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Rest in Peace

Pauline Higgins, SP

(Sister Louis of the Blessed Sacrament)

Sister Pauline Higgins died December 5, 2009, at St. Joseph Residence, Seattle, at 95 years of age, after 76 years as a Sister of Providence.

Sister Pauline and her twin brother Paul were born March 13, 1914, in Sunnyside, Wash., to Louis and Hannah Higgins. There were six children (three boys and three girls) in the Higgins family which included two sets of twins. Her father's occupation was diversified farming and the family moved within Washington State from Sunnyside to Yakima Valley and on to Toppenish, where he shared produce and consulted with other farmers.



Sister Pauline entered the novitiate of the Sisters of Providence in Seattle on January 18, 1933. Her sister Margaret, who was also a twin, had entered the novitiate four years earlier.

Sister Pauline graduated in 1932 from St. Joseph Academy, Yakima, Wash. In 1938 she completed her bachelor's degree at St. Catherine College, St. Paul, Minn., specializing in language and English, plus home economics. In 1946 she earned a master's degree in philosophy at Seattle University and in 1966 she also earned a master's degree in Latin from the University of Washington.

Her first ministry assignment was teaching seventh grade at Providence Academy in Vancouver, Wash. In addition to her service there, she taught a variety of subjects or served as assistant librarian or debate coach in the following high schools: St. Joseph Academy, Yakima, Wash.; St. Patrick High School, Walla Walla, Wash.; Kennedy High School, Seattle; Providence High School, Burbank, Calif.; and Monroe High School, Fairbanks, Alaska, and surrounding villages. For three consecutive summers in the 1950s she taught philosophy courses at Great Falls College (now the University of Great Falls) in Montana.

Her summers were spent studying at the University of St. Louis, University of Notre Dame, University of Washington, and Seattle University.

Sister Pauline especially enjoyed teaching in Alaska's bush with Indian families or on the tundra with Eskimo families. She published a book in 1999 that included her experiences there entitled, "Providence in Alaska: Sisters of Providence Education Ministry in Alaska, 1902-1978."

Her other ministry assignments included formation team member, vocation director, candidate director and Eucharistic minister for parish shut-ins. Sister Pauline was an excellent cook and seamstress and made many of her own clothes.

Sister Pauline was preceded in death by her five siblings and is survived by nieces and one nephew.

Vigil Service was held December 9, 2009, in the chapel at St. Joseph Residence, Seattle, where the Funeral Mass was celebrated the following day. Burial followed at Calvary Cemetery, Seattle, with Bonney-Watson Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

Memorial contributions in Sister Pauline's honor may be made to the Sisters of Providence Retirement Fund, 1801 Lind Avenue SW, #9016, Renton, WA 98057-9016. ●

Marian Therese Kohles, SP

(Sister Mary Bernice)

Sister Marian "Therese" Kohles died December 22, 2009, at St. Joseph Residence, Seattle, at 84 years of age, after 64 years as a Sister of Providence.

Sister Therese, born April 5, 1925, in Oakland, Calif., was the eighth of 14 children of Marie Freis and Michael Kohles. Her father was an automobile mechanic and her mother was a loving homemaker.

Sister Therese attended St. Elizabeth Elementary School and St. Elizabeth High School in Oakland, Calif., which were in the same building. She and her siblings were in the St. Elizabeth schools from 1919 to 1955. While in high school, she worked as a billing clerk for a freight company and continued in this job for several years after graduation. In 2000, she was honored as the year's NCEA Catholic Elementary School Distinguished Graduate by the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA).

At an early age, she had an inner knowledge that she eventually would enter religious life. She entered the novitiate of the Sisters of Providence on May 18, 1945.

Sister Therese attended Auerswald Business College in Seattle. She received a B.S. degree in nursing at Seattle University in 1959 and received an M.A. degree in nursing with a minor in education at the University of Washington in 1962. She took theologi-



cal studies at Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, Calif., and at St. Mary's College, Moraga, Calif., from 1983 to 1988.

She was in financial management at Providence Hospital, Seattle, from 1946 to 1954. She also served as director of finance, 1951-54; assistant administrator, 1962-67; and director of nursing services, 1964-67.

At Providence Hospital in Everett, Wash., Sister Therese was head nurse in surgical services from 1960 to 1961. She was an instructor in the School of Nursing at Seattle University from 1964 to 1965; staff nurse at the University of California Medical Center, San Francisco, 1967-69; director of educational services, Rogue Valley Memorial Hospital, Medford, Ore., 1969-77; director of Providence Child Center, Portland, Ore., 1977-83; and assistant administrator, Mission Effectiveness, St. Joseph Medical Center, Burbank, Calif., 1985-89. She also served in Mission Effectiveness and as a sister representative at Providence Hospital in Oakland, Calif., until she formally retired in 1994.

She was involved in three research activities from 1965 to 1977 and wrote four publications regarding quality assurance in nursing and communication values in the administrative process.

Sister Therese enjoyed spending time with her family. She loved sports, was an avid tennis player, and enjoyed playing tennis with her brothers. She also enjoyed swimming and bowling.

Sister Therese was preceded in death by four brothers and four sisters. Survivors include one sister, Julie (Richard) Cupp, Moraga, Calif., and four brothers, Francis (Honey) Kohles, Moraga, Calif.; Donald (Barbara) Kohles, Mariposa, Calif.; Greg (Cynthia) Kohles, Calistoga, Calif.; and Richard (Jean) Kohles, Hayden, Idaho; as well as many nieces, nephews, grandnieces, grandnephews, and great-grandnieces and great-grandnephews.

Vigil Service was held December 29, 2009, in the chapel at Providence Mount St. Vincent, Seattle, where the funeral Mass was celebrated the following day. Inurnment followed at Calvary Cemetery, Seattle, with Bonney-Watson Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

Memorial contributions in Sister Therese's honor may be made to the Sisters of Providence Retirement Fund, 1801 Lind Avenue SW, #9016, Renton, WA 98057-9016. ●

PROVIDENCE HEALTH INTERNATIONAL

returns to El Salvador

Editor's note:

Last November marked the 9th annual Leadership Immersion Trip to El Salvador conducted by Providence Health & Services. An opportunity rotated among the four regions of Providence Health & Services, these trips “expand our understanding of the mission and values that unite our ministries within Providence Health & Services,” said Mark Koenig, system director of international missions.

While in El Salvador, the participants learn from the Salvadoran people about their continued efforts to rebuild their lives and their communities following years of civil war and multiple natural disasters. They also participate in service projects, visit a clinic and/or hospital to better understand healthcare delivery to the poor, and they engage in individual and group reflection on their experience. “These trips challenge participants physically, intellectually and spiritually—but they are also a source of renewal on a personal and professional level,” Mark explained.

by Fran Stacey, SP



Lisa Scardina (left) and Sister Fran Stacey pose in front of a memorial to the martyred women missionaries from North America.

Chamba (left), a local community leader, directs a repainting crew that includes Steve Brennan (center) and James Harker (right).



Shown setting off for a home visit, in which everyone had a role to play, are (from left) John Koster, as doctor; Lynda Dawson, as nurse; an unidentified community leader; David Carlisle, as translator; and Steve Brennan, as scribe.

Eight women and seven men from the Seattle and Portland regions of Providence Health and Services gathered in El Salvador the morning after their late arrival in November as part of a delegation from Providence Health International. They spent a good part of this orientation time sharing about why they chose to join PH&S as doctors, nurses, administrators and employees in the System Office. Even more importantly, they shared why they stay with PH&S. Some of their thoughts follow:

Matthew Breeze (general practice physician, Portland) said his interest in social justice attracted him to medicine and that the mission of PH&S is important to him. James Harker (Oregon regional director of strategic development) also finds that with PH&S, his personal values are in line with his professional values. Elizabeth McCabe (chief mission integration officer, Portland) expressed that she appreciates the global consciousness of PH&S. Sandra Gregg (director of strategic nursing initiatives, Portland) said she appreciates the faith-based environment. Melinda Lee (medical director of ElderPlace, Portland, stated that her experience is that the mission, the “driver” for all they do, is what keeps her at PH&S. John Koster, PH&S CEO, said that PH&S people reveal God’s love in the world with the umbrella of health care. Because there is trust in the system, PH&S can accomplish what other groups can’t even dream of, John added.

Caring in word and action were clearly evident in the 15 Providence people as they visited the Christian Base Communities (CEBs) in El Salvador where the Sisters of Providence are privileged to serve.



In the villages of San Hilario, Angela Montano, Mario II, San Marcos Lempa and La Papalota, they went in teams of three (doctor, nurse and “secretary”) to visit homes. The aim of the visits was not clinical, but rather personal. It was an opportunity for each team to meet and get to know members of three families. The family members spoke of their past and present, as well as their dreams for the future. Of course, part of each visit was a sharing about the family’s particular health-care concerns. These concerns were summarized and shared with representatives of the Emergency Fund for Health, which followed up with the families after the Providence delegation left.

The CEBs coordinate this Emergency Fund for Health. Persons who help serve with the “Fondo” had spoken with the delegation members about the outreach that occurs in communities, with CEBs helping persons with diabetes, high blood pressure, lung problems, cancer and many cases of kidney problems. The goal of the Fondo is to provide services for persons with critical or chronic health concerns.

Because of international generosity, including from Providence Health International, the Fondo is able to provide diagnostic services, transportation to hospitals in San Salvador, the making and distribution of natural medicines, and other more personal outreach to those with critical or chronic disease.

In their evening reflections, delegation members spoke of their experiences in these homes. They shared how they were experiencing God’s presence alive in the families they visited, and in the outreach of the CEBs through the Fondo. Personal values change when one visits with families that may or may not have one spigot of water, that cook over clay-baked fire pits, that have dirt floors and little or no “furniture,” and whose main food three times a day is tortillas flavored with salt.

We, Sisters of Providence in El Salvador, are happy and proud to witness persons of Providence Health International in their compassionate being with and for the poor in communities here. ●

The delegation included: 1) Dr. John Koster, PH&S president and CEO; 2) Steve Brennan, system director for government affairs; 3) Elizabeth McCabe, chief mission officer for the Oregon region; 4) Dr. Matthew Breeze, Providence Physician Division; 5) Lisa Scardina, manager of strategic outreach and communications in Physician Services & Development; 6) David Carlisle, an MBA in international business/sustainable development; 7) Olga Jessup, a contract RN at Providence Hood River Hospital; 8) Christine Bloom, a nurse practitioner at Providence St. Vincent Medical Center; 9) Zita Petkus, administrative assistant for mission leadership in the System Office; 10) Melinda Lee, medical director for Providence ElderPlace; 11) Lynda Dawson, system manager of nursing workforce planning; 12) Sandra Gregg, project manager for system support services; 13) Dr. Chris Anderson, a physician at Providence Milwaukie Hospital; 14) Mitch Neyhart, CFO for the Providence Physician Division, Oregon; and 15) James Harker, chief strategy officer for the Oregon region.

Emilie Gamelin Mission Fund Donations 2009 *

* *Donations from Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province, were in the form of grants, memberships, table sponsorships, operating funds, salaries, stipends, capital campaign contributions, program advertisements, tuition, scholarships, etc.*

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Briefs

More honors for Sister Carolyn

A cafeteria, a conference room and now a scholarship!

Providence Centralia Hospital, where Sister Carolyn Koreski was sister representative and patient advocate for 18 years, has created a new scholarship fund in her name. A year after she retired in 2003, hospital employees voted to name the renovated cafeteria after her. Next came the Koreski Conference Room, dedicated in a new building in 2007.

In December, the hospital made a \$100,000 donation to create the Providence Centralia Center for Nursing at Centralia College. Half will go to purchase new equipment for the nursing program and the other half creates the Sister Carolyn Koreski Scholarship Fund, which will provide two full nursing scholarships each year. The campus and the hospital are closely linked by nursing students who spend time in the hospital's surgical and medical units. Many then choose to work at the hospital after graduation. ●



New graduate

Congratulations to Sister Gabrielle Nguyen for completing her associate of nursing degree. She celebrated her graduation December 9 with family and friends, and Provincial Superior Margaret Botch, SP, presented Sister Gabrielle with her nursing pin. The following afternoon, sisters in Spokane honored her with a reception for this special occasion. Pictured from left are Sisters Marilyn Charette, Margaret Botch, Lang Tran and Margarita Hernandez, Sister Gabrielle's mother Tham Nguyen, Sisters Judy George and Lily May Emert, the proud graduate, Sisters Sue Orlowski and Annette Seubert, and Sister Gabrielle's sister-in-law Linh Giang Le. ●

Lunch and learn

Nuns at Noon program offered in the PH&S System Office

Providence Health & Services employees in the System Office in Renton are being offered a bimonthly opportunity to join a couple of Sisters of Providence for lunch and to learn about them and their ministries. In the spirit of Blessed Emilie Gamelin, foundress of the Sisters of Providence, a simple soup and bread lunch is served. On January 22, the sisters in the spotlight were Sisters Helen Brennan and Charlene Hudon. The capacity for these lunches is 16. ●

