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 Sisters of Providence –  
 227 E. 9<sup>th</sup>, Spokane  
 Sisters of Providence - Walla Walla

**MEMORIALS 2002**

*We are grateful for thoughtful donations received through the Development Office in memory of deceased friends or loved ones.*

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 Mr. Alfred Stein  
**In memory of Mary K. Stone**  
 Ms. Joyce D. Vornbrock  
**In memory of Stan Toering**  
 Ms. Vi Toering  
**In memory of Marie Weible**  
 Mr. Victor Weible  
**In memory of Ann Wiltse**  
 Ms. Jacqui McCue

# University of Great Falls 70th Anniversary

**W**hen most people think of the Sisters of Providence, they think of health care. And, in fact, the religious congregation did found what has become one of the largest health systems in the nation. But it also founded a private, Catholic liberal arts university in Great Falls, Mont., that is celebrating its 70<sup>th</sup> year in higher education.

"The benefit of the College is obvious," an entry in *The Little Journal of Providence* said in 1933. "It is from the beginning God's work. The Community did not seek it. The Lord by ways and means most unexpected made possible its establishment."

The institution began its life in 1932 as a college for women – a collaboration between the Sisters of Providence, the Ursuline Sisters, the Catholic Bishop of Great Falls and the civic community. Originally called Great Falls Junior College for Women, it was located in the Ursuline Academy on Central Avenue in Great Falls. A year later, Great Falls Normal School was established and combined with the junior college to provide teacher training. Fourteen women enrolled in its first year, and three years later registration for both the junior college and the normal school was 105 women. In 1937, the first male student enrolled and a year later there were 19 men in attendance.

10 ● The two schools were really separate, each operating under a different Catholic religious community, but in 1942 Great Falls Junior College for Women was discontinued. Meanwhile,

Great Falls Normal College had become Great Falls College of Education.

By the early 1950s it became simply the College of Great Falls, under the direction of the Sisters of Providence. Classes were held in the old Columbus Hospital,

bringing the Junior College, the Normal College and Columbus School of Nursing together as the College of Great Falls.

In 1944, land was purchased south of the city which became the site of the 11-building campus in 1960. That same year, Sister Rita Mudd became the campus president. The site included living quarters for priests and a convent for the sisters.

In 1995, the College of Great Falls became the University of Great Falls.

Today, the University of Great Falls has an enrollment of 821 full- and part-time students and offers associate,

*This mosaic by Sr. Mary Trinitas graces a spot to the right of the altar at Trinitas Chapel on the campus of the University of Great Falls.*



bachelor's and master's degrees. It also has a new president, Dr. Eugene McAllister, a former Jacksonville University vice president who held business and economics posts in the administrations of both former Presidents George Bush Sr. and Ronald Reagan. McAllister replaces former UGF President Fred Gilliard, who retired in May 2001, and interim president Michael Easton. McAllister, a native of the Bronx, N.Y., holds economics degrees including a bachelor's from Loyola University in Los Angeles, a master's from the University of California at Davis, and a doctorate from Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

The University of Great Falls offers courses onsite and through distance learning. In fact, the university has been involved in outreach education since its beginning. The Telecom distance learning program, utilizing video and web-based communications, reaches across the United States and Canada. Transfer agreements have been established with numerous tribal and community colleges around Montana and its neighboring states and provinces.

The University of Great Falls has not strayed from its original focus: "providing students an education for living and making a living with character, competence and commitment." And the sisters remain involved. Mary Kaye Nealen, SP, currently serves as provost and vice president for academic affairs. Margaret Beaulieu, SP, a graduate of the college, holds the status of professor emeritus.

The UGF campus continues to be a community landmark. Its spiritual centerpiece is the Trinitas Chapel, an exquisite sanctuary that features the inspired religious artworks of Sister Mary Trinitas Morin, SP, campus art professor for 32 years. Although she died in 1965, she lives on in the stained glass windows, carvings, mosaics and murals that adorn the chapel and its Galerie Trinitas. Preservation of the art of Sister Trinitas and the promotion of appreciation for religious art are the missions of the community arts center and museum, which opened in 1994.

A stroll down the corridor leading to the Galerie must be made slowly. The detail of the stained glass and metal panels depicting Mary, Mother of Sorrows, on one side, is moving. On the other side, the wood and metal mural portraying the history of the Sisters of Providence in the Northwest is inspiring. The works of Sister Mary Trinitas can be seen elsewhere on campus, including in the student center and the library.

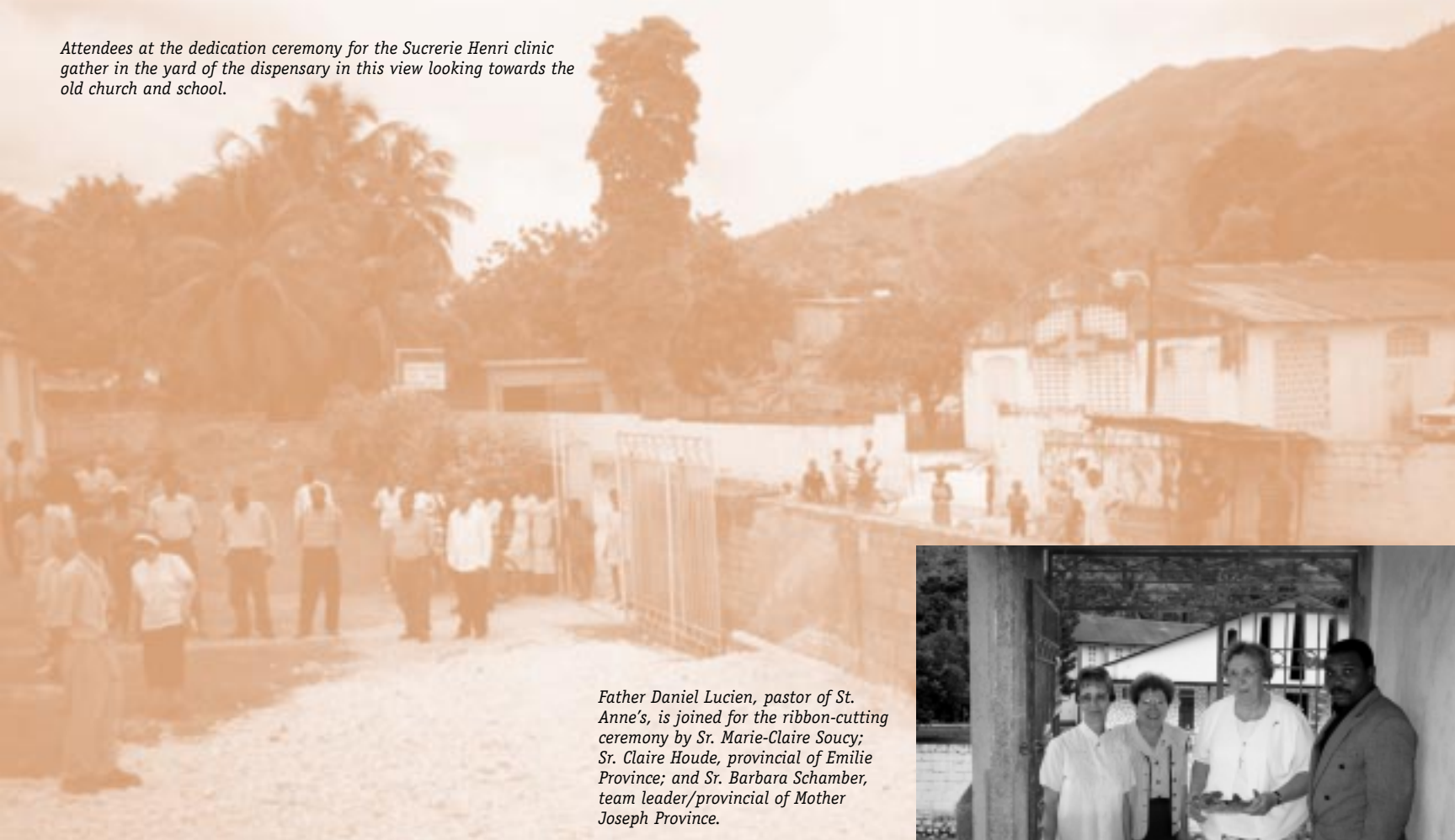
A host of annual campus events offer great opportunities to visit the University of Great Falls. Those events include Founder's Day (Sept. 8); Mass of the Holy Spirit (September); Homecoming (this year, in January); Martin Luther King, Jr., Celebration (January); Holy Week & Easter Observance; the pow-wow in Celebration of Sobriety & Diversity (March); and the Baccalaureate & Commencement (December and May). For more information, check out the university's website at [www.ugf.edu](http://www.ugf.edu), or call the university's public information office at (406) 791-5290. ●



*This photo shows three of the nine large, 7-foot-high stained glass windows in the chapel's choir loft that depict Christ and the 12 apostles.*



Attendees at the dedication ceremony for the Sucrierie Henri clinic gather in the yard of the dispensary in this view looking towards the old church and school.



Father Daniel Lucien, pastor of St. Anne's, is joined for the ribbon-cutting ceremony by Sr. Marie-Claire Soucy; Sr. Claire Houde, provincial of Emilie Province; and Sr. Barbara Schamber, team leader/provincial of Mother Joseph Province.



# Sisters of Providence celebrate 25 years in Haiti

● 11

***Bless renovated clinic where Sr. Marie-Claire Soucy ministers to the poor***

**L**ast October, a weeklong celebration in Port au Prince commemorated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ministry of the Sisters of Providence in Haiti. Emilie Province sponsors the Haitian ministry, where Sister Marie-Claire Soucy of Mother Joseph Province has been serving for most of the last 24 years. Sister Claire Houde, provincial superior of Emilie Province, invited sisters from Mother Joseph Province to join in the anniversary celebration. Sister Barbara Schamber, team leader/provincial, and Sister JoAnn Showalter, candidate director, were very pleased to represent Mother Joseph Province at the celebration.

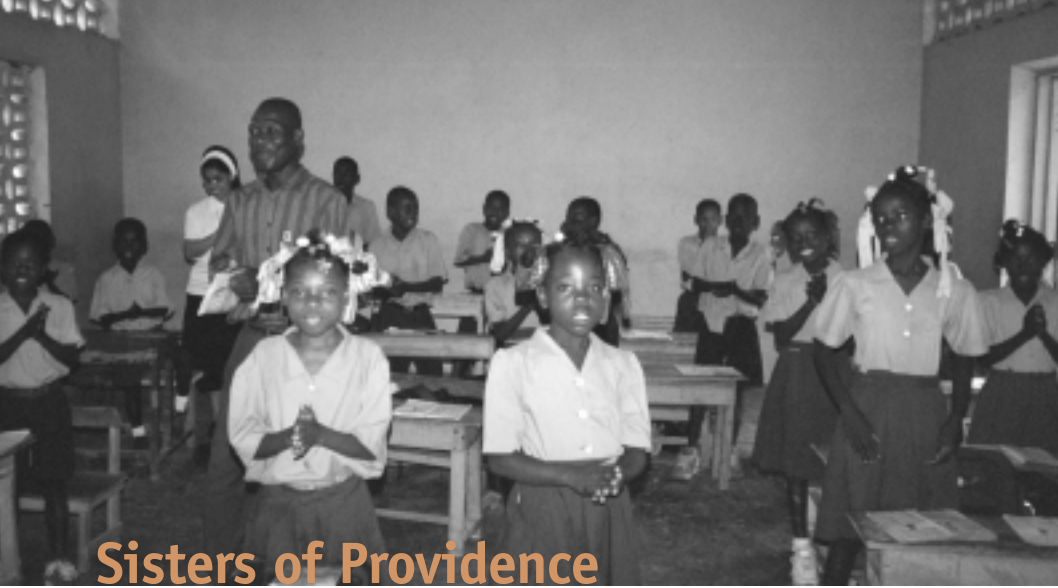
Sr. Marie-Claire Soucy (left) and Sr. Claire Houde cut the ribbon to open the newly dedicated dispensary.



The week was an eventful one. Father Daniel Lucien blessed the clinic addition at Sucrierie Henri, which now includes an apartment for a doctor on the top level. People from local villages turned out for the blessing ceremony and the rest of the week's events, which included the entrance of Icela Feliz to the pre-novitiate, and the acceptance of eight new Providence Associates.

Haiti is a country that is flavored by Amerindian, Spanish, African, French and Anglo-Saxon influences. The official

language is Creole, but some of its people speak French, English and/or Spanish, which is the language of the neighboring Dominican Republic. There is a marked contrast between the haves and have-nots in Haiti, with 10 percent of the population said to control all of the country's wealth. While the Haitian people lack in material goods, they are rich in spiritual things, the sisters serving in ministry there have observed over the years. → →



Haitian schoolchildren and their teacher sing in praise.

**While the Haitian people lack in material goods, they are rich in spiritual things, the sisters serving in ministry there have observed over the years.**

## Sisters of Providence celebrate 25 years in Haiti...

**F**ive Sisters of Providence from three provinces are in ministry in Haiti today. The sisters from Emilie Province are Diane Sarrasin, superior; Ghislaine Landry, postulant director; and Jeanne Longpre. Sister Herna Astorga, at the Come and See House, is from Bernarda Morin province in Chile. Mother Joseph Province's Sister Marie-Claire Soucy acts as "nurse/doctor" in the clinic at Sucrierie Henri. "I belong to two provinces - Mother Joseph and Emilie," Sister Marie-Claire says.

She seems born to be a missionary in foreign countries, serving others while adapting to their cultures and languages. It is a call you either have or you do not, she acknowledges.

Her years in ministry have taken her to Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Cameroon and now Haiti, where she has been for most of the last 24 years. "I wanted to work with the sick; I was a fish out of water in the education department," she says.

"The Sisters of Providence should go to places where nobody wants to go," Sister Marie-Claire says. On a typical day, she is up at 5 to pray in the little chapel, listen to the news on radio, have breakfast and go to the clinic at 7:30 for its opening at 8 a.m. On a heavy day, she is back after 3 or 4 p.m. for lunch, a nap and a beverage, then it's back to the clinic for consultations, planning, pharmacy chores, and accounting. Once a month she makes home visits, and she is on call in emergencies. Sister Marie-Claire can perform minor surgery, but for bigger things patients must be driven a half-hour away to the hospital. When night falls, it's time for a light meal, to answer the needs of people who come to

the house, and then get to bed early to rest for the next day.

Life alone can bring isolation, so Sister Marie-Claire welcomes the opportunity three times a week to use the ham radio to communicate with the sisters in Port au Prince. She spends her free time reading, listening to music and, on the weekends, "putting on a video and imagining I'm at the movies."

The life is by no means easy. Solar energy and a small generator power the

house and clinic, but she can be without running water for months when the small spring that supplies the water system has to be renewed. Then, water has to be brought in from 10 minutes away by car, and purified against typhoid and malaria. On any trip away from Les Cayes, even to Port au Prince, the first order of business is to get a shower, she explains.

**S**till, she loves this ministry and these people. "Haiti is really special," she asserts. But it is, she allows, extremely challenging with its intense poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, malnourishment and disease. "If you don't have faith, you wonder ..." ●

## PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

*Lee Deslauriers, brother of Sister Lillian Deslauriers, SP, died November 15 in Lauderdale, Fla.*

*Mary Jane Reilly, sister of Sister Anna Marie Koval, SP, died November 16 in Redondo Beach, Calif.*

*Guillermo Pagulayan, brother-in-law of Sister Blanca Sagles, SP, died December 2, in Toronto, Canada.*

*Cyprien Begin, brother of Sister Simone Begin, SP, died December 11 in Montreal.*

*Alice Wiseman, sister of Sisters Annette and Jeannette Parent, SP, died December 15 in Baker, Mont.*

*Lea Landrey, sister of Sister Georgette Jean, SP, died January 2 in Montreal.*

*Gail Sorensen, sister-in-law of Jim and Dorene Plampin, PA, died January 2 in Longview.*

*Bob McGuire, brother of Sister Mary Catherine McGuire, SP, died January 13 in Everett.*

*Audrey (Betty) Allen, sister of Sister Mary Audrey McCoy, SP, died January 15 in Seattle.*

*Lorette Masse, sister of Sister Lillian Deslauriers, SP, died January 23 in South Hero, Vt.*

*Germaine Glassy-Rawlings, sister of Marilyn Wittenmyer, PA, died January 23 in Puyallup.*

*Willard A. Smith, brother of Sister Shirley Smith, SP, died January 27 in Oahu, Hawaii.*

*Eileen Hodgson, mother of Carol Neupert, PA, died January 30 in Federal Way.*

*Zelma Lulay, sister-in-law of Sister Rose Lulay, SP, died February 10 in Vancouver, Wash.*

*Andre Maynard, brother of Helene Maynard, SP, died February 17 in Quebec.*

