



SUMMER 2025
VOLUME 7
ISSUE 2

Providence Moments

CONGREGATION OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE | MELBOURNE, KY



Pictured: Jubilarians Sister Armella Pietrowski, Sister Jackie Schack, Sister Marie Rose Messingschlager, Sister Janet Carr, and Sister Madonna Kling.

“COMPANIONS ON THE JOURNEY”
Sisters from our communities around the world come to the US province to learn, share, and grow. (Story on page 7.)

INSIDE— Stories of our jubilarians, our Sisters promoting Catholic Social Teaching on immigration, a reflection on Providence, and more!

Providence Continues to Guide My Life

In the spring of 2024, at the age of 81, I retired to Holy Family Home, our retirement facility, after a lifetime of high school teaching and parish ministry. As I settled into my new reality, I began looking for ways to serve God in an outreach ministry.

With the guidance of Providence, I soon found two attractive volunteer opportunities. A practical ministry, begun as a Province ministry and directed by one of our own Sisters, El Centro de la Divina Providencia, is a service for adults desiring to learn English. Another ministry, the Rose Garden Mission, operated by the Franciscan Daughters of Mary, serves poor families and homeless people who lack basic needs and are struggling to survive. Both services are located in a nearby city. Because I am comfortable using the Spanish language, I focus on meeting, greeting, and serving the Hispanic people who come for help in both of these places.

These ministries really appealed to me not only because of my knowledge of Spanish, but because of the needs that are being met. I soon unpacked my box of Spanish resources and began devoting quality time to improving my fluency. At the same time, I began talking with God in Spanish, just to make sure I was not jumping off a cliff without sufficient preparation, and while expecting God's blessing on these brand-new ministries.

The more I practiced, the more I felt called to go forward with both of these endeavors. By the grace of God, and with the full support of our Provincial Leadership Team, I am now serving in both ministries; enjoying lots of newfound friends; and continuing to serve God's people in new and creative ways.

Alleluia! Praise the Lord!

—SISTER PAULA GOHS, CDP



Providence Moments

is the newsletter of the Sisters of Divine Providence in Melbourne, Kentucky. "As Sisters of Divine Providence we have a mission to be living witnesses to the Providence of God. God's love becomes real in us as we go out to be Providence to others through the works of mercy."

— Constitutions of the Congregation of Divine Providence

Providence Moments is published three times a year. To subscribe, please contact Maria at secodo@cdpkentucky.org.

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Companions on the Journey

This summer, the Sisters of Divine Providence welcomed representatives from around the world to the US province. For a month, participants engaged in encounter, formation, and shared ministry. Sisters from Madagascar, Ecuador, France, Poland, Kentucky, and Texas gathered under the theme, “Companions on the Journey.”

Their purpose was threefold: to experience interculturality and internationality in a lived setting; to deepen knowledge of the US province and its history; and to gain a better understanding of the Church and religious life in the United States.

Throughout July, the Sisters participated in presentations on the congregation’s history, the four fundamental virtues of the charism, and the mission of religious life today. They also shared in prayer and community with the Holy Family Sisters and visited ministries across Kentucky, Ohio, and Alabama.

One highlight was a week-long immersion in Selma, Alabama, where the Sisters learned about and discussed the history of slavery, the Civil Rights Movement, and current realities of poverty and racial inequity. Visits to sites such as Brown Chapel AME Church and the Edmund Pettus Bridge gave profound context to ongoing struggles for justice. The group also visited ministries in the greater Cincinnati area.

Participants spoke of being deeply moved by the generosity of U.S. communities and the witness of Sisters ministering in varied contexts. “We leave forever changed,” one Sister reflected. “Our friendships are stronger, our unity is deeper, and our love for the charism renewed.”

The international gathering reminded both hosts and visitors that Providence is alive across cultures and continents — from rural Madagascar to the Amazon, from Paris to the US heartland. The Sisters continue to share their reflections and sustain their new bonds through an ongoing WhatsApp group, carrying forward the spirit of companionship and hope. 🌱



PROVIDENTIAE TUAE
ME COMMITTO

Our 2025 Jubilarians

Celebrating Decades of Devotion and Ministry

Sister Armella Pietrowski



70



Sister Mary Armella Pietrowski celebrates 70 years as a Sister of Divine Providence, a journey that began with a CDP assisting at her birth — an early sign of her vocation. Raised on the grounds of St. Camillus Academy, she spent her formative years immersed in the joy and service of the CDPs, admiring their charity and faithfulness. It was a challenge from Sister Gregoria, who told her, “I thought [religious life] would be too difficult for you” that ignited her resolve to enter religious life.

Sister Armella began her ministry in education, eventually shifting to catechetical work for the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky. She has been serving as DRE at Immaculate Heart of Mary since 1985.

Sister Jackie Schack



70



Sister Jackie Schack celebrates 70 years of a life rooted in compassion, joy, and deep trust in Divine Providence. Born in Camp Springs, she encountered the Sisters of Divine Providence at St. Joseph School, where their kindness and patience left a lasting impression — especially on struggling students like her.

Sister Jackie’s ministry took her to the Infant Home in Providence, Rhode Island, the Jeanne d’Arc Residence in New York, and *St. Anthony Messenger*, in Cincinnati.

Even in retirement at Holy Family, Sister Jackie remains active — serving at the front desk and assisting wherever needed.

Sister Janet Carr marks 60 years as a Sister of Divine Providence, drawn to religious life by the joyful witness of the Sisters who taught at her grade school.

Initially earning a degree in elementary education, Sister Janet's path shifted after a theology class at Xavier University inspired her to pursue pastoral ministry. She eventually served on the CDP General Council and spent ten years in France, connecting with Sisters from around the world.

Upon returning, she trained in Clinical Pastoral Education and began a new chapter in hospital ministry, first at Cincinnati Children's Hospital and later at CHI St. Joseph Hospital in Lexington. In her ministry, she accompanies families in grief, women in crisis, and individuals navigating life's most vulnerable moments.

Sister Marie Rose Messingschlager celebrates 60 years of ministry. Raised in a parish served by the CDPs, she initially resisted the call to religious life —until a sense of peace convinced her to say yes.

After receiving a licentiate in pastoral missiology from Rome's Gregorian University, Sister Marie Rose dedicated her life to ministry among Native American peoples. She served for 26 years with the Anishinaabe people in Minnesota, helping establish a Native ministry there. She also worked with the Navajo and Acoma peoples of the Southwest. These experiences deepened her appreciation for indigenous spirituality, nature, and the interconnectedness of all creation — which she sees echoed in Pope Francis's call to ecological conversion.

Sister Madonna Kling celebrates 60 years of religious life with her eyes fixed on the future. Consecrated life remains as relevant as ever to her — not because Sisters are holier or better, but because their presence reveals the diverse gifts within the Body of Christ.

Her journey has spanned cities and decades, shaped by joyful service and a vibrant global Sisterhood. She has ministered across the U.S., embracing change with grace, and always walking in hope. That hope, she says, is not static but lived — learned anew each day and shared with those she meets. Her life has been one of active trust — encouraging others to live with courage and openness to God's unfolding work. 🌱

Sister Janet Carr

60



Sister Marie Rose Messingschlager

60



Sister Madonna Kling

60



Not Numbers, But Neighbors

The Diocese of Covington hosted a series entitled “Immigration: The Catholic Perspective,” that examined immigration through Catholic social teaching.

Organized with the Intercommunity Sisters Peace and Justice Committee, event speakers included Sister of Divine Providence Kay Kramer and Sister of Notre Dame Maria Francine Stacy, who stressed migrants’

dignity and rights. Sister Maria Francine shared stories of families torn apart and asylum seekers at risk, while Sister Kay emphasized balancing border security with justice and mercy.

Attendees were urged to see immigrants as neighbors, not statistics. “This is not a political issue. It’s a human one,” said Sister Kay 🙏



Called to Eternal Life



**SISTER JUDITH
MCMAHON**

**“Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.”**

Sister Judith McMahon (Sister Thomas Marie), CDP, a professed member of the Congregation of Divine Providence for 71 years, died peacefully at Holy Family Home on August 11, 2025.

Sister Judy began teaching at Christ the King School, Lexington, and later at St. Aloysius, Covington, before moving to Our Lady of Providence Academy, Newport, and St. Thomas High School, Ft. Thomas. After a year of study in France, she taught French at several

schools until 1988, when she was elected General Councilor and served in France for ten years.

Returning to the US, she worked in New York at Jeanne d’Arc Residence and later in finance at Holy Family Home. She continued to teach, including English at El Centro de la Divina Providencia.

In 2022, she retired to the Health Care Center. She will be remembered for her diligence, humor, and steadfast faith. 🙏



**SISTER GEORGIA MARIE
MESSINGSCHLAGER**

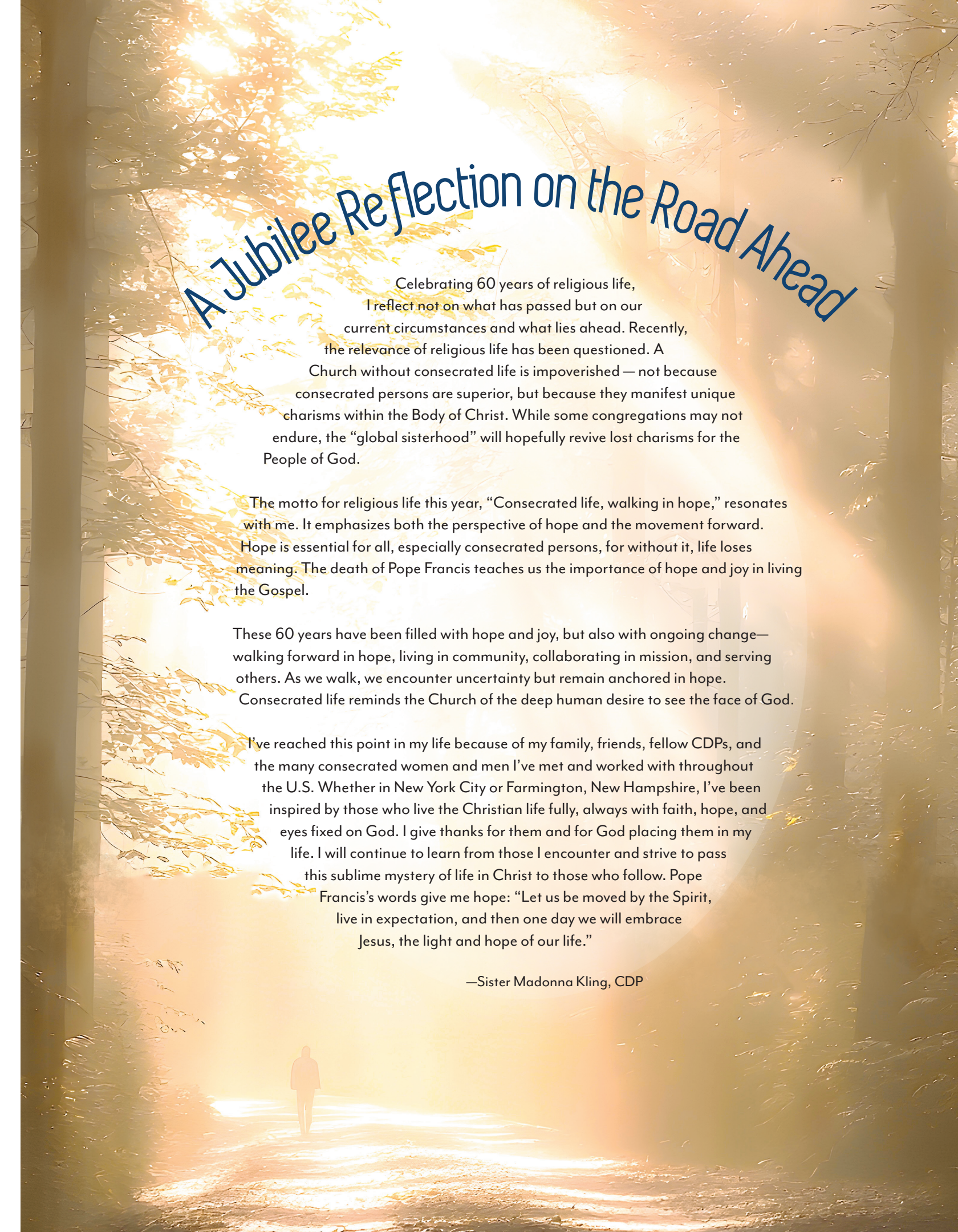
Sister Georgia Marie Messingschlager, CDP, passed away peacefully on January 23, 2025, at Holy Family Home.

Born in Covington, KY, in 1938, she entered the Congregation of Divine Providence in 1958. Sr. Georgia Marie taught at St. Ann School, Our Lady of Providence Academy, and Covington

Catholic High School, where she was affectionately known as “the nun.”

In 1983, she became the first woman religious at St. Xavier High School in Cincinnati, serving until 2014. After retirement, she volunteered at St. Bernard Food Pantry and visited the elderly at St. Matthew Parish. 🙏

NOTE: Due to a printing error, some copies of our last issue of *Providence Moments* omitted the obituary of Sister Georgia Marie Messingschlager, who passed away on January 23 of this year. This notice is provided for those who missed it.

A person is walking away from the viewer down a dirt path in a forest. The path is illuminated by bright sunlight filtering through the trees, creating a warm, golden glow. The person is a small silhouette in the distance. The trees are tall and thin, with some leaves visible in the foreground.

A Jubilee Reflection on the Road Ahead

Celebrating 60 years of religious life, I reflect not on what has passed but on our current circumstances and what lies ahead. Recently, the relevance of religious life has been questioned. A Church without consecrated life is impoverished — not because consecrated persons are superior, but because they manifest unique charisms within the Body of Christ. While some congregations may not endure, the “global sisterhood” will hopefully revive lost charisms for the People of God.

The motto for religious life this year, “Consecrated life, walking in hope,” resonates with me. It emphasizes both the perspective of hope and the movement forward. Hope is essential for all, especially consecrated persons, for without it, life loses meaning. The death of Pope Francis teaches us the importance of hope and joy in living the Gospel.

These 60 years have been filled with hope and joy, but also with ongoing change—walking forward in hope, living in community, collaborating in mission, and serving others. As we walk, we encounter uncertainty but remain anchored in hope. Consecrated life reminds the Church of the deep human desire to see the face of God.

I’ve reached this point in my life because of my family, friends, fellow CDPs, and the many consecrated women and men I’ve met and worked with throughout the U.S. Whether in New York City or Farmington, New Hampshire, I’ve been inspired by those who live the Christian life fully, always with faith, hope, and eyes fixed on God. I give thanks for them and for God placing them in my life. I will continue to learn from those I encounter and strive to pass this sublime mystery of life in Christ to those who follow. Pope Francis’s words give me hope: “Let us be moved by the Spirit, live in expectation, and then one day we will embrace Jesus, the light and hope of our life.”

—Sister Madonna Kling, CDP



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