. Nothing is easy in life, especially when you do not know the culture, the people and the language very well, but Providence is always at work.

I have met good people along the way and this has helped me to face the difficulties I have encountered. Studying in a country different from mine is quite an adventure. As Pope Francis says, if you want to go fast, work alone, but if you want to go far, work with others.

Here is what I experienced during these three years at university, always with my classmates. We have walked together as brothers and sisters. Our professors were excellent counselors and friends. Thank you, Lord!

The first week at the university, I realized that I could not speak or read French properly. This was an obstacle to my education, especially in science classes,



because I had to write down the professor's long and difficult scientific explanations and expressions. I thought about giving up the university, but my classmates encouraged me and said: "Give yourself a chance."

At present, I have finished my studies and I defended my thesis between December 1st and





8th on the following topic: "*L'importance du matériel didactique dans l'enseignement comme apprentissage au troisième cycle de l'école fondamentale*" (The importance of didactic materials as a method of teaching and learning in the third cycle of elementary school).

I will never forget the third year, as several changes and regulations due to coronavirus disrupted our program and activities. I have experienced bereavement in my dear family, but I kept courage, because God grants the graces.

their quality of presence and their way of keeping in touch with them during the coronavirus. They felt supported, loved and encouraged.



Here is a message from the employees of our two houses, who thanked the Community of the Sisters of Providence for

For the past two months, I have been teaching biology and catechism classes. With the students, we have made liquid dish soap, cards and other things as manual work.

I participated in a spirituality program with the Jesuits to nourish my faith and to learn more about accompanying young people either individually or in groups.

Providence of God, I thank you for all!

Holy Angels Province



Western Canada

Long Service Awards November 20, 2020

By David Warawa, Executive Director of Providence Centre, Edmonton

Providence Centre, through the support of our Provincial Administration, was extremely proud to host the Long Service Awards 2020, where we recognized our employees for their ongoing efforts and

dedication. As one community of Sisters and staff who share in the Mission of Providence Centre, Providence Renewal Centre and Provincial Administration, it was with great pride that we recognized





the employees who have reached various milestones of service.

The Awards Ceremony allowed us to say a special thank you to those who have completed 5, 10, and 25 years of service. We recognized these individuals with a few words about their efforts and presented them with a certificate, a gift, and a rose, to

show our appreciation for their continued commitment to excellence and the sincere loyalty to our Sisters, staff and guests.

On behalf of the Provincial Administration we wish to thank our staff for their dedication, and we look forward to supporting and recognizing their continued efforts, for many years to come.

Bernarda Morin Province



Chile and Argentina

We celebrate the Month of Mary with works and communities of the Province

By the Communication Office of the Province

Every year, during the month prior to the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the Church in Chile celebrates the traditional "Month of Mary", an occasion in which parishes, chapels, shrines, congregations, works and

religious communities, among others, celebrate our Mother





communities prepared various prayers and celebrations. Considering the context in which we are living, many celebrations had to be held at a distance, whole not diminishing their relevance. In all of the Providence Schools in Chile, the present sisters, along with the pastoral

through special activities, prayers, processions and pilgrimages.

This beautiful practice was started in 1854 by Monsignor Joaquin Larrain Gandarillas, rector of the Pontifical Seminary of Santiago, who was inspired by an ancient tradition established in Europe, where Mary is celebrated in May, as it is the "month of flowers". Here they wanted to celebrate in November, to avoid the cold of autumn.

Our Province is not exempt from the joy of celebrating the Virgin, so works and

teams of each work, centered their gaze on Mary, raising prayers through videos, conferences by Zoom or images and prayers written on their websites and social networks.

The elderly care works also experienced this special celebrated Month, with special prayers each day, including petitions for those challenged by the pandemic. In addition, the sisters and staff of the Provincialate gathered daily before work to celebrate Mary and pray for those who are suffering.

Use of technological tools has facilitated union across distances

By the Communication Office of the Province

A video call between some sisters of the Bernarda Morin community and the San Jose Residence is only one of the many concrete reasons for which we thank Providence for keeping us united and for being able to communicate with technological and computer tools, thus respecting restrictions and social

distances. Jaqueline Juárez, current superior of the Bernarda Morin community and provincial





secretary, had the opportunity to speak through Zoom with the San José Residence, specifically with resident María Haydee Forestal de la Parra, who is very close to the province, having worked for many years in the sacristy of our Mother Church.

For Maria Haydee, the Sisters of Providence are her closest family.

She was therefore very happy to receive this call and speak to the sisters. "The congregation has been my home and my family. They were and are everything to me," she indicated from a distance with gratitude.



responded that, for the Sisters, she too is part of the Providence family.

Thanks to the efforts of the San Jose Residence and the National Service for the Elderly (SENAMA), a government entity that aims to improve the quality of life of the elderly in our country, the residence has had greater Internet coverage in its premises since November and there is also access to cable television.

Not only the residents of the homes for the elderly of the Bernarda Morin Foundation had to adapt to the context, but also all the personnel of the works of the Province and the



sisters themselves, had to make an effort to adapt gradually to the use of technological tools. The educational institutions of the Province are mostly engaged in distance education, so the sisters of those works have had to constantly participate in meetings and video conferences with Zoom, also using email and messaging applications on cell phones.

The organization and activities of the Province itself have also been able to continue thanks to technology, developing at a distance different meetings, retreats, funerals, masses, Eucharists, entry into the pre-novitiate and ceremony of temporary vows, among others. Great participation of sisters from all over Chile was possible, witnessing or participating directly from their own communities or places of mission.

We are especially grateful for the various invitations to participate in the different congregational events, also organized through videoconferences, such as the recent November retreat, and also for keeping the



sisters in Chile informed by sending emails, publications and notices from our International Centre.

We are grateful to God Providence for being able to recently implement in our chapter

orientations references to community life, since the difficulties of these past months have served to strengthen dialogue, listening and mutual trust, adapting ourselves to the cultural reality that we are living today.

Mother Joseph Province



United States, El Salvador, Philippines

Teresa Huang Thi Nguyen professes final vows as a Sister of Providence

By Anita Wilkins, Communication Director

During this particularly challenging year, celebrating the perpetual vows of Sister Teresa Huang Thi Nguyen was a bright spot.

Sister Huang professed her final vows of chastity, poverty and obedience as a Sister of Providence in a liturgy on Sunday, Oct. 11, at Vietnamese Martyrs Catholic Church, Tukwila, Wash.

Due to pandemic health and safety requirements, Sister Huang's vows ceremony was a bit of a break from tradition. The church was limited to 25 percent capacity, which restricted the number of friends, parishioners and sisters to approximately 200, with masks and social distancing in effect. Caution tape blocked off alternate pews, attendees were seated six feet apart, and a cleaning crew appeared as soon as Mass dismissed. The customary final vows reception will be



Sister Huang (right) recites her vows to Sister Karin Dufault, congregational leader. The liturgy was presented in English and Vietnamese.

rescheduled as health and safety requirements allow.

Though Sister Huang's family was unable to travel from Vietnam for the ceremony, they were able to watch via livestream video.



Several times during the ceremony, the family was addressed, keeping them engaged from afar. Sisters of Providence in lockdown and long-distance were able to enjoy the event online and be present in spirit, as well.

All four members of the Provincial Council of Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province were able to attend – Provincial Leader Barbara Schamber and Councilors Jacqueline Fernandes, Margarita Hernandez and Karen Hawkins – as were more than 25 other sisters. Congregational Leader Karin Dufault, SP, traveled from Montreal and spent 14 days in quarantine so she could take part in the event. Father Gioakim Dao Xuan Thanh presided, with six concelebrants.

Sister Huong's many personal gifts and talents were apparent at the ceremony. The altar was decorated with a handmade needlework quilt and flowers arranged by the creative sister, who also sewed her own dress for the occasion. The ceremony culminated with a beautiful song written and sung in Vietnamese by Sister Huong for her parents. The lyrics describe her gratitude for their love and support, and reassuring words about her call to become a bride of Christ: *"Jesus is my married man. He is the best of the best... Mom, Dad, please do not worry for me because with Jesus I am at peace, and I am His beloved, and I will try to live this love for the rest of my life."*

Sister Huong entered the Sisters of Providence religious community as a candidate in April 2010. She had been called to religious life as a young woman and initially joined the congregation of the Lovers of the Holy Cross

of Thanh Hoa in North Vietnam after graduating from high school. When her family members experienced difficult times, she left the religious community to help support them as a seamstress and florist.

However, God's call persisted, and Huong was drawn to the Sisters of Providence. She spent two years communicating with various Sisters of Providence. Eventually two sisters visiting Vietnam paid a visit to Huong and her parents, and she was invited for a "Come & See" experience in Seattle.

As a Sisters of Providence candidate and novice, Huong spent time in Spokane, Wash., studying theology at Gonzaga University and taking courses at Spokane Community College. She also volunteered at the Women's Hearth and St. Ann's Child Center.

Sister Huong returned to Seattle in June 2013 where she finished her associate degree at Seattle Central College and earned a bachelor's in business administration at Seattle University. She completed a master's in transformation leadership at Seattle University in June 2020 – celebrated "the Covid way" with a virtual online graduation ceremony.

Sister Huong begins her new ministry this month as a residence service coordinator with Providence Peter Claver House and Providence Gamelin House, affordable supportive housing programs in south Seattle.

"I cannot explain enough how Provident God is in my life, particularly my religious life, but one thing I know: God will always be with me





in every step of my life," said Sister Huong. "I often remind myself of the words St. Teresa of Calcutta said, "I can't do a great thing, but I can do a small thing with great love." So, I choose this way as I trust in my God because, "with

God, nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37). I offer my life to God through the Sisters of Providence responding, "Yes, here I am, send me!" to serve people who are marginalized and vulnerable in our society.



Earth Committee moves toward ecological con-

By Anita Wilkins, Communication Director

Care of the Earth is nothing new to the Sisters of Providence. It is part of the Constitutions and Rules of the Congregation – number 28, to be precise: "...

Recognizing that we humans are a part of the whole created universe, we accept the challenge to promote an integral ecology. (Pope Francis) As we foster the human, social and environmental connectedness of God's creation, we become more authentic signs of God's loving Providence."

During this year of significant international milestones in caring for creation – the fifth anniversary of Pope Francis' encyclical, "Laudato Si," the fifth anniversary of the Paris Agreement to combat climate change, and the 50th anniversary of Earth Day – it has simultaneously been a time of significant suffering due to health, justice, economic and environmental inequities.

In response to the increased and changing needs of our times, the Sisters of Providence have

refocused their Earth ministry. A new Earth Committee will build on the work of the prior Reclaiming Earth Committee to support an updated **mission statement: to foster action for the healing of our common home by deepening our understanding of Constitution #28 and facilitating the response to Laudato Si and integral ecology by the Sisters of Providence, Associates, Companions and friends.**

The committee is made up of sisters with deep roots in Earth advocacy: Sisters Annette Seubert, Charlene Hudon, Margaret Botch, Marilyn Charette, Mary Kay Nealen, Sue Orłowski, and Karen Hawkins. As a committee, they will be identifying specific steps for personal and provincial movement toward "Laudato Si's" Goals for Ecological Conversion, below.

1. **Response to the cry of the Earth:** work toward carbon neutrality through greater use of clean renewable energy and reduced fossil fuel use; support efforts to protect and promote biodiversity and guarantee water access for all.
2. **Response to the cry of the poor:** defend human life from conception to death and all forms of life on Earth, while giving special attention to vulnerable groups such as





indigenous communities, migrants and children at risk of trafficking and slavery.

Ecological economics: support sustainable production, fair trade, ethical consumption and investments, investments in renewable energy, divestment from fossil fuels and limiting any economic activity harmful to the planet or people.

Adoption of simple lifestyles: reduce use of energy and resources, avoid single-use plastics, adopt a more plant-based diet, reduce meat consumption and increase use of public transportation over polluting alternatives.

Ecological education: redesign curricula around integral ecology, create ecological awareness and action, promote ecological vocation with young people and teachers.

Ecological spirituality: recover a religious vision of God's creation, promote creation-centered liturgical celebrations, develop ecological catechesis and prayers and encourage more time in nature.

Emphasis on community involvement and participatory action around creation care at all levels of society by promoting advocacy and grassroots campaigns.

"As a member of MJP Earth Committee I am eager for us as a province to delve more deeply into our Constitution #28 and to understand integral ecology at a deeper level," says Sister Annette Seubert. "Our Earth today cries out for us to respond to the care of our common home. Creation cries out in devastating fires, high winds and tropical

storms; our suffering people cry out in illness and deaths from COVID-19 and racial inequality surfacing black lives matter protests, violence and white supremacist activities; our consciences cry out for justice and transformative soul-making. I believe God is inviting us to change our minds and our hearts, and to invest our energies into responding to the most urgent need of our world today: climate change and its impact on the whole of our Earth community."

Integral ecology defined: everything is connected

Pope Francis' encyclical, "Laudato Si," chapter 4, describes integral ecology as the interconnectedness of environmental, economic, political, social, cultural, and ethical issues.

Because everything is connected, we must take a holistic approach to what is both an environmental and human crisis: "...genuine care for our own lives and our relationships with nature is inseparable from fraternity, justice and faithfulness to others." (LS n 70)

Our current patterns of connecting people to each other do not make it possible for everyone to live well. Integral ecology requires "an integrated approach to combatting poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature." (LS n 139)

"If everything is related, then the health of a society's institutions has consequences for the environment and the quality of human life. Every violation of solidarity and civic friendship harms the environment. In this sense, social ecology is necessarily institutional, and gradually extends to the whole of society, from the primary social group, the family, to the wider local, national and international communities." (LS n 142)



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