

## THE ASSOCIATE RELATIONSHIP



The Associate relationship is a way in which adults outside of the vowed membership can share in the mission and goals of a religious congregation. The relationship is mutually creative and enriches, supports and challenges both associates and vowed members in their response to the Gospel. The essential element of association is to widen and strengthen bonds with others who affirm the goals and mission of a religious congregation. Associates do this while maintaining their independent life style.

(The above is a statement by the North American Conference of Associates and Religious (NACAR), once a national organization providing information and resources on Associates with Religious Congregations, now nonoperational.)

## ASSOCIATES WITH THE SISTERS OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE



*Mission and Charism of the Sisters of Divine Providence, from the Constitution of the Sisters of Divine Providence, Articles 1-5.*

- 1. The Sisters of Divine Providence of San Antonio, Texas, are a community of women within the Church who dedicate our lives totally to furthering the mission of Jesus in our world. For the sake of our mission we are bound to one another in a common life by public profession of vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. We minister to people in need, finding light and strength in prayer and in our communion with one another.*
- 2. The particular charism which informs our mission is confidence that God is provident – guiding, loving, and caring for all creation. The identifying spirit in which we live out this charism is that of our four fundamental virtues of abandonment to Divine Providence, simplicity, poverty and charity.*
- 3. Jesus was sent by God to bring good news to the world. He told the people that God, the creator of everything, loves and provides for all creation. His actions showed that God continually acts to re-create and redeem the world. Thus, Jesus gave the people hope that all things would in God's time be transformed into a New Creation. The gospel message is that, in Jesus, God's way of justice, peace, freedom, and love is re-created within and among all people.*
- 4. The Church has been sent in the Spirit to carry on Jesus' mission throughout history. Its members are to pray, speak, and act that God may continue the work of creation in and through them.*
- 5. As a religious congregation within the Church, we Sisters of Divine Providence carry out the same mission in a unique and prophetic way.*

***“Associates commit themselves to collaborate . . . in carrying out the mission of Jesus.”***

For further information, please contact:

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## WHO ARE CDP ASSOCIATES?



Associates of the Sisters of Divine Providence of San Antonio are persons who experience a call to live the mission and charism of the Congregation of Divine Providence within their particular lifestyle. They are formally accepted as lay associates, after requesting affiliation with the Congregation and participating in an Associate Formation process. CDP Associates commit themselves to collaborate with the Congregation in carrying out the mission of Jesus to bring good news to the world that God loves and provides for all creation by sharing their gifts in their individual settings. Associates experience and manifest in their lives the unique spirit of confidence in a Provident God – guiding, loving, and caring for all creation.

CDP Associates are women and men (at least 18 years of age) of diverse faith traditions who seek a formal relationship with the Sisters of Divine Providence of San Antonio, Texas. There are CDP Associates throughout the United States and Mexico. In four regions of Mexico, Associates minister alongside the Sisters in parishes, nursing homes, and homeless shelters, among other ministries. Becoming a CDP Associate is a voluntary relationship with the Congregation of Divine Providence. There is no canonical or legal obligation on the part of the Associate or the Sisters of Divine Providence. Associates do not participate in the governance of the Congregation.

The Congregation has long encountered lay women and men who, with us, share faith in a Provident God who loves and cares for all creation and who express their faith in service to others. It was this on-going experience that moved our Congregation to mandate the following recommendation at the 1981 General Chapter: **That immediate steps should be taken to establish associate groups to participate in our CDP charism and mission.**

Since that time, the Holy Spirit has continued to spread our Providence spirituality among diverse women and men in the United States and Mexico. The number of CDP Associates has steadily grown in both countries, and the mission and charism of the Sisters of Divine Providence of spreading the love of our Provident God, has been passed on to many people by our Associates living and serving in their unique circumstances. Through their witness and service, CDP Associates express the loving care of our Provident God in situations and places that our Sisters are not able to be present. In other instances, CDP Associates are co-workers in our sponsored and Congregational ministries and collaborate with the Congregation in carrying out its mission and charism in these special ministries. The CDP Associates enrich and enhance the life and mission of the Sisters of Divine Providence in an inspiring and powerful way.

