

Rest in Peace

Mary Leona Miller, SP (Sister Virginia Mary)



Sister Mary Leona Miller died July 31 at St. Joseph Residence, Seattle, at 92 years of age and after 70 years as a Sister of Providence.

She was born June 23, 1920, to Leon H. Miller and Margaret (Slamnik) Miller in Glenwood, Minn., and was named Virginia Miller. She was one of three children, all girls. When she was 3 years of age, the family moved to Longview, Wash., where she attended public schools.

Sister Mary Leona entered the Sisters of Providence on May 18, 1942, made her first profession on July 19, 1943, and her final vows on July 19, 1946. Her sister, Ruth (name in religion, Sister Virginia), is also a Sister of Providence.

Sister Mary Leona's academic accomplishments include a Bachelor of Arts degree from the College of Great Falls (MT) and a Standard Elementary Teaching Certificate.

She was an extraordinary, much beloved primary teacher specializing in first grade. She taught in the following schools: Sacred Heart School, Tacoma, Wash.; Holy Rosary School, Moxee, Wash.; St. Joseph Grade School, Yakima, Wash.; St. Finbar School, Burbank, Calif.; St. Joseph Grade School, Yakima; St. Joseph School, Vancouver, Wash., as first-grade teacher and assistant principal; and Our Lady of Lourdes School, Vancouver, Wash., as first-grade teacher and vice principal. Sister Mary Leona's former students and their parents continued as lifelong friends with whom she maintained contact through the years.

In 1990, Sister Mary Leona retired from teaching. She was the last teaching sister in Vancouver, Wash., but continued as a volunteer tutor in Catholic schools in that city. She also visited the sick and needy and served as a parish minister.

In 1975, she was honored as an Outstanding Elementary Teacher of America and, in 1990, she was one of ten educators to receive the Outstanding Teacher of Clark County Award. In 1991, she was honored with the Woman of Achievement in Vancouver award.

Sister Mary Leona was preceded in death by her parents and her sister, Genevieve. Survivors include her younger sister, Ruth (Sister Virginia Miller, SP), and a cousin, Jerry Duve, Yuma, Ariz.

Vigil service was held August 3 at St. Joseph Residence, Seattle, followed by the Funeral Mass there the next day. Burial was at Mother Joseph Catholic Cemetery, in Vancouver. Bonney-Watson Funeral Home, Seattle, was in charge of the arrangements.

Memorial contributions in her memory may be made to the Sisters of Providence Retirement Fund, 1801 Lind Avenue SW, #9016, Renton, WA 98057-9016. ●

Jean M. White, PA



Jean M. White, PA, the mother of Sister Teresa White, SP, died at her home in North Hollywood, Calif., on July 20 after a short bout with cancer. She was 87 years old and had been a Providence Associate for 26 years.

She was born October 3, 1924, in Philadelphia, Penn., and moved with her family to California at the age of 10. Jean converted to Catholicism at the age of 14 and married John White at 19. They raised five children, including Teresa, who entered the Sisters of Providence in 1962.

The couple got to know the sisters well and asked to become Providence Associates in 1986. Their commitment ceremony was held September 15, 1986, at St. Joseph Medical Center's chapel in Burbank, Calif. Sister Jean Schultz was their sponsor.

Jean's primary ministry was care of her elderly mother for many years. She also had been a school and church volunteer when her children were growing up, as well as a Eucharistic minister on Sundays and a convalescent hospital visitor. She also helped out at Providence High School in Burbank on occasion. She was a member of St. Jane Frances de Chantal Parish in North Hollywood and of the Teresians.

She was preceded in death by her son William and her husband John. Survivors include her sons John, Dave and Richard and their families, her daughter Sister Teresa, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Funeral Mass was celebrated July 28 at St. Jane Frances de Chantal Catholic Church. In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the Sisters of Providence at www.sistersofprovidence.net or sent to Sisters of Providence, Development Office, 1801 Lind Ave. SW, #9016, Renton, WA 98057-9016. ●

Virginia Jean Cory, PA



Virginia Jean (Kuehner) Cory, 89, died August 15 at Mount Angel Towers in Mount Angel, Ore. She had been a Providence Associate for 17 years.

She was born June 7, 1923, to Helen and Oscar Kuehner in Bridgeport, Conn., and moved with her family to Brooklyn, N.Y., and then to Bel Mar, N.J. Virginia was a nurse and a nurse educator. She began her career as a registered nurse, and then continued nursing studies for a bachelor's degree from Simons College and a master's degree from Catholic University of America, in Washington, D.C. Her positions included serving as a public health nurse in the San Francisco Bay area and teaching at Oregon Health Sciences University for nearly a decade.

She was a member of Beta Psi Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau, nursing honor society, and of the Western Interstate Council on Higher Education, advancing nursing education and research.

Virginia studied to become a nurse practitioner, working to integrate the role of the nurse practitioner into the clinical setting, successfully collaborating with then-State Sen. Ron Wyden and the Oregon Grey Panthers to obtain rights for nurse practitioners to prescribe medications for patients in 1979. She served two terms on the Oregon State Board of Nursing and was director of nursing education at Providence St. Vincent Hospital in Portland, Ore., for about 10 years, retiring in 1989.

Virginia continued to volunteer at the hospital, providing counseling and Eucharistic ministry to the elderly through its pastoral services program. She also was a Providence Associate and was camp nurse for campers and staff in the Outdoor School program at Camp Adams near Molalla, Ore.

In 2002 Virginia moved to Mount Angel, where she was a member of the Mount Angel Towers Catholic lay ministry and mentored seminarians from the Mount Angel Benedictine Monastery on ministering to the elderly.

She was predeceased by her two younger sisters, Marguerite and Monica, and former husband George Cory. Survivors include her son Scott and his partner Graham Gunn.

Funeral Mass was celebrated August 20 at St. Cecilia Church in Beaverton, Ore., and at Mount Angel Towers on August 21. Riverview Abbey Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her honor may be made to the Providence Portland Medical Foundation Helping Hand Fund or to Willamette Valley Hospice. ●

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

13

Salvador Prieto Ruvalcaba, father of Esther Ybarra, PA, died May 21 in Ameca, Jalisco, Mexico.

Joan Iselin, sister of former Sister of Providence Kathryn Kurtz, died May 26 in Shaughn, Penn.

Gloria Hensel, sister of Carol Marie Morin, SP, died June 3 in Missoula, Mont.

Emelicana Cerezo, sister-in-law of Felma Cerezo, SP, died June 15 in the Philippines.

Susanne M. Levy, sister of Craig Cozza, PA, died June 18 in Maple Valley, Wash.

Neil C. Green, brother of Joyce Green, SP, died August 19 in Park Hills, Miss.

Marie Kemper, PA, died August 29 in Vancouver, Wash.

Donna Joyce Herval Bauer, a former Sister of Providence, died August 29 in Missoula, Mont.

Briefs

Providence Associate news Associates gather at WPC and at NACAR in Chicago

Providence Associates from Mother Joseph Province, plus Provincial Councilor Jo Ann Showalter, were among the 250 attendees at North American Conference of Associates and Religious (NACAR) Conference 2012: A Journey of Blessings, June 1-2 in Chicago. The keynote speaker was Joyce Rupp, OSM, on "Journeying in the Land of Don't Know."

Two weeks later they joined their counterparts in an annual gathering at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind., June 17-18. The gathering came on the heels of Providence Event 2012, with featured speaker Ron Rolheiser, OMI, on "Providence: Mystical Window on the World."



Sisters of Providence and Providence Associates from Mother Joseph Province pose for a group photo at Women of Providence in Collaboration's gathering.

Both Sisters of Providence and Providence Associates from this province enjoyed the spiritual exchange and fellowship of that time together. ●

Pictured at NACAR are (from left) Provincial Councilor Jo Ann Showalter and Providence Associates Mary Ann Wilharm, Geri Ann Johnson and Marie Ilch.



14

Full house

Vocare retreat draws young women from across the Inland Northwest

Vocare 2012, a vocation retreat for young women ages 13 to 18 who are discerning a call to religious life, was held June 26-28 at Immaculate Heart Retreat Center, Spokane. The retreat was put on by a committee of area women religious who encourage vocations by putting on Twilight Retreats, Busy Person Retreats, and handing out vocation materials. Sister Maria Lourdes Cleto represented the Sisters of Providence in the planning group.

A full house of 31 young women responded to the invitation to participate at Vocare 2012. They

came from Spokane, Spokane Valley, Colbert, Walla Walla, Otis Orchards, Kettle Falls, Colville, Reardan, Deer Park and Farmington, Wash., as well as from Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

Retreat activities included visits with sisters from different religious communities, tours to ministries and sites including Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center and the campus of Gonzaga University, and a trip to Holy Cross Cemetery's Memorial to the Sisters. By the end of the retreat they had broken bread, prayed and worshipped

Maria Lourdes Cleto, a member of the Sisters of Providence Vocation Committee, is front and center in this group photo from the Vocare vocation retreat in Spokane.



New science center

Sisters help cut the ribbon at Providence High School

August 20, the first day of classes at Providence High School in Burbank, Calif., was an especially festive occasion. School officials, students and Sisters of Providence gathered for a ribbon-cutting at the science center, with three new state-of-the-art science classrooms. San Fernando Valley Bishop Gerald Wilkerson was present to bless the new building.

Sister Lucille Dean, former long-time principal of Providence High School, said completing the science labs was "testimony to those who prayed and worked and waited and always believed in commitment."

The donor wall on the high school's campus notes the inspiration of Blessed Emilie Gamelin and lists the names of the 444 science center donors. ●



Pictured from left are ASB President Caitlin Markey, Sisters Mary Hawkins, Lucille Dean and Rebecca Berghoff, and Joe Sciuto, head of the school.

with each other, in addition to being immersed in the rich history of women religious in the Inland Northwest.

The retreat was supported by donations from the Knights of Columbus, the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, the Serra Club and various religious communities. ●



New Health & Well Being coordinator

Patty Beattie, OP, has been hired by the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary and the Sisters of Providence as the new care coordinator in the shared Office of Health and Well Being. Her start date was June 29. She joins Melissa Neff, case manager assistant. ●

St. John's Academy reunion

On June 29, Sister Sue Orłowski took Sisters Cecilia Paganessi and Dolores Elwart to a class reunion for St. John's Academy in Colfax, Wash. Both had taught in elementary school there years ago when the Sisters of Providence ran the academy. Sister Sue says the two did not expect to "know a soul" there, but were surprised by the reception they received. When they went through the door wearing name tags that said Sr. Camilla (Sister Dolores' name in religion) and Sr. Beatrice (Sister Cecilia's), former students swarmed around them. Another Providence sister whose name often was mentioned was Sr. Margaret Yvonne (Sr. Dorothy Zimny), who was unable to attend but was remembered fondly by her many former students.

Some of the former students at the reunion were brought to the United States from Cuba in the late 1950s and early '60s, around the time of the Bay of Pigs. Cuban children were brought to the states and sent to schools all around the country, many without their families. St. John's Academy was chosen as one of the sites since it had a boarding school.



Sisters Cecilia Paganessi (left) and Dolores Elwart were happily greeted by Martin Marler at the St. John's Academy reunion.

Sister Cecilia was surprised by how many former students flew in from around the country to attend the reunion. They returned to a building that is no longer a school but has become a parish hall for St. Patrick's Church. Some remodeling has been done, but much of the building remains the way it was. The statue that formerly was in front of the hospital was moved to the front of the parish hall.

Reunion attendees looked at pictures from the past and listened to the stories about graduates' memories and their lives now as they shared a potluck meal. ●

Sister Margarita Hernandez renews vows

Sister Margarita Hernandez renewed her temporary vows on August 15 in the chapel at St. Joseph Residence, Seattle. Born in El Salvador, Sister Margarita is living with four sisters in Seattle while taking classes at Seattle Central Community College towards a degree in social work. ●

Sr. Margarita Hernandez asked guests at her vow renewal ceremony in Seattle to join her in a dance.



Provincial Superior Karin Dufault (left) listens as Sr. Margarita Hernandez speaks at her vow renewal ceremony.

PA anniversaries in Walla Walla



Congratulations to (front row, from left) Mary Ruzicka and Agnes Mason, of Walla Walla, Wash., who celebrated their 20th anniversary as Providence Associates on August 5. They are pictured here with other area Providence Associates (from left) Phyllis Davis, Kathie Oreb, Dr. Bruce Barga and Mary Jane Fehrenbacher. Not pictured are Deacon Jim Barrow, Kay Barga and Deanna Smith.

Sister Vilma Franco earns certificate in theological and pastoral studies

Sister Vilma Franco recently completed studies for a certificate in theology and pastoral studies from the Jesuit Institute of the University of Santa Clara in Berkeley, Calif. The program helped her to know and to understand the dynamics of working with Latinos and Anglos in the United States, she said. It also helped her to meet with other people who are leaders in religious education and to learn from their experiences. In addition, the program helped her to create relationships with many people from different cultures and to obtain a greater understanding of the Latino traditions.

"Finally," she explained, "this program helped me to learn many things about the history of the church and to go deeply into God's relationship with us and especially in my relationship with him. That

will help me to continue serving him from the realities that we are living in this moment in our world."

Sister Vilma will profess perpetual vows on Sunday, October 7, at St. Aloysius Church in Spokane.

Congratulations and best wishes, Sister Vilma! ●

Sr. Vilma Franco (second from right) is pictured with her classmates at the Jesuit Institute in Berkeley, Calif.



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A Cause to Dine For

Annual fundraiser benefits Sojourner Place ministry

Nearly 200 guests turned out at A Cause To Dine For, the annual luncheon to benefit Sojourner Place, a Sisters of Providence ministry that empowers homeless women to rise above their challenges. The event was held August 15 at The Westin Hotel in downtown

Seattle and featured Phyllis Campbell, Pacific Northwest chairman of JPMorgan Chase, as the keynote speaker.



Pictured at A Cause To Dine For are (from left) keynote speaker Phyllis Campbell, event chair Charlotte Van Dyke, SP, and Sojourner Place staff member Sharon Fitzpatrick, SP.

Phyllis recalled her childhood growing up in Spokane and how shocked she was when women with children came to the door of the family home, seeking help. "It is a dynamic cycle; the more you give, the more you get back," is a lesson Phyllis said she learned from her parents.

The longtime banking executive also served for six years as president of the Seattle Foundation, which has provided financial support to Sojourner Place, now celebrating its 25th year of providing housing and support for homeless women in transition who are motivated to grow and change toward independent living.

A special celebration of Sojourner Place's 25th anniversary was held from 3 to 6 p.m. Saturday, September 22, at nearby Blessed Sacrament Parish, 5050 8th Avenue NE, Seattle, and University Playground. All were invited to the outdoor celebration filled with friends, food, outdoor games and fun for all. ●

Kudos to

Transito Ruano Castro, PA, on an international honor!

Transito Ruano Castro's ministry

in El Salvador, PASSOS Education and Training Center, was selected to receive a 2012 Human Rights Award from the Washington Office on Latin America. The honor was presented at WOLA's Human Rights Awards Ceremony and Benefit Gala, on September 19 at the French Embassy in Washington, D.C.

Provincial Superior Karin Dufault and Sister Fran Stacey, who served 16 years on mission in El Salvador, were present for the presentation, along with Transito's husband Anibal Castro, PA.

The WOLA awards are presented to individuals and organizations working to confront violence throughout Latin America. PASSOS Education and Training Center was chosen for its "innovative community programs that stop crime before it starts by working with at-risk youth in El Salvador".

Transito is our first Salvadorian Providence Associate and a great leader along with her husband, Anibal. PASSOS Education and Training Center was founded in 1997 and it currently has 12 centers throughout San Salvador that offer programs for violence prevention and social outreach. Here is how WOLA describes PASSOS on its website:

"Throughout El Salvador, there are church groups, government workers and others who are eager to work with youth in communities with high levels of drug addiction, gang activity and violence. Often though, they do not know how to turn their commitment into effective community action. That's where PASSOS comes in. Its staff provides the professional training necessary so that people committed to working with at-risk and underprivileged youth can be effective when engaging with adolescents in marginalized communities." ●



Transito Ruano Castro and her husband Anibal are Providence Associates in El Salvador.



Sister Fran Stacey was pictured with Transito before she ended her ministry in El Salvador and returned to the United States.