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## CELEBRATING THE CALL TO PROVIDENCE



*Sister Ann Linda Bell, CDP*

80<sup>th</sup> JUBILEE

I was inspired to enter religious life by the devotion of my teachers at St. Cecilia School in Broussard, Louisiana. My most rewarding experience has been teaching...I love teaching. Some of my students have become teachers, including Sister Ann Petrus who was head of the Math Department at Our Lady of the Lake University and is now Superior General of our Congregation and Janet Griffin who was head of the History Department at Our Lady of the Lake University and is now a tutor at La Casita and volunteer for Project Quest.



*Sister Adrienne Marie Schmitzinsky, CDP*      75<sup>th</sup> JUBILEE

I was born into a devout Catholic family on a farm in Fredericksburg, Texas. Two of my aunts were Sisters of Divine Providence. My fifth grade year was at St. Mary's School and I was taught by Sister Laboria. She assigned us the inspirational book on The Life of the Little Flower and I was awed by Sister's love of Jesus. During my junior and senior years in high school, I experienced a call to religious life during an afternoon nap. The September after I graduated, with the support of my family I entered the Congregation of Divine Providence. At the time, my brother Msgr. Victor Schmitzinsky had been in seminary for a few years and he supported me all the way through formation.

As a teacher, every student I taught for 64 years was a rewarding experience. I began in Texarkana, Arkansas where I was blessed to count Sister Jane Ann Slater as one of my pupils. It is an honor for me to be remembered by so many of my former students, some of whom are Sisters of Divine Providence. I attend class events and it is a pleasure to see alums go on to lead wonderful and productive lives. I love receiving notes telling me of a new addition to the family, asking for my prayers for the death of a loved one or photographs of travel they have done. Being remembered by so many is beyond rewarding and I thank our Provident God for my teaching ministry.



*Sister Patricia Ann Sullivan, CDP*

75<sup>th</sup> JUBILEE

Because my father died when I was two years old, my mother sent me to a boarding school run by the Sisters of Divine Providence. I just loved those Sisters and I wanted to be like them. When I was old enough to make my own decision, I joined the Congregation of Divine Providence. I have been very happy being a Sister of Divine Providence and I have enjoyed my many years of teaching in various schools. God has been very good to me.



*Sister Joanne Eustice, CDP*

70<sup>th</sup> JUBILEE

I was inspired to enter religious life early. I attended Catholic school and by the time I was in the fourth grade I knew that I wanted to be a Sister. I thought they were great, so I wanted to be like one of them. They helped me to be more religious, and watching them, and the way they acted and the things they did influenced me to be more like them. I had an aunt in this order; I was named for her. She was my mother's sister.

My mother played piano, so she taught all of us nine kids the rudiments of music and we all learned to play the piano – some, of course, better than others. We were three boys and six girls. So the boys didn't stay with the piano that long. Some of them went to guitar after a while, but two of us girls became music teachers. I had always wanted to be a music teacher, to keep my mother's legacy of playing and teaching piano. I very much enjoyed teaching the piano to grade school students.



*Sister Genevieve Prochaska, CDP*

70<sup>th</sup> JUBILEE

I was never introduced to anyone in religious life, so I truly felt my call came from God. My most rewarding experience has been working in health care, but most of all the RCIA program.



*Sister Mary Rose Zimmerer, CDP*

70<sup>th</sup> JUBILEE

In my family were many religious. My dad had a sister who was a Sister of Divine Providence, Sister Fortunata Zimmerer. She inspired me. There were also many cousins in the Congregation of Divine Providence. We were taught by the Sisters of Divine Providence.

My most rewarding experience was feeling that I was the reason Msgr. Larry Droll became a priest. He was truly an inspiration. He is now pastor in a large parish, St. Ann's, in Midland, Texas.



*Sister Constance Christopher, CDP*

60<sup>th</sup> JUBILEE

All my assignments have been a positive experience. I enjoyed immensely working with junior high students during my teaching days. After getting a degree in social work from Tulane University I spent the next 10 years as a visiting teacher and went out into the homes to counsel students and their families in the Harlandale School District. That was one of my best experiences working among the young people and being of assistance to parents to help make their lives better. I'm proud to be a member of the Congregation of Divine Providence.



*Sister Madonna Sangalli, CDP*

60<sup>th</sup> JUBILEE

I was inspired to enter religious life by the example of many wonderful people in my life and a desire to give my life totally to God. My most rewarding experiences have been meeting and serving the people in the areas where I ministered.



*Sister Fran Trochta, CDP*

60<sup>th</sup> JUBILEE

In approaching the time of jubilee my thoughts have brought me to a deeper appreciation of the ways in which God has woven the threads of varied ministries in my life. In ways both unexpected and extremely meaningful and satisfying, God's hand has led me in ways that brought me to different faces of ministry - from teaching to parish involvement at every level and, more recently, to serving and being served by the terminally ill. The latter two ministries were completely absent from both my view and my imagination 60 years ago, and, coupled with an early teaching ministry, have enriched my life abundantly. And while no word can capture the beauty and the depth of the experience of this richness, I can only return to the prayer that suffices: a "Thank You" to God, to all the people I've been blessed to serve, and to you, my Sisters.

*"The Sisters of Divine Providence will often ask God for the four fundamental virtues of: simplicity, poverty, abandonment to Providence, and charity."*

BLESSED JOHN MARTIN MOYE



*Sister Theresa Anne Billeaud, CDP*

50<sup>th</sup> JUBILEE

I grew up in a family of daughters, no sons. My mother graduated high school at St. Cecilia in Broussard, Louisiana. She was fond of the Sisters of Divine Providence there. All of my sisters except my youngest, Mary Anne, graduated from St. Cecilia. Four of my older sisters entered the Convent. Denise and Jo (Antoinette) joined the Congregation of Divine Providence. Shirley (Sister Mary John) and Lulu (Sister Alberta) joined the Carmelites in Lafayette, Louisiana. The other four of my sisters married and had beautiful families. The sisters who taught at St. Cecilia's would always encourage religious life to the students. Every summer our family would go to Our Lady of the Lake Convent to visit our aunt, Sister Ethel Marie Corne, then also Sister Denise, then Sister Antoinette. In the summer of 1960, the family gathered at Camp Cayola in Castroville. Sister Denise was teaching at the Aspirancy at Moye; she took me aside and talked to me about the Aspirancy, asking me whether I would be interested in becoming an Aspirant. I figured there was no harm in trying. My mother thought I was too young to consider religious life, but decided that I could go to Moye that September since Sister Denise would be teaching there. Moye and all of my formation time as well as my life as a Sister of Divine Providence have been fruitful experiences for me.

My two most rewarding experiences in ministry were my time preparing for social justice ministry at the Jesuit School of Theology in Chicago, then promoting social justice in schools and parishes and my time teaching math, especially to the adult women preparing to get a GED.



*Sister Carolyn Pelzel, CDP*

50<sup>th</sup> JUBILEE

My inspiration to enter religious life came from the many CDP Sisters who taught me in Olfen Public School. However, it was my creative 7th & 8th grade teacher, Sister Marie de Chantal, who was the determining influence on my choice to become a Sister of Divine Providence. World News, social issues, and social justice were an integrated part of our daily discussions. These discussions built on the awareness of God's loving care that I was taught at home. My parents and grandparents lived these teachings in our faith-filled environment in Olfen, TX. I saw religious life as vibrant and meaningful to Sister Marie. I continued to be inspired by her during our life together as religious.

Each mission where I ministered was so very different. I was continually amazed by the unique life styles and traditions of each place. I went from downtown Houston, TX to a small community of Broussard, LA. I lived on the Intercostal Canal working with the Cajuns in Houma, LA, and also ministered at Sacred Heart Church on Canal Street in New Orleans. From the desert of Odessa, TX, I went to the mountain top of Santa Fe, NM. There I was introduced to the faith traditions of Chimayo, the pueblo communities, and of the mountain top communities of Truches. My time in Santa Fe was the highlight of my different ministries. The faith traditions from this area were vibrant, yet built on ancient history. There was an energy that enlivened me there.

The bayous, the desert, the mountains, the oilfields, the hill country all reflected God's unique love. In each place I became enriched in ways I would have never dreamt possible. In each place I felt very blessed by the vibrancy of God working among so many diverse people.



*Sister Maria Eva Flores, CDP*

50<sup>th</sup> JUBILEE

Two years ago, as I sat in my home parish church, San José, in Fort Stockton, Texas, for the funeral of my uncle, it occurred to me that my spiritual genealogy and my call to religious life is rooted in that small church in that small West Texas town.

In that small church I was baptized, confirmed, learned my prayers, by rote in Spanish, taught by my mother's aunt, Carolina. The small church building, a five minute walk from home, represents the faith of my ancestors, my spiritual roots. It was in that church and with that church community that I first learned that a life well lived is a life of service.

*"I humbly ask our provident God to grant me the grace to remain always faithful to my vows"*

RITE OF PROFESSION

# FROM THE DESK OF SISTER ANN PETRUS



Dear Partners in Mission,

How wonderful it was to welcome so many of you to our Donor Appreciation event in early May. All of us Sisters enjoyed greeting old friends and meeting new ones. Many thanks to all who were able to attend. At the event we kicked off the Big Give San Antonio that took place Tuesday, May 5. It was a day of giving for local non-profit organizations. Because of generous donors like you, we received \$28,692 in donations that day and won \$1000 in prize money by having the most unduplicated donors during the 3:00 PM hour. Our ministries in the U.S. and Mexico will benefit greatly from this additional funding. Thank you.

Recently Sisters Estela Guadalupe Tovar, Helen Marie Miksch, and I returned from Portieux, France where we attended the triennial meeting of the leaders of the seven Providence congregations which share common roots in 18th century France. Six of the congregations trace their beginnings to Father Jean Martin Moye, and Father Louis Kremp founded the Ribeauvillé community following Moye's model. About 3000 Sisters of these congregations serve in all continents except Australia. One of the topics of the meeting was the recently-founded inter-congregational mission in Plassac, Haiti. We were able to deliver nearly \$3000 for the mission from our donors, the Sisters and our Providence Catholic School.

There are young women today who experience a call to religious life. Two young women professed their first vows as CDP Sisters in July, Sister Kate Fitzgerald, and Sister Misty Garriga. Megan Grewing will become a novice in August, and we have four affiliates, Cristina Chavez and Melissa Cessac in the U.S. and Esperanza Rivera and Ana Lourdes Gonzalez in Mexico. We invite you to partner with us to support women during their period of formation for religious life. A donation to the Charlene Wedelich Endowment Fund would be much appreciated; you may contribute by checking off the Future Membership box in the enclosed envelope.

This issue is dedicated to our 12 Sisters who are celebrating anniversaries this year—50, 60, 70, 75 and, yes, even 80 years of life as Sisters of Divine Providence. Oh, the stories they have to tell! We celebrate the action of God's Providence in their lives and give thanks for their generous response over so many years as they dedicated all their talents and energy to serve the People of God.

With trust in Providence,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sr. Ann Petrus". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sister Ann Petrus, CDP  
Superior General

## *Leave a Legacy*

Add the Congregation of Divine Providence to your estate plan. It's easy.  
Contact our Director of Mission Support, Mary Anne Votion, and let her assist you.

# MEET FUTURE NOVICE MEGAN GREWING...



As a Pre-Novice, I have grown and learned a great deal this past year about what it means to live in a community as a Sister of Divine Providence. There is a beautiful song by All Sons and Daughters titled 'Called Higher' that really expresses a lot of how I have felt about being a Pre-Novice over this past year. I would like to give you a quote from it.

"I could just sit, I could just sit and wait for all your goodness, hope to feel your presence. I could just stay, I could just stay right where I am, hope to feel you, hope to feel something again. I could hold on, I could hold on to who I am and never let you change me from the inside. I could be safe; I could be safe here in your arms and never leave home and never let these walls down. But you have called me higher, you have called me deeper and I will go where you lead me Lord....and I will be yours, I will be yours for all my life... cause you have called me higher, you have called me deeper and I will go where you lead me Lord."

As Sisters of Divine Providence we are called out of waiting for God, of holding on to who we are, of wanting to be safe, for the purpose of becoming more and doing more than we could imagine while serving God and all of God's beloved people.

I love and continue to be drawn to our strong sense of mission wrapped in our charism and what it means for the world. We certainly do live in a world that is in chaos and very much wounded by violence, whether it is unjust immigration laws or terrorism or even the great poverty that abounds in the neighborhood in which we live. The world seems to be screaming out for a loving God who works within all of those situations to turn them to good. We as CDPs work in the world as co-creators with God through our ministries.

I have greatly enjoyed my time as a Pre-Novice. My time with this community has been filled with warmth, support, laughter, tears and everything in between. I have had the privilege of getting to know many of the Sisters on a deeper level. I love being able to listen to and learn from their wisdom. This year has been a tremendous gift that will undoubtedly continue to unfold as I move forward in formation.

With trust in Providence,

Megan Grewing  
Pre-Novice, Congregation of Divine Providence



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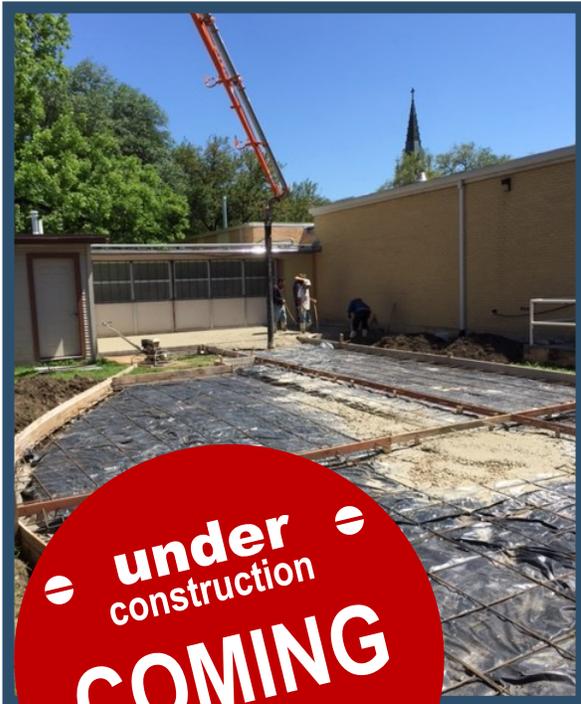


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## THE ARNOLD BEZNER *Memorial Garden*

Construction is underway on a garden designed to be accessible to the residents of McCullough Hall Nursing Center. Situated at the west end of the building, the garden will feature a potting shelf for those who like planting, a swing that can hold a wheelchair, lots of lovely plants and a shaded area.

This remembrance garden is dedicated to the memory of Arnold Eugene Bezner who was killed in a tragic car accident on May 31, 1955, after serving as best man at the wedding of his friend and cousin John Schmitz and Albina Mages Schmitz. In addition to remembering the friendship of Arnold and John, the garden provides the family a unique opportunity to acknowledge the Bezner Sisters (Sisters Alban, Anna Rose, Ramona, Kathleen and Bernadette Bezner) for their long and loyal religious service as Sisters of Divine Providence.

The Congregation is very grateful for the generosity of John's sons, John David and Steve Michael Schmitz, who are sponsoring this garden as a lasting and beautiful memorial to their father's friend, Arnold Bezner. It will serve as a peaceful and prayerful retreat for the Sisters and other MHNC residents who will grace the setting by their presence.

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