



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

# PROVIDENCE PAGES

Summer 2018



The Healing Violence Committee commemorated completion of its 20 year mandate of healing violence. The celebration which highlighted past works and past committee members, invited attendees to share memories and experiences of the events.

*The final year committee members were (from left): Sister Marie Dundon, Sister Catherine Casey, Providence Associate Carol Groten, Providence Associate Barbara Baker, Sister Margo Shafer, Friar Ed Debono, and Sister Frances O'Brien with Sister Dianne McNamara (pray-er).*

**story on page 3**

## In this issue:



Imagining Peace



The future of the heirloom seeds



Echoing the Providence of Peace

## 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*  
srsopfprovidence

 *Facebook*  
Providence.Kingston

 *YouTube*  
srsopfprovidence

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 Catherine Casey  
Sister Marie Dundon  
Sister Pauline Lally  
Sister Frances O'Brien  
Sister Margo Shafer  
Friar Ed Debono  
Barbara Baker, PA  
Ann Boniferro, PA  
Cate Henderson  
Tara Kainer  
Veronica Stienburg  
Jamie Swift  
Resonance Centre  
Women of Providence in Collaboration

**Special thanks to proofreaders**  
Doreen Hoekstra  
Sister Anne Hudec  
Sister Sandra Shannon

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



# Healing Violence Committee Comes to Completion

On June 2nd, 2018, the Healing Violence Committee commemorated 20 years of work guided by their mandate. We gathered in McKinley Hall at Providence Motherhouse with invited guests to mark the occasion. Sister Sandra Shannon set the tone of the celebration with her welcome to all. Providence Associate Barbara Baker led a prayer ritual in which we welcomed the 4 elemental forces of earth, air, fire and water into our midst. I gave the historical background to the formation of this committee in 1998. Sister Margo Shafer and Associate Carol Groten offered a PowerPoint Presentation of the conferences and

workshops we have hosted since that time. Participants shared memories of their experiences at the various events. All present were invited to make a commitment describing how they would continue to heal violence in their own way. The remainder of the time was spent toasting and celebrating with food and drink while participants browsed through a display of materials prepared by Sister Marie Dundon. It was a fitting way to celebrate the work that we had accomplished over the past 20 years.

■ *Sister Frances O'Brien, member of the healing violence committee.*

## MANDATE OF COMMITTEE:

“Rooted in the Vision and Mission Statements of the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul, the Healing Violence Committee moves to concrete actions to eradicate violence, especially against women and children. We aim to raise awareness, to change attitudes and take action to promote healing at all levels: personal, congregational, ecclesial, and societal, through education, advocacy, networking and bursaries.”

*Revised and approved by Leadership Team in February 2016.*



Posters, brochures, books and more from Healing Violence events over the last two decades. A list of past and present members of the committee were displayed to honour everyone who helped make a difference.



# Commemorating and Reflecting

*The following are some reflections submitted by members of the committee.*

For 20 years it has been a rewarding experience to serve on this committee. We were inspired and guided by our mandate which was read together at every meeting. Personally I learned so much about the various issues of violence that we addressed through our conferences and workshops. Our networking with other social agencies was a rich experience for all. The opportunity to take our workshops 'on the road' to schools, Catholic Women's League (CWL) meetings, and parishes presented us with opportunities to do education for transformation. I am proud of our work and grateful to all who contributed to our Mission in any way.

■ *Sister Frances O'Brien*



*Sister Frances O'Brien presenting the history and formation of the Healing Violence Committee.*

Over the number of years that I have been a member of the committee I have valued the awareness that each Conference and workshop has brought to me personally, and to the Sisters and other participants, of how serious a problem it is in society. The networking with other agencies and individuals as well as the speakers we have engaged has been a wonderful experience and source of connection to be able to refer people to when asked. It has been amazing how the committee has been able to work so diligently and passionately to be available not only for the planning, but to offer what we have to assist the parishes, and how people have responded who attended. It was certainly evident in the comments at the 20th Anniversary celebration and should be a source of satisfaction for how we have reached out.

■ *Sister Catherine Casey*



I am impressed that the Sisters took the initiative and that this important work will continue through bursaries.

■ *Friar Ed Debono*



*Sister Catherine Casey (left) distributes commemorative pens and bookmarks to attendees of the final event.*

I became a member of the Healing Violence Committee in 2005 after attending a training session on Human Trafficking sponsored by the Canadian Religious Conference. As a member of the committee I was privileged to take an abbreviated form of the training session to church groups, CWL groups and high schools in the area. To hear the remarks from parishioners and students about their growing awareness and understanding of this form of slavery in our time was heart-warming. Because of this experience I remained on the committee promoting awareness of many forms of violence in society including child sexual abuse in the Church. It was very rewarding and empowering work.

■ *Associate Barbara Baker*

*continued on bottom of next page*

# Providence Village welcomes...

*The vision approved by the Sisters of Providence in their 2015 Chapter is starting to take form.*

## Hospice Kingston breaks ground

On Friday, May 4, 2018, Providence Village Inc. welcomed our first partner who will be moving into the neighbourhood, Hospice Kingston. The groundbreaking ceremony took place in the field behind Providence Motherhouse near the location where the new Hospice Kingston facility will be built.



## Donations to Providence Manor facility

A public announcement event was held at Providence Motherhouse on Thursday, June 28, 2018. Two large donations were presented to the University Hospitals Kingston Foundation (UHKF) in support of the new Providence Manor facility joining Providence Village. The Sisters of Providence donated \$4.5 million and Britton Smith, founder of Homestead Landholdings, donated \$5 million.



It is life-giving to work with a group of people who have the same passion to first study and educate themselves on different aspects of violence such as abuse, gender violence, trafficking, clergy sexual abuse, etc. and to network with other agencies to provide conferences and workshops to

raise awareness on the issues of violence, promote healing and also inspire others to carry forward the commitment to continue this work. I am delighted that the Congregation is going to continue the bursary which provides educational opportunities and counselling opportunities for victims to

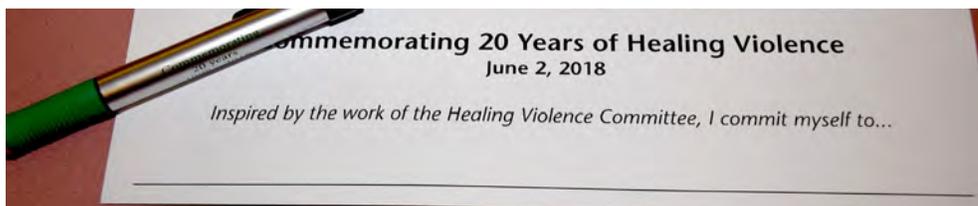
continue their healing journey and create a healthier life for themselves.

■ *Sister Margo Shafer*



During Chapter preparations in 1993, my personal conviction was that the topic of violence and its consequences was one of the needs to be explored. For seventeen years it has been my privilege to have worked with committee members in this healing ministry.

■ *Sister Marie Dundon*



*The words on the bookmark let each attendee consider how they will carry on the healing work.*

# Echoing the Providence of Peace

In mid-June, three carloads of Sisters and Associates drove in beautiful weather through scenic countryside to attend the 14th event of the Women of Providence in its 38th year of Collaboration at La Roche College in Allison Park, Pennsylvania. The theme of the conference was “Echoing the Providence of Peace in an Intercultural World.” The presenters were the dynamic Megan McKenna and the humble Bishop Gumbleton.



photo courtesy: Women of Providence in Collaboration

From left: Sister Barbara McMullen CDP, Executive Director of Women of Providence in Collaboration, Bishop Thomas Gumbleton and Megan McKenna.

Megan was full of stories. She said there are three major truths regarding stories: first, all of them are true and some actually happened; secondly, the story is going to happen to you in some fashion if it hasn't already, i.e. “every story is out to get you”; thirdly, stories create community. Through Chinese, Muslim, French and Japanese stories as well as stories from scripture, Megan developed themes of justice, forgiveness, abundance and resurrection. Each story was transforming.

Her creative proclamation and interpretive dialogue between the Syrophenician woman and Jesus from Matthew's Gospel (15:21-28) is an example. In an occupied territory and from a woman Jesus discovers his identity and eventually learns “to mother the world.” He is stretched and comes to realize that he is not just for the Jews but for everyone. Her boundary was broken by desperation and need; his, by conversion. Their dialogue is a great model for ministry. You never really help others unless you get help from them. The poorer you are, the wiser you become. After

this challenging meeting Jesus heals *all* who are brought to him, and the crowd is “shocked.” Even the disciples are “amazed” that he would do this.

For Megan “Providence is rooted in the Resurrection.” She said it quite poetically: “in the Resurrection we believe that God the Father kissed the body of Jesus from the dead by the power of the Spirit and

thus Jesus is more alive today than he ever was; and the Father is going to do the same for us.... Resurrection for us actually began in baptism and the rest of life is practice. All is moving toward fullness of life and everyone – including the universe – will experience it.” Now, if that isn't cause for hope and joy, what is? Thus, she challenged us “to push our privilege” and work for justice and peace.

Who has done this better than Bishop Tom Gumbleton! Retired Auxiliary Bishop of



Our Sisters and Associates who attended this year. **Back row:** (from left) Sister Gayle Desarmia, Sister Pauline Lally, Associates Barbara Baker and Carol Groten. **Front row:** Sisters Diane Brennen, Sandra Shannon, Barbara Thiffault and Frances O'Brien. **Missing from photo:** Sister Lucy Bethel

# in an intercultural World

Detroit, Bishop Gumbleton is widely known as an advocate of the poor, sexual abuse victims (having been abused by a priest himself as a young teenager) and for pacifist causes. At 88 years of age this man of peace challenged us to remember our sins. What cannot be remembered cannot be forgiven and healed. A forgotten Auschwitz predicts a Hiroshima. To forget Hiroshima and present wars is to predict the end of the world as we know it. Modern warfare is not fought with armies on battlefields anymore, but from a distance, killing civilians, destroying infrastructures and contaminating the environment. During the war in Iraq (2003-2011) 1,105,000 people were killed. When the Bishop went there he saw not the carpet bombing of WWII but the destruction of every one of their water systems, their electrical grid system (no A/C in 100 degrees Fahrenheit!) as well as the destruction of their irrigation, communication and transportation systems returning the country to pre-historic days. Then, if that wasn't enough, an embargo was imposed upon them for 12 ½ years with no trade or outside help.

The effect on combatants is severe – moral post-traumatic stress. Veterans know they need forgiveness, reconciliation, and restorative justice to repair the world as well as atonement which can eventually lead to communion. But military chaplains are not allowed to use religious language. The big question is, “How do we learn to live with each

other again?”

“There is no justification of war as we wage it today,” said the Bishop. At present Pope Francis is writing a new encyclical which will condemn the *Just War Theory*. Massive conversion is required. We live in the shadow of the Cross. “Our relationship with God,” said Bishop Gumbleton, “is as good as our relationship with our enemies, the poor and those of whom we are afraid.”

To close on a more positive note an impressive panel of younger Sisters of Providence (SPs) born in Korea, Vietnam, China, El Salvador and Nigeria told their stories one afternoon. Their presentations were powerful. One said, “You understand your way but not mine.”



Panel of Sisters of Providence born in various countries shared their stories.

Another who had entered from Chile, whose father, six brothers and sister were killed in El Salvador by soldiers trained in the *School of the Americas* spoke of her painful struggle to learn English because of her “closed heart.” Another spoke of the great challenge to live with others who are so different. I thought how

courageous each one was. I felt something new is happening to us SPs. These younger sisters are designers of a future we cannot yet see. This is the new face of Providence, and it is very much alive! May it evolve and embrace new possibilities “Echoing the Providence of Peace in an Intercultural World.”

■ Sister Pauline Lally

# Grieving the tragedy of war

PeaceQuest was founded in late 2013 as a grassroots organization dedicated to creating conversations about WWI. Our idea was to remember that tragedy in, what my cofounder Jamie Swift calls, a “post-patriotic” manner. Not celebrating military victories but commemorating the lives lost on both sides. And reflecting on any lessons for peacemaking in our own age.

With a very committed and capable volunteer steering committee and others interested in helping, we created and supported a wide range of programme initiatives designed to engage ordinary citizens of different age groups and backgrounds – both locally and nationally. We agreed to describe peace as, not just the absence of war, but as “an active way of living, resolving conflicts cooperatively, respecting the well-being of the earth and all peoples.”



photo courtesy: Jolene Simko

**Back Row:** (from left) Bronek Korczynski, Barbara Linds, Jamie Swift. **Middle Row:** Ann Boniferro, Pauline Lally, SP, Judy Wyatt. **Front Row:** Elaine Berman, Michael Cooke. **Missing:** Laurie Davey-Quantick, Jolene Simko, Administrative Coordinator

Over four years, we have been involved in projects looking at war and peace from four perspectives or “streams”: culture, education, faith and policy. We’ve organized public forums to discuss and promote peace (some involving partnerships with other like-minded groups). We’ve gone on peace “pilgrimages” on Hiroshima Day. We’ve organized film screenings and plays – at the Grand and The Thousand Island Playhouse – often followed by discussions. We launched a PeaceQuest School Initiative. We developed our own WWI Memorial Walk in Kingston, visiting monuments and setting the *Great War* scene for visitors and Kingstonians. Our *War and Children* web site is available, free of charge, as a virtual museum and curriculum resource for teachers. *Peace Song* has offered weekly north end gatherings to sing about peace. We sponsored the wonderful children’s book

*What is Peace?* by Wallace Edwards, published by Scholastic. Our Canada 150 sesquicentennial project profiled 150 Canadians who worked for peace. An inter-faith potluck and celebration, *Kingston Meditates for Peace* was graciously facilitated by Marie Dundon, SP. We organized a street level “citizens signing” of a petition promoting the *Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons*. Our white square campaign encouraged reflections and conversations about peace. And we co-sponsored a 2016 effort by civil society organizations that produced a detailed brief to Ottawa’s Defence Policy Review. It was called *A Shift to Sustainable Peace and Common Security*.

We were able to do all this through the



# Committed to the promise of peace

generosity of wonderful donors, predominantly Canadian religious congregations, in particular the congregations of women. And especially my own congregation, the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul who, from the very beginning, have been so supportive both financially and in kind. We could not have done this work without such support. On Friday, November 9, 2018, a banquet at the Motherhouse will be held to honour our donors.

On November 10 we will gather at Kingston City Hall in the very fitting Memorial Hall, with its stained glass windows featuring images of WWI. We will hold an all-day session with peace scholar Paul Rogers from the University of Bradford as the key note speaker. A five-member panel will respond, animated by prominent Kingston author Lawrence Scanlan. The theme? “Imagine Peace.”

Then, on Sunday, Remembrance Day itself, we will conclude with an afternoon concert about peace at the *Isabel Centre For the Performing Arts*. It promises to be a rich and wonderful weekend. Please consider putting aside those dates to attend. See our website [peacequest.ca](http://peacequest.ca) for details and registration. This national gathering with peace groups from across Canada will complete our four-year programme of PeaceQuest in its present form.

We are grateful to the Community Foundation for Kingston & Area which provided a generous grant of \$3,906 in support of the November events.

■ *Sister Pauline Lally, co-founder of PeaceQuest*

## The World Remembers

Just as the schools let out, marking the real start of summer, PeaceQuest held an event in front of City Hall. It was the official announcement of our November Gathering and concert. We got the news out moments before the skies opened up.

City Councillor Jeff McLaren, whose Meadowbrook-Strathcona district includes the Providence Motherhouse, was there in support of PeaceQuest. And, in particular, to explain how the City of Kingston is actively considering a plan – sponsored by The World Remembers – to project the names of the 1918 war dead onto the exterior of City Hall. Not just the Canadian and allied soldiers killed, but the names of the dead on both sides.

The World Remembers project, like PeaceQuest, seeks to commemorate the battles of World War I by emphasizing the profound tragedy of the war. We call this a “post-patriotic” approach to remembrance. If we just talk about valour and glory and battles, it can gloss over the terrible carnage that two contending empires visited upon so many.

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



*Where do we go from here? Do you have any ideas where we can steward and share our resources and experiences to ensure a smooth transfer? We'd love to hear from you.*

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

# Annual Congress on Basic Income

*The 17th Annual North American Basic Income Guarantee (NABIG) Congress was held this year in Hamilton from May 24 to May 27. The assembly, jointly-sponsored by the Basic Income Canada Network (BICN), USBIG, the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, and McMaster University, engaged participants from around the world. Speakers from Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Portugal, Belgium, Germany, Russia, Australia, and the United States gathered to consider the bold ideas and practical solutions of a basic income.*

Some of Canada's public champions – BICN Chair Sheila Regehr, human rights activist Josephine Grey, Senator Art Eggleton, Member of Parliament Guy Caron, and Dr. Evelyn Forget, economist, health expert, and researcher of the world's most famous basic income experiment *Mincome*, undertaken in 1970s Manitoba, took to the stage to discuss the importance and urgency of implementing a policy that will not only ensure an adequate income but also build a healthy, equitable, and prosperous society for all.

More than 30 presentations and workshops, along with the premiere screenings of two documentary films, covered the many paths leading to a basic income as well as the various means by which ba-

sic income (BI) can become a reality. The three-day gathering covered BI-related topics including democracy, human rights, robotics, cryptocurrency, poverty, and health together with the practicalities of implementing a basic income through pilots, policy, and public support. Should a basic income be a universal benefit or targeted to those who need it? Should it be implemented incrementally or all at once?



*Technological Unemployment as Thought Experiment* presenters Jason Burke Murphy (United States), Sergey Zolotov (Russia), and David Goutor (Canada).

Will BI lead to freeloaders taking advantage of the system, or will a basic income be our only means of preventing civil unrest in a jobless society where human workers are replaced by machines? How do we build political support, and how will we pay for it? Can people with diverse views but agreement about a common goal work together to build a movement championing basic income? These were just some of the many questions posed during the conference.

A grassroots' community presence distinguished Hamilton's NABIG from all that came before it. For the first time community advocates and those with lived experience made a contribution equal to the theorists and academics at NABIG and played a central role in the discussion of a basic income guarantee. Seven members of *Living Proof*, a group of individuals from Hamilton participating in Ontario's Basic Income Pilot, were there to share their personal stories about life on BI. Previously struggling to survive on disability pensions, Ontario Works, or low-wage jobs, all testified that basic income has given them hope and transformed their lives. From securing housing, purchasing eye glasses and healthier food to having the breathing room to seek a better job, return to school, spend time with their children or volunteer, they attested that basic income has provided the safety net they needed to move forward in their lives. They experience less social isolation, stress, stigma, and anxiety, have more compassion for others, and feel they are making a worthwhile contribution to society. "It's not theoretical to us, it's our lives," one said. "We need to be leading the fight for a basic income."

■ Tara Kainer, JPIC Team



# Kingston Seedy Saturday says 'Thank you!'

*Sister of Providence Kay Morrell attended Kingston Seedy Saturday for the first time this year, bringing along Sister Elise Nikiema who is a Sister of the Immaculate Conception of Ouagadougou visiting from Burkina Faso, in Africa. She wanted to share with Sister Elise an original Canadian phenomenon, Seedy Saturday, which began in Canada in the 1990s and has since spread to other countries.*

Sister Kay was impressed with how well organized the event was and astonished with the size of the crowd and the large proportion of young people in attendance. This last gives her hope that the next generation is interested in growing their own food and preserving traditions and seeds of the past!

2018 will be the last growing season for the Heirloom Seed Sanctuary (HSS). All seed will be divided this winter between the two partner groups, KASSI and Ratinenhayenthos (*more on page 12*), who will steward the collection into the future, which means that this was our last year to offer our seeds and information at Kingston Seedy Saturday (KSS). The Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul have been sponsoring KSS since I made the suggestion in 2009, and it has proven to be the most efficient way to share our precious, locally-adapted seeds with the Kingston community.



## Save the Date!

Saturday, September 1st, 2018  
10am - 12pm (noon) at  
Providence Motherhouse  
1200 Princess St., Kingston, Ontario

*As part of the final growing season for the Heirloom Seed Sanctuary our Heirloom Tomato Tasting Day has returned for one day only and for the very last time.*



Check the website for details:  
[www.providence.ca/seeds](http://www.providence.ca/seeds)

The event has also educated and inspired many local individuals to save their own seeds. When we first started sponsoring it, our HSS seeds were sometimes the only homegrown seeds on the seed swap table. For the last 2 years however, there has been no need to put our seeds on the swap table as it is full of homegrown seeds from enthusiastic growers who also swap stories and growing tips. At the beginning the HSS was responsible for hosting the seed saving workshop, but there are now new presenters available who can offer more advanced workshops such as saving seeds of biennials and cross-pollinating crops. KSS attracts around 600 people every year, and 100% of the vendors who attend grow their own seeds in our local region, which is also a positive change from the beginnings of the event. And, perhaps most importantly of all, the squash soup offered for lunch at the event

*continued on page 13*

# Sacred, Secular, Indigenous Women Gather

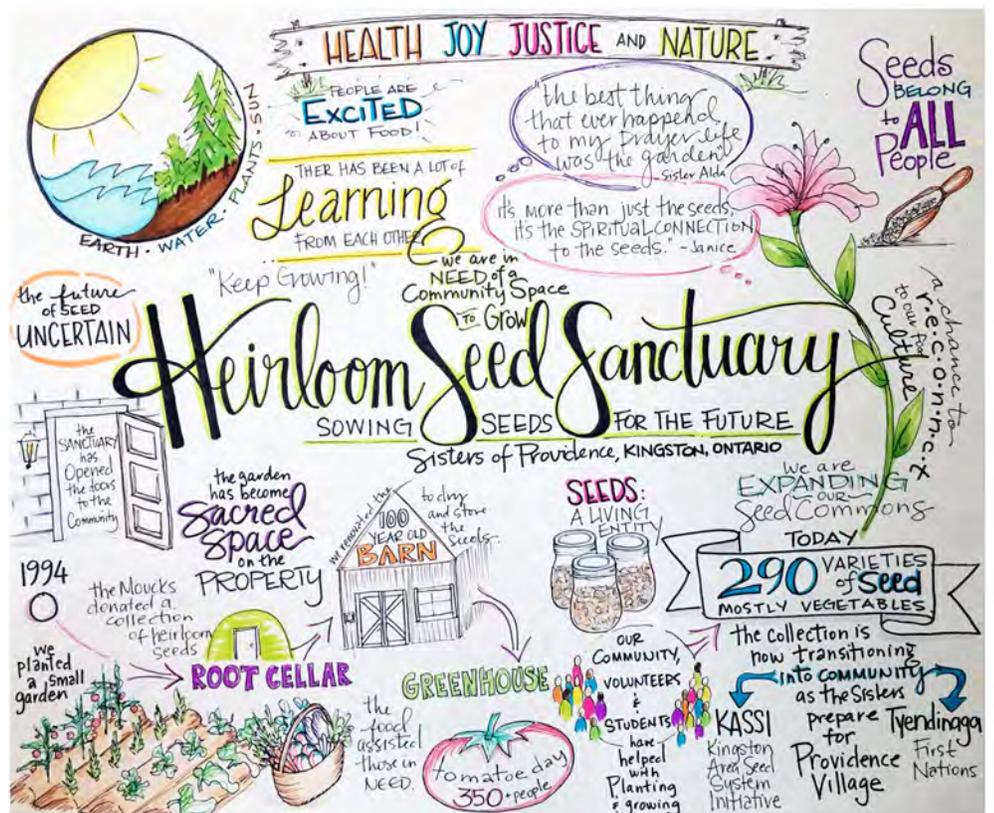
*An historic moment is marked by deep connection*

“It was truly a wonderful experience to hear the energy and heart in each of the people present who have the life of the seed and its future held gently in their heart and hands.”

These are the words of Sister Jeannette Filthaut to describe her experience of a gathering to mark the passing along of a valuable and rare inheritance.

For 19 growing seasons the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul stewarded an heirloom seed sanctuary brought to them by Robert and Carol Mouck to preserve and propagate. Last week, women who have enacted their stewardship of those seeds until now, for now, and for the future gathered together.

Time was taken to create a sacred space for sharing, to consecrate memories, and to weave the relationships between the women and the seed inheritance. You could sense continuous lineage coming to life as the conversation, full of care and wisdom, unfolded.



The Heirloom Seed Sanctuary is host to an extensive collection of once endangered seeds, now well adapted and hardy to this area. Members of the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul spent time connecting and exploring with members of Kingston Area Seed System Initiative, and women from Ratinenhayenthos, a small group from the Tyendinaga community who see themselves as farmers and stewards of the seeds for the seed’s sake.

An intention to care for the earth, its beauty, and gifts was palpable and ever present. Each of the women spoke reverently about their role and welcomed responsibility for this sacred charge.

Reflections from the gathering included:

*“In our creation story, a woman fell from the sky, and she brought with her, seeds. That tells us that it’s our job to be caretakers of the seeds.”*





# Breaking ground in a historic way

*On Friday, May 4th the groundbreaking for Hospice Kingston, the first partner in Providence Village, took place on the Motherhouse grounds. There have been numerous groundbreakings on the property before this, as the congregation built and added onto the Motherhouse itself.*

The first groundbreaking occurred on July 2, 1931, when Archbishop Spratt broke ground for the construction of the Motherhouse. The Congregational annals recorded the event:

*All the Mothers went out to the farm this afternoon, for His Excellency, the Archbishop, is to turn the first sod for the new building. He had not much time for ceremony for a great storm came in a few minutes which put an end to the prayers. They then adjourned to [Heathfield Villa] where they spent a pleasant hour or two. It was nearly 9 o'clock when the Assistants reached home.*

The next groundbreaking took place on March 30, 1953 to start the construction of the Marian Wing. The Archbishop was unable to attend, so Fr. Rowell, the Motherhouse chaplain, took his place.

In the Archives we have a lighthearted photograph of the event:



In 1964 construction began on a large addition project that included the administration wing, the kitchen, laundry & boiler room wing, the extension of the Marian Wing, and the extension of the wing that now houses the Spirituality Centre. The groundbreaking took place on June 15, 1963, in what is now the courtyard between the auditorium and the administration wing. The event was described in the congregational annals:

*“In connection with the observance of our two diamond jubilations, two golden, and five silver anniversaries, we had a short ceremony of the “turning of the sod” on the new wing. His Grace Archbishop O’Sullivan presided. In the presence of a large number of priests and Sisters, His Grace turned the first sod.”*



*June 15, 1963 Front row, Left to Right: Archbishop O’Sullivan, Sr. Mary Jean, Sr. Mary Lenore, Sr. Mary Alban, Sr. Mary Electa, Sr. Mary Ivan, and Sr. Mary Scholastica.*

The last major addition was the chapel in 1969, but I did not find any documentary evidence of a groundbreaking ceremony. We are sure to see more groundbreaking ceremonies on the Motherhouse property in the future as Providence Village progresses and develops.

■ *Veronica Stienburg, Archivist*

# Spring offerings at the Spirituality Centre

## OVERNIGHT RETREAT

### **Walking with the freedom of God**

Fri Oct. 5, 7pm – Sat Oct. 6, 4pm  
*Deacon Bill Gervais*  
 Register by Sep. 21  
 Cost: \$75

This overnight retreat will consider Saint Paul's words, "Do not worry", through prayer, reflection, sharing and discussion of our understanding of God, Jesus' parables and other biblical references.

## SPIRITUALITY SERIES

### **Greening Our Hearts: Spirituality and Creation**

Mondays Oct. 29, Nov. 5 & 12  
 6:30pm – 8:30pm  
*Helen Russell, csj*  
 Register by Oct. 15  
 Cost: \$25/series

Contemporary science, its story of creation, and this critical time for our environment all give our Christian spirituality a fresh new look and focus. Come and reflect together on these realities and the inspiration and challenge they offer towards an evolutionary creation-centered spirituality for our now.

### **Finding God In the Heart of Our Suffering - Spiritual Resilience**

Thu Nov. 1, 7pm – Sat Nov. 3, 1pm  
*Hilary Musgrave & Monica Brown*  
 Call to pre-register.  
 Full payment by Oct. 4  
 Cost: \$135 Accommodation + *Thu supper add \$100*

In the face of suffering and hardship in so many hearts, there is an urgency to find God, not in heaven, but in the nitty gritty of our human struggle and broken humanity. This retreat will offer a creative reflective space to ponder where God can be found in our human experience and how our faith can support and sustain us on life's journey. By pondering the mystery of God's grace at work in us and in our Universe, we will appreciate our innate resilience and capacity for growth and transformation.

*Hilary Musgrave* from Ireland is a former Teacher, Principal and Religious Education Advisor who works extensively in the area of sacred clowning, storytelling and facilitation. *Monica Brown* is an internationally acclaimed Christian composer and workshop facilitator. Her music is used throughout the world and is touching the hearts of many.

## SENIORS PRE-ADVENT REFLECTION & DINNER

### **Advent: Time of Silent Expectancy**

Thu Nov. 29, 9:45am – 1pm  
*Denise Bérubé, cnd*  
 Register by Thu Nov. 15  
 Cost: \$25

*Senior or not – if you'd like to come you're welcome!*

Each year, the season of Advent beckons us...slow down, take time, be silent, listen, stay awake, "receive the gift you need so you may become the gift others need". Join others who desire to ponder this season of silent expectancy.

## ADVENT SUPPER & EVENING OF REFLECTION

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

Thu Dec. 6, 5pm – 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.

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)



## Making a Commitment

On April 7th the weather outside was cold and dreary, yet inside the Chapel of Mary, Mother of Compassion, the joy of the Easter season was evident as the Providence Associates celebrated Evening Prayer. The sanctuary was decorated with spring flowers, and a graceful drape of rainbow fabric reflected the covenant between God and all of creation which inspired our seasonal theme, “Trust the Covenant – The Time is Now.” In this beautiful setting, in front of an assembly of Sisters, Associates, family and friends, Helen Driver, Mary Olenick and I made our commitments as Providence Associates.

The ceremony marked the final step in a two-year process. Beginning as inquirers in 2016, we were each assigned a mentor to guide us in understanding the history, charism, spirituality and mission of the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul. Discovering all that the Sisters have done and continue to do to support the vulnerable, honour creation, work for justice, and create inclusive communities is truly inspiring. Tours of the Archives, Providence Manor, and the office of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation further expanded our learning. A weekend excursion to Montreal allowed us to explore the roots of the community in the Museum of the Sisters of Providence, and to walk in the footsteps of Blessed Emilie Gamelin in Old Montreal. The trip was also a chance to get to know our wonderful travel companions, Sisters and Associates from Toronto, Quinte, Brockville and Kingston, who remained joyful in hope, even when our bus broke down on the highway on the way home!

Through monthly Associate group gatherings, as well as general meetings, education sessions and retreats, we continue to strengthen the bonds that unite us in our commitment to live out our Baptismal call to witness to the Providence of God in the church and in the



*From left: Ann Boniferno, Helen Driver and Mary Olenick.*

world. Helen, Mary and I are also blessed to be members of the Sunday faith community at Providence Motherhouse where the liturgical seasons and celebrations inspire our service in ministry and growth in faith.

We are grateful to the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul, the Providence Associates, and to our families and friends who have supported us on this journey. As Sister Sandra said in the commitment ceremony, “May our association bring praise and glory to God, support to one another and renewed hope for all God’s people.”

■ *Ann Boniferno, Providence Associate*

