



Sisters of Providence  
of St. Vincent de Paul  
www.providence.ca

# PROVIDENCE PAGES

Fall 2018



Through the generosity of the Diocese of Hamilton, two volumes of the Heritage Edition of *The Saint John's Bible* were available for viewing at Providence Motherhouse for Sisters, Associates and members of the Sunday faith community.

*story on page 3*

## In this issue:



**Farewell Sister Rita Gleason**



**Affordable Healthy Food**



**Final Heirloom Tomato Day**

## Vision Statement

A world where the vulnerable experience compassion, justice and peace.

## Mission Statement

The Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul are a congregation of vowed women religious called to be channels of God's Providence.

Rooted in the mission of Jesus, we empower the vulnerable through compassionate service, advocacy and networking. Sharing our spiritual, human and financial resources, we promote justice and peace for all creation.



Sisters of Providence  
of St. Vincent de Paul

Phone 613.544.4525 ext. 328

Email [communications@providence.ca](mailto:communications@providence.ca)

Box 427, Kingston, Ontario K7L 4W4

[www.providence.ca](http://www.providence.ca)



Twitter  
[srsoprovidence](https://twitter.com/srsoprovidence)



Facebook  
[Providence.Kingston](https://www.facebook.com/Providence.Kingston)



YouTube  
[srsoprovidence](https://www.youtube.com/srsoprovidence)

Please contact us with your e-mail address if you prefer to receive an electronic version of Providence Pages and discontinue receiving it by mail.

[communications@providence.ca](mailto:communications@providence.ca)

Thank you!

### Editor

Mike Hammond

### Communications Advisory Committee

Sister Sandra Shannon (liaison)

Sister Barbara Thiffault

Ruth Gruer

Mike Hammond

Doreen Hoekstra

Veronica Stienburg

### Contributors

Sister Lucy Bethel

Sister Joey Doiron

Sister Rita Gleason

Sister Reinalda Kloosterman

Sister Shirley Morris

Sister Frances O'Brien

Sister Barbara Thiffault

Albert Dunn

Cate Henderson

Tara Kainer

Veronica Stienburg

Kathy Sturmey

Jamie Swift

Global Sisters Report

### Special thanks to proofreaders

Sister Anne Hudec

Sister Sandra Shannon

Doreen Hoekstra

A regular publication of the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul



# Illuminating the Word of God

On Sunday, October 21, 2018, through the generosity of the Diocese of Hamilton, two volumes of the Heritage Edition of *The Saint John's Bible* were displayed in Providence Motherhouse's Chapel of Mary, Mother of Compassion. Volumes displayed were the *Wisdom Books and Gospels and Acts of the Apostles*.



In 1998, the Benedictine monks of Saint John's Abbey and University in Collegeville, Minnesota commissioned renowned calligrapher Donald Jackson to produce a hand-written, hand-illuminated Bible. This is a work of art that unites an ancient Benedictine tradition with the technology and vision of today, illuminating the Word of God for a new millennium. *The Saint John's Bible* is a singular achievement: the complete text of the Bible, written on calfskin vellum using traditional tools and inks. As a work of sacred art, it ignites the spiritual imagination of all those who view its pages. It stands alone.

The beauty, richness, and inspiration of *The Saint John's Bible* are not limited to those able to see the original pages in a museum setting. With the Heritage Edition—a masterpiece in its own right—people around the world can experience *The Saint John's Bible*. These volumes can be used in liturgies, by scholars, and in the daily life of a faith community. Limited to 299 sets, the seven volumes of the Heritage Edition of *The Saint John's Bible* are true to the scale, beauty, and artistic intent of the original manuscript.

Prior to the display, on October 17, a documentary entitled *The Illuminator*, about the creation of the Bible, was shown in the Motherhouse auditorium as part of the ongoing education series. Sisters, Associates and members of the Sunday faith community were present.

The Bible and the documentary were both informative and inspirational.

■ *Albert Dunn, Coordinator of Pastoral Liturgy*

*To learn more about The Saint John's Bible and to view digital versions of the volumes online, visit [www.saintjohnsbible.org](http://www.saintjohnsbible.org)*



*From left: Dominy Williams, Director of Library & Archives, Diocese of Hamilton, and Bridget Ker, Coordinator of The Saint John's Bible. Dominy and Bridget facilitated the viewings and answered questions about The Saint John's Bible.*

## Farewell Sister Rita Gleason

**In January of 2008, Sister Rita Gleason retired from St. Joseph's Auxiliary Hospital after almost 7 years as a member of the Spiritual and Religious Team. As part of this team Sister Rita ministered to residents' spiritual, emotional and physical needs, including directing the staff choir which sang at Memorial Services of deceased residents. After retiring, Sister Rita returned to St. Joseph's to volunteer her musical talents until recently.**

On August 9th, 2018, staff members and volunteers gathered in the Atrium of St. Joseph's Auxiliary Hospital to say farewell. I was the last of 95 Sisters who served at St. Joseph's so, in a sense, it was not only a farewell to me but also to all the Sisters who served there and left.

As I received the 2 dozen roses, I accepted them on behalf of our community and the founding Sisters who established the hospital in 1927.

It was a privilege to work in the beginning with Sister Mary Benilda and Sister Miriam Helm (Sister of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, Halifax) in the Spiritual Care department and then later to serve as a volunteer, playing the organ for the Masses and for the memorial services.

I also enjoyed the Wednesdays in which I played the piano for the "happy hour" on 2nd floor before the residents' supper. As I played, I witnessed the residents come alive, smiling and keeping time to the music by tapping their feet or tapping their hands on the table and joining in by singing the old familiar songs.

I grew very fond of the residents and became more and more appreciative of the staff and volunteers as I witnessed their dedication and compassionate care for the residents and patients. As you walk into the hospital one cannot help but notice the peace within.

I will always cherish my experiences there and the friends I have made over the years, and I will continue to hold them in prayer.

■ *Sister Rita Gleason*



Photo: Sister Jeannette Filthaut

*Sister Rita Gleason cutting the cake alongside Spiritual Care staff.*



# Providence Care Leadership Missioning Service

***Sister Frances O'Brien was one of three Sisters from the Leadership Team that participated in the annual missioning service for Providence Care this past September 25. This is part of Sister Frances' reflection on the Charism of the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul presented during the missioning service.***

In the late 1970's, after Vatican Council II, religious orders were asked to identify their founding charism, their special gift in the Church. After a long process and many workshops, we articulated our special charism as "Serving with Compassion, Trusting in Providence, We Walk in Hope".

Notice this is not a mission or a vision or a values statement but more of a statement of our identifying characteristics. I would like to reflect on what each of the 3 parts of our charism has come to mean for us.

## **Serving with Compassion**

I think we always understood that our calling was to a life of service to others, especially to the poor.

Over the years this has come to mean that we attempt to transcend ourselves and our own needs for the sake of the other whose need is greater or for the sake of the common good. But service to others also gives meaning and purpose to life and can be very rewarding. I'm sure that your own calling to be Board Members and leaders of Providence Care rewards you with meaning and purpose as you serve in this way.

Our call to serve was qualified by the notion of compassion. Literally translated "com passio" means to suffer with another, or suffer together. It demands a deep empathy, an ability to put oneself inside the experience of

another and stand in solidarity with them. Providence Care has developed our charism even further. Your vision is "that Providence Care will lead the way in compassion". Compassion is one of your values: "We are sympathetic and conscious of the needs of others, and have a deep desire to respond."

## **Trusting in Providence**

From the beginning days, our Sisters trusted in Providence for everything they needed. They had no resources to carry on the work of the House of Providence to care for the poor, the elderly infirm, the orphans, or the sick in their homes. But somehow God always provided what they needed for the work and for themselves. They even went on begging tours to sustain the ministries they had. Over time as new missions were opened across the country and new requests were made for them to branch out, they learned that Providence always provided for them in one way or another. Today we have come to understand that

Providence is a name for the divine, for God, that means much more than provider. In the light of the new cosmology, we understand that Providence was there before the creation of the universe, before the Big Bang, that Providence cares for all creation.

We are called to be channels of God's Providence in a world that is suffering a crisis of meaning, a world in chaos. We are beginning to understand that Providence is that name of God which holds the tensions and polarities of human life and gives them meaning. Providence as meaning undergirds everything!

*continued on page 14*



Channels of Providence

*Artwork by Richard Gill on display in the Founders Hall at Providence Care Hospital.*



# Tomato Tasting Celebration: Connecting

With the Heirloom Seed Sanctuary (HSS) ministry moving towards completion, the HSS committee felt a return of the Heirloom Tomato Celebration would be appropriate to mark the final growing season of the heirloom seeds on the Providence Motherhouse grounds.

The Heirloom Tomato Tasting Day was one of the first public events Carol and Robert Mouck co-hosted with the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul in the early days of the Heirloom Seed Sanctuary. That event occurred on the Sisters' sacred grounds in 1999. Sister Reinalda Kloosterman (HSS committee member) recalls this first event.

“Shortly after joining the Retreat Centre team (Providence Spirituality Centre as it's known today),



*The Yellow Pear tomato is a sweet flavoured variety first marked down in the annals of history in 1805 by the biologist Christiaan Hendrik Persoon.*

I was one of the first people to taste the tomatoes at the first annual tomato tasting event. It was held behind the greenhouse and featured lots of tomatoes. Two of my favourites have always been the Yellow Pear and the Ground Cherry.”

The unique and diverse tomato varieties brought in more than 100 people on the hot and humid Saturday in late August. According to a featured article in the Fall 1999 issue of Providence Pages, visitors “accustomed to the uniform look of ... tomatoes in the supermarket were intrigued by the colours, textures and shapes of the Golden Queen, Big Rainbow, Beauty and other tomato varieties from seed catalogues of days gone by. Many of the varieties at the tasting were more than 100 years old, preserved through the diligent efforts of the Moucks, who have been collecting seeds and researching heirloom plants for decades.”

Sister Josephine (Joey) Doiron of the HSS committee expressed that “people need to know what organic tomatoes taste like. They have a tremendous and rich



*Early tomato tasting days were offered in the garden area.*

taste. There is such a variety of flavours beyond the typical red tomato. People need to be aware of what organic food is like.”

The heirloom tomato tasting attendance peaked close to 400 people in the early years of the celebration.

“By the time I arrived in Kingston there were other tomato tastings, but they did not include the names of the specific varieties—they were just tastings of random tomatoes,” said Cate Henderson who was hired in 2008 by the Sisters to learn from Carol and Robert Mouck and eventually take over stewardship of the seeds on behalf of the HSS.

“In 2011 (year of my 4th Heirloom Tomato Day), I wrote the following note to thank volunteers: *On behalf of the Heirloom Seed*



# food with health, joy, justice & nature

*Sanctuary, I would like to express sincere appreciation for your valuable time and efforts that produced such a successful day this past Saturday! While there was no official headcount, I feel confident in estimating about 250 or more people in attendance, about 40 of whom attended the workshop (my personal raison d'etre for the day). There were tomatoes left over of many varieties, and even one person who came at 1pm still got to taste a couple of varieties left in the gazebo!*

*Thank you so much for all your contributions, from organizing to slicing to directing traffic and cleaning up-many of which I didn't even get to see at the time, I just know it all got done!*

*You have been a blessing to me and to the Heirloom Seed Sanctuary, so I wish you many blessings in return."*

With the success of the tomato tastings which featured a tomato seed saving workshop, seed saving in the Kingston community grew along with the popularity of heirloom plants. Cate explains that "in 2014 there were only about

100 people in attendance, because there were 3 other similar tastings in the area, so we decided it was more work than it was worth, even though we still had the only tasting that offered a workshop on how to save your own tomato seeds! That year the Sisters received congratulations on behalf of the Legislature of Ontario on the occasion of the 15th Annual Heirloom Tomato Celebration."



*Cate Henderson providing a workshop on tomato seed saving in the Heirloom Seed Sanctuary barn.*

Planning for the future of the seeds has been underway and "to mark our final growing season the Sisters requested one more Heirloom Tomato Day this year, 2018," said Cate. "Although less than a hundred people attended (around 10 attended the workshop) and there was little publicity around the event, it provided some closure for

the planning committee (the Heirloom Seed Sanctuary advisory committee) and was well-received. Many former interns, staff and volunteers were present to express appreciation for this ministry."

Sister Shirley Morris of the Ecology ministry shares about her journey with the seeds: "It is all about connecting food with health, joy, justice and nature, and this also connects with our Mission which calls us to preserve the rich heritage of seeds and species. I have come to understand that Heritage Seeds belong to all people and as a Religious Congregation, we are asked to share our legacy with the next generation. We are also called to be leaders in taking prophetic actions in the care and protection of the earth."

Two partner groups, Kingston Area Seed System Initiative (KASSI) and Ratinenhayen:thos of Tyendinaga, will be stewarding the seeds on their continued journey.

■ *The official transfer of the seeds will occur in 2019. You can look for more in a future issue of Providence Pages or on our website.*



# The Good Food Stand: A New Project

The Good Food Stand, a two-year pilot project initiated by the Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington (KFL&A) Food Access Advisory Committee, “launched under cloudy skies on Monday, August 27, 2018 at Regiopolis-Notre Dame Catholic High School. The school was abuzz with students and parents, and many were curious about the tables loaded with fresh, colourful fruit and vegetables,” says Kathy Sturme, Good Food Stand Organizer.

The Food Access Advisory Committee began as a conversation among 23 representatives from groups and organizations within KFL&A to discuss improving access to safe, affordable, healthy food in isolated regions. It is convened and funded by the United Way of KFL&A and the City of Kingston, as well as by the Community Foundation for Kingston & Area. Its goal is to provide a local, sustainable solution to address food access, thereby promoting good health and well-being among individuals and households using the service in the KFL&A region.

Other partners include KFL&A Public Health Unit, in charge of communications and also evaluation of the pilot; Kingston Community Health Centres (KCHC), which holds the Good Food Stand organizer position; and Catholic and Public School Boards along with the Ontario Secondary Schools Teacher Federation (OSSTF) to provide volunteers and Good Food stands at five schools: Regiopolis-Notre Dame Catholic High School, LaSalle Secondary School, and Bayridge Secondary School within Kingston,

as well as Sydenham High School in Frontenac County and Napanee District Secondary School in Lennox and Addington County.

Tony Deodato & Sons Ltd. supply a variety of fresh produce to each of the stands at reduced prices. Potatoes, onions, carrots, cauliflower, broccoli, celery, romaine lettuce, spinach, garlic, cucumbers, green peppers, apples, bananas, blueberries, and more have been on offer. Vouchers will soon be available as an additional means of ensuring that cost will not be a barrier to anyone purchasing fresh, nutritious food.

Each Good Food Stand is open to the public at one of the five secondary school sites once a month from 3:00 to 5:30 pm. Locations and schedules are listed at [www.goodfoodstand-kfla.ca](http://www.goodfoodstand-kfla.ca)

Also providing support to the Food Access pilot project are a significant number of food-related local organizations and service providers, along with people having lived



Photo: Kathy Sturme



# Provides Affordable Healthy Food

experience of poverty and food insecurity. Both the Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Office of the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul and Community Harvest Kingston, a project of JPIC, are represented.

Entering its third week, Good Food Stand organizer Kathy Sturmeay, who also facilitates a market for Community Harvest Kingston, reported that momentum for the project is building. Attendance and sales increased significantly from the first to the second week, she noted, with two of the sites doubling their numbers from week one.

*People started sharing their stories, their recipes and what they were having for dinner that night. Two young girls stopped to check out the stand, asked lots of questions and left with an apple each. A little later, they returned to purchase fruit and vegetables for their families, and then came back once more to get more fruit*

*for their school lunches. Some let me know they had shared the information with friends and family and some brought neighbours, family and friends with them.*

*Kathy Sturmeay,  
Good Food Stand Organizer*

Teachers are purchasing produce for nutritional cooking classes, and community partners, such as South Frontenac Community Services Corp (SFCSC), have started buying produce from the stand. Any food left at the end of the day is going to partners running food banks and meal programs in their area.

As part of KFL&A poverty reduction initiative, the Good Food Stand pilot project will be evaluated at the end of its first year to ascertain its success and determine whether it will run for a second year. Has access to sufficient, affordable, healthy food increased for participating residents? Has the program helped to reduce poverty and promote good

health? Those involved in the project are hopeful. Affordable neighbourhood markets are proving to be a creative policy solution that contribute to the autonomy, dignity, and well-being of its residents. Increasingly, food is being seen as a vehicle to forward a variety of objectives: to promote health, build strong and diverse communities, protect the environment, and strengthen the economy.

■ *Tara Kainer, JPIC, and Kathy Sturmeay, Good Food Stand Organizer*



Photo: Blaine Jeffery

# Communities Face 'Final Eruption' and beyond

**This article excerpt is reprinted with permission by Global Sisters Report. Original story is by Soli Salgado, titled "Sr. Teresa Maya challenges LCWR assembly to go forth amid changing times".**

*In early August, Sisters Sandra Shannon, Gayle Desarmia and Frances O'Brien attended the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) assembly in St. Louis, Missouri. The guiding theme of the assembly was "Being the Presence of Love: The Power of Communion."*



Sr. Frances O'Brien

*In her Presidential address, Sister of Charity of the Incarnate Word, Teresa Maya, expressed that lessons for religious life lie in volcanoes. Maya's friend told her that following the 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens, bright wildflowers, some of which not previously seen by locals, gradually bloomed amid the ash.*

Religious life is living close to "a final eruption that will wipe out what we have come to know, struggle with and love about this life — everything," Maya said. "How ready are we, really?"

Communities are facing funerals, ministry changes, dealing with property, and arranging for care of their members. "Some days, I wonder: Is this our principal call as leaders of religious

institutes at this time?"

Holding a blue-green glass egg made from the ash of Mount St. Helens, she told the audience: "We did everything we were supposed to do by taking the [Second Vatican Council] renewal to heart. ...

We have been faithful women. This same faith will allow us to look beyond the ashes to the color that they make possible."

[Sister Frances O'Brien] said in an interview after the address that the

imagery of a final eruption did not distress her, but instead made her think, "It's going out with a bang."

The Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul of Kingston, Ontario, have been doing the difficult work of preparing for completion for four years, she said. The process "has brought us much closer together in communion. We are facing this reality that is beyond our control except that we can plan to navigate it well together," O'Brien said. "I think that's one of our wildflowers."

The community response to the recent hurricanes and earthquakes in Texas, Puerto Rico and Mexico is a testament that nature is challenging the very concept

of individualism, Maya said. Fortunately for women religious, community is "what we do best."

"There is nothing more important, more radical, more necessary for us than to lean into our apostolic call to nurture and foster community wherever we find it, wherever we are, with whatever means we have."

"Hope is the gift of communion," she said, posing questions for assembly participants to reflect upon. "Leadership must vision beyond the preparation for the final eruption. We need to point to the wildflowers already showing up among us."

If women religious stay faithful to what the Spirit is asking, "then we will be ready for what comes," Mercy Sr. Pat Whalen said, reflecting on Maya's references to wildflowers.

Sisters must "listen to one another, to what the voices of society are saying to us," she said. "Out of the darkness and ashes came this beautiful field of colorful flowers, and certainly that's a message of hope and life for our future."

■ *For the complete story visit Global Sisters Report, [www.globalsistersreport.org](http://www.globalsistersreport.org)*



# Remembering for Peace...One more time

PeaceQuest wound up its formal events on November 11 with our third sold-out Remembrance Day concert at The Isabel. It was an afternoon of song and celebration.

The previous day we assembled 150 people at City Hall's Memorial Room for a conference called "Imagining Peace." The ornate room, with its stained glass images of war, was adorned with dozens of flags, each a poster for some sixty events PeaceQuest had organized over the past five years.

Two giant puppets, one of Nova Scotia civil rights pioneer Viola Desmond, were positioned on one side of the stage. On the other stood two uniformed mannequins of World War I soldiers, one British and one German. Pinned to their tunics were buttons PeaceQuest had produced: "To remember is to work for peace."

But our final events had a focus well beyond questions of peace and war. In a way they mirrored the description of peace we'd developed in 2013.

*Peace is an active way of living, resolving conflicts cooperatively, respecting the wellbeing of the earth and all peoples.*

Renowned English peace scholar and activist Paul Rogers came from Yorkshire to deliver a remarkable keynote address at Imagining Peace. He explained that the 2020s will be the pivotal decade that will determine the future of the earth and all the species it supports. Not just with respect to war prevention. But also how we'll deal with global climate chaos, the migration crisis and the savage inequalities that separate us.

Paul recalled a meeting he had organized back in the 1970s. Geographer Edwin Brooks gave what Paul described as "an extraordinary paper" on the way the world was headed. And this was forty years ago.



Image still from video by Clarke Mackey  
Paul Rogers, Emeritus  
Professor of Peace Studies,  
University of Bradford.

"He said what we would end up with would be – and I can quote this verbatim – 'A crowded, glowering planet with massive inequalities of wealth buttressed by stark force yet endlessly threatened by desperate people in the global ghettos.' "

Prof. Brooks was spot on. Yet despite such foreboding warnings,

Paul urged us to face up to the challenges as we approach his pivotal decade of the 2020s.

He skillfully wove personal anecdotes into his Kingston talk, speaking lovingly of his grandchildren who will likely see the twenty-second century. Citing the work of his son Tom, a renewable energy engineer. Explaining how it is possible to do away with the internal combustion engine. And how we need to redefine "security" away from a fear-based, military approach to one rooted in food and energy security.

A longtime analyst of nuclear disarmament and terrorism, Paul was candid about the choices ahead. "If you've spent 40 years of your life working on nuclear destruction and terrorism, you have only three personal choices ahead of you. You're either suicidal. Or alcoholic. Or optimistic."

He's chosen Option Three.

■ *Jamie Swift, JPIC Director and co-founder of PeaceQuest*



# Remembering the 1918 Influenza Pandemic

The Fall of 1918 was a tumultuous time around the world, in Ontario and for the Sisters of Providence. The First World War wasn't over yet, but soldiers were starting to arrive home from Europe bringing with them an unwelcome guest – the Spanish Influenza. In Ontario alone, there were 300,000 cases of the flu and approximately 10,000 people died. The majority of those who died were previously healthy adults between the ages of 20 and 40.



*Sister Mary Ursula*

The Sisters of Providence were directly affected by the influenza epidemic. Numerous Sisters were stricken by the flu, at least 25 at the House of Providence in Kingston alone, and one Sister died. The Sisters were also called on to nurse the ill, in the hospitals they ran across the country and through home-nursing where they were needed.

The worst wave of Influenza in Ontario was from mid-October to mid-November 1918. Many school boards closed schools and churches canceled masses. According to

the annals of Maryvale Abbey in Glen Nevis, "Owing to the epidemic of Spanish Influenza through parts of the country it was deemed advisable by the school board to close the classes to day pupils [in mid-October]. The boarders continued their classes as usual." In Glen Nevis, Maryvale Abbey reopened on November 11th and the elementary school reopened a week later. In Prescott, schools were closed on October 16th and didn't reopen until November 11th.

According to the annals of St. Mark's Convent in Prescott "the churches as well as the schools are closed which makes the trial doubly hard without the consolations of Religion...The church was opened on Nov. 10th."

Sisters serving as teachers in small town Ontario were called to take up nursing duties, at great risk to themselves. For example, the Chesterville annals record that in December 1918 "Sister Mary Pauline and Sister Mary Aurea had been called to take care of a family of ten

who had the flu. Their names were McDonald. Sister Mary Pauline took the flu and had to return to Convent."

Due to the shortage of doctors and nurses caused by the First World War and the sheer impact of the Influenza epidemic, those suffering from other illnesses were also in need of medical attention. According to the annals of the teaching mission in Prescott "in the evening of [October 16th], an urgent call came through ... for Sisters to care for a Dr. Mulloy who was very ill with Pneumonia. Sister Superior explained that the Sisters here were not trained nurses, but he said that would not matter, as no one whatever could be got to care for the patient. Sister Superior and Sister Mary Ursula volunteered to go and accordingly left on the early morning train [to Morrisburg]! After living at Dr. Mulloy's almost two weeks, they were asked to take charge of a very poor woman, ill with Pneumonia in a dirty and very miserable house. As Dr. Mulloy still required the attention of Sister Mary Ursula, Sister Superior took the case. It was truly a great work of charity



# Sister Irene MacDonell

Irene Janet Theresa MacDonell was born on July 1, 1932 in Alexandria, Ontario, the youngest of seven children of Mary MacDonald and Angus MacDonell. Since her mother died shortly after Irene was born, she was raised by her aunt and uncle, considering them as her parents and their family as her family.

She entered the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul on September 19, 1953. After making her First Profession of Vows on March 19, 1956 she was assigned to St. John's School in Kingston where she soon became Principal. She remained in this position until she volunteered for mission work in Latin America in 1967. She was first assigned to Guatemala and then transferred to Peru in 1970 where she was assigned as a Pastoral Agent and a member of the Parish Team in El Progreso, Carabayllo. This work involved leading small groups of discussion and reflection with High School students and adults. She involved parents in their children's First Communion preparation, a successful new experience for



them. In 1974 she became an assessor of the Christian Workers' Movement which was involved in the work of evangelization within the working class in Peru. This work consisted in the formation of lay leaders and small Christian Communities.

In 1991 she launched the Associate Program which grew and developed under her direction and guidance. By the mid 1990's she was in charge of aspirants to religious life and the formation of new members.

Sister Irene was totally committed to the poor and she loved to laugh and sing and dance with them. She knew how to empower others especially the women.

She returned to Canada to take up residence at the Motherhouse infirmary in March of 2011 and died peacefully at Providence Motherhouse on July 16, 2018.

■ *Sister Barbara Thiffault*

as no one could be got to risk contracting the disease as well as endure the mortifications necessitated on such occasion." At the same time as these two Sisters were away nursing three Sisters at the convent in Prescott became ill with Influenza, which meant that "Sister Mary Bernadine and Mary Pius were the only Sisters remaining [in Prescott] to care for the sick and perform domestic duties."

Numerous Sisters suffered from the Spanish Influenza and, unfortunately, one Sister

died of the disease. According to her necrology Sr. Mary Remigius (Catherine Egan) was "appointed to Arnprior Sept. 1st 1918. Little did the dear Sister dream that she was so soon to receive the reward of her labours. This was the year that the 'Spanish Flu' was



*St. Mark's Convent in Prescott*

to make such havoc among the people. It came to the school the last of September, both pupils and teachers were taken down. Sister had a very bad attack. Not improving, the Superior of the Convent thought better to bring her to the Mother House, which she did October 16th." She died at the House of Providence (which was then the Motherhouse) on December 4th, 1918 in the prime of her life. She was 32 years old.

■ *Veronica Stienburg, Archivist*



# Sister Judith Lee

Judith Lee was born on July 6, 1944 to Margaret Ruth Hartford and Lawrence Winslow Lee in Montreal the first of five children. She attended St. Malachy's elementary school where she first met the Sisters of Providence. When the family moved to St. Lambert, she was taught by the Sisters of the Holy Name of Jesus and Mary. Her high school years were at D'Arcy McGee where she was taught by the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame.

She entered the novitiate of the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul on September 8, 1961 with 14 other young women. Following her First Profession of vows, she returned to Montreal to attend St. Joseph Teachers' College. She was then assigned to St. Gregory's School in Picton where she taught grades 1 and 2. After 3 years she went to St. Malachy's School in Montreal to teach grade 3. In 1970 she was chosen to go to Momostenango, Guatemala which was the fulfillment of her life's dream. Shortly after arriving, she received word of her mother's sudden death and ten months later her father died. These events took a toll on her health and so her time in Guatemala was interrupted for various periods of time to receive



medical attention. In 1999 the Sisters left Momostenango and joined the Sisters at San Cristobal until 2003 when the mission closed and they returned to Canada after having given their best years to empower the people.

Sister Judy then went to Perth to minister part-time in pastoral work. In 2006 she returned to Kingston. Because of her passion for justice she participated in the Friday Silent Vigil at City Hall as often as possible. She was a member of the Guatemalan Solidarity Group in Kingston. She was also the Contact Sister for the Associates in Momostenango and for groups in Kingston and served on the Providence Associates Committee.

Sister Judy died peacefully on October 3, 2018 at Providence Motherhouse. The Mass of Christian Burial held in the Chapel of Mary, Mother of Compassion, was presided over by Most Rev. Brendan O'Brien, Archbishop of Kingston. Friar Ed Debono, OFM Conv. delivered the homily.

■ *Sister Barbara Thiffault*

*continued from page 5*

## We walk in Hope

Over the approximately 130 years that the Sisters of Providence were directly involved in founding and sponsoring 12 institutions of Catholic Health Care from Montreal to Vancouver (for acute care, continuing care and long-term care), we faced many challenges and even trials. But it was this charism of serving with compassion

and trusting in Providence that nurtured our hope.

When so many people suffer from lack of hope for the future, our charism is to walk in hope. "Hope" in Scripture means "a strong and confident expectation; it is akin to trust. Hope is a firm assurance regarding things that are unclear and unknown. If Providence is in the future, luring us forward, and if we have complete trust

in Providence, then we walk forward with great hope/faith/trust that God who cared for us in the past (indeed did such great things for us) will continue to care for us as we go forward.

Now when we see Providence Care living our mission and values in your services to the vulnerable in this community and doing it with excellence and innovation, we are so very proud of being your founders. ■



# Winter workshops and retreats

SUPPER & EVENING OF  
REFLECTION

## **The Music of the Night: Advent Listening**

Thu Dec 6, 5 – 9pm  
*Lucy Bethel, sp*  
Register by Thu Nov 22  
Cost: \$25

The darkness of our December world offers Christians a unique perspective on the coming of Christ, "the light that shines in darkness" (Jn.1:4-5) We experience wonder and awe as we reflect together on the wonder of an Advent spirituality.

## GUIDED RETREAT WEEKEND **Advent: Love is Born!**

Fri Dec 7, 7pm – Sun Dec 9, 1pm  
*Lucy Bethel, sp*  
Register by Fri Nov 23  
Cost: \$165 (*directed retreat \$150*)

We will reflect together on the call to "Wait" during this Advent Season. We will examine the quality of waiting to which we are called."

## WINTER READING SERIES: **Teilhard de Chardin on Love: Evolving Human Relationships**

By Louis M. Savary and Patricia H. Berne

Thursdays 1:30-3:30pm  
Jan 17, 31, Feb 14 & 28  
*Helen Russell, csj*  
Register by Thu Jan 3  
Cost: \$30/series (*bring your own book, some available \$33*)

This is an exciting book that unwraps the work of Teilhard de Chardin in a very readable fashion, and which includes many Spiritual Reflections for personal use. The authors, Savary and Berne, reflect well the immense gift that de Chardin has given to the world, how he invites us to ponder more deeply the real meaning of love for our world - the dynamic force able to renew Earth Community.

## ONE-DAY WORKSHOP: **Spirituality of Aging**

Fri Feb 22, 9:00am – 4:00pm  
Cost: \$40 (*includes lunch*)  
*Brother Don Bisson, FMS*

Aging is not a failure but a process of growth and diminishment

towards our authentic self. This workshop looks at the mystery of aging as God's desire to fullness of spiritual development and union with God. Through the lenses of Jungian psychology and Christian spirituality, aging will be seen as our deepest desires for holiness by embracing limits and loss.

## GUIDED WEEKEND RETREAT: **Deepening The Contemplative Attitude**

Fri Feb 22, 7pm – Sun Feb 24, 1pm  
*Brother Don Bisson, FMS*  
Call to pre-register with deposit  
Cost: \$245 Workshop + Retreat Weekend = \$295 (\$40 + \$10 (Fri supper) + \$245)

Through Christian and Jungian lenses, the retreat will invite us to ponder the thresholds and invitations from the True Self within. Through conferences and contemplative silence, the retreat will prayerfully allow the invitation to greater depth of contemplative intimacy and response to Divine Initiative in prayer, dreams, and meditation.

Please visit our website for full details on offerings at the Providence Spirituality Centre and for contact information, [www.providence.ca](http://www.providence.ca)



# Walk the Path of Righteousness

INCARNATIONAL CYCLE 2018-2019: ADVENT • CHRISTMAS • EPIPHANY

December 1	Saturday	6:30 pm	Evening Prayer <i>Incense &amp; tapers will be used</i>
2	Sunday	10:00 am	1st Sunday of Advent
4	Tuesday	6:30 pm	Sacrament of Reconciliation
9	Sunday	10:00 am	2nd Sunday of Advent
16	Sunday	10:00 am 2:00 pm	3rd Sunday of Advent Cantabile Choirs
23	Sunday	10:00 am	4th Sunday of Advent
24	Monday	6:30 pm	Christmas Eve Mass followed by reception
25	Tuesday	10:00 am	Christmas Day Nativity of the Lord
30	Sunday	10:00 am	Holy Family
January 1	Tuesday	10:00 am	Mary, Mother of God
6	Sunday	10:00 am	Epiphany of the Lord
13	Sunday	10:00 am	Baptism of the Lord

***Chapel doors open one half hour prior to liturgies.***

Items will be collected for the  
St. Vincent de Paul Wish List

- Non-perishable food items, including baking needs
- Baby items such as formula, food, diapers and wipes
- Toiletries (toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, razors, etc.)
- Mittens, socks, scarves, toques

*Please see the donation display in the narthex.*

