

Province of Lemont- November 2019

This past Jubilee Year, filled with memory, gratitude and celebration, made our Province very aware of our unity with the past, with our Sisters around the world, with all those we meet and influence in our daily lives and ministries, and with the future.

We are inspired by the risks and challenges that Mother Margareta faced in carrying out her passion to teach the poor Slovenian students in Maribor, and we are grateful for the many Sisters who left Slovenia to continue that work here in the U.S.A., teaching first poor Slovenian and Croatian immigrants and later the many students who came to the parish schools. It was in these schools, inspired by the Sisters, that many of our vocations were nurtured. We are here because of the sacrifices, dedication and vision of Mother Margareta. Both of our community days during the Jubilee Year recalled for us our heritage and unity, celebrating Mother Margareta's birthday and our Congregational history.

The early missionary fire of our Sisters led them to Egypt, the United States, other European countries and South America. For many years distance and language made it difficult for us to know each other. Today, however, we have the opportunities of media, air travel, and translation that make knowing each other a reality. This year we feel so much more connected to all our Sisters. We always supported our mission in the Congo, but this year we had the added excitement in seeing on social media pictures of the opening of our mission in Uganda.

We welcomed Sr. Bernarda, Sr. Tina and Sr. Ema from Slovenia who spent time with us sharing their gifts and talents and bringing youth and laughter to our Province.

We committed to praying for each of our Sisters throughout the whole Congregation and having a memorial service remembering all our Sisters who went before us and passed on.

So many people here in the U.S.A. celebrated this anniversary with us and learned about our history through presentations, conversations with us, printed materials, and attending our celebrations. We have touched many lives and continue to influence and inspire people we encounter, and through them our influence will ripple to so many more.

And what of the future? Even though we are aging and in the midst of change and reconfiguration, we are committed to carrying out, for our time and in our place, the charism of our Congregation. We will be Sisters to each other every day and love and accept each other. We will be visible in parishes, in our retreat center, in Alvernia Manor as well as in the many everyday places like doctors' offices, airports, stores, and our family homes. In all of these places we can radiate joy and hope and kindness. It was a marvelous year for all of us, and we embark on the next 150 years one day at a time in communion with each other, facing new challenges, risks, and sacrifices "in the footsteps of Mother Margareta."

Sr. Kathleen Vugrinovich