

Sponsored Ministries



Franciscan Child Day Care Center
Pittsburgh, PA, United States



Our Lady of Carmel Franciscan School - São Paulo, Brazil



St. Michael the Archangel Franciscan School - São Paulo, Brazil



Pius XII Franciscan School
São Paulo, Brazil



Saint Francis and Saint Clare Social Center - São Paulo, Brazil



St. Francis of Assisi School
Barbacena, Brazil

Co-Sponsored Ministry

Sisters Place - Pittsburgh, PA, United States

Co-sponsored with 13 other Catholic Congregations of Religious Women in Western Pennsylvania, Sisters Place serves single parents and children experiencing homelessness through housing and programs that provide opportunities for empowerment, wellness and professional advancement.

Gratitude for God's Providence

Blessed by God's Providence for more than a century, we give thanks and remember those who have gone before us, on whose shoulders we stand - our founding Sisters, pioneer Sisters to Brazil, and everyone who has served as a Sister of St. Francis of the Providence of God.

Because of each blessed person Providence has placed on our path, we know God is with us. Called to live and proclaim the Gospel, the Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God confidently, joyfully, go forward into the next century with renewed commitment to care for our common home and our common heart.



Charism

INSPIRED by Francis of Assisi to follow Jesus Christ in total responsiveness to the Providence of God.

WE EMBRACE the evangelical life in Community, striving to live the poverty of Jesus Christ and to proclaim peace in the joy of the Spirit.



Sisters of Saint Francis of the Providence of God



Confidently, Joyfully, We Go Forward!

"God is with us!" (Joshua 1:9)



Sisters of Saint Francis of the Providence of God

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1890's The Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth (Polish) in Des Plaines, IL accepted members of Lithuanian heritage to serve growing Lithuanian Catholic immigrant communities in Pennsylvania, Illinois, Michigan and Connecticut. The parishioners and priests of these parishes advocated for the formation of an autonomous Community of Lithuanian Sisters who understood their unique culture and traditions.

1922 On March 12, 1922, with the support of Pittsburgh Bishop Hugh C. Boyle and Mother M. Chrysostom Krill, the Sisters of St. Francis of Millvale (Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities) agreed to sponsor a new Congregation of Lithuanian Sisters and train the 22 founding members to follow the Franciscan way of life.



1923 The Community was incorporated as the Lithuanian Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis of Assisi in the Diocese of Pittsburgh and thus began the sixth branch of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia founded by St. John Neumann.

1924 Auxiliaries began to form in the parishes the Sisters served including those in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, PA, Hartford, CT, Cleveland, OH, Grand Rapids, MI and Kenosha, WI. Their mission was to provide financial support.

An Auxiliary in Chicago, IL was formed by the parents, relatives and friends of our founding Sisters. Their efforts helped furnish the convent and chapel, established scholarships for St. Francis Academy and raise financial support.

1925 Mother M. Chrysostom Krill was appointed by Bishop Boyle to serve as the transitional Superior of the Community, which quickly grew to 59 Sisters.

The Congregation purchased the 33-acre Abbot Farm in Pittsburgh's South Hills to be their home - Mt. Providence. The Sisters moved into their newly built Motherhouse on August 12, 1925, the feast day of St. Clare of Assisi.



1926 St. Francis Academy began in the Motherhouse as a preparatory school, then expanded to a grade and high school in 1929.

1935 Sisters were missioned to Lithuania to study the language and culture as they served two boarding schools, with the hope of establishing a convent and learning center. However, the Sisters returned to the U.S. in 1940 due to the instability and violence of World War II.

1936 The St. Francis Academy Alumnae Association began. The organization continues to keep alumnae and teachers connected, as well as engage in charitable activities, including support of the Sisters and ministries. In 2008, they established a merit-based Legacy Award Scholarship for students of Seton LaSalle Catholic High School in Pittsburgh.

1938 Five Sisters set sail for Brazil on August 13, 1938 to serve Lithuanian Catholic immigrant communities. Soon after they arrived, the Sisters served at St. Joseph School in Vila Zelina, a small borough east of São Paulo.

1939 The St. Francis Academy building was completed on the Mt. Providence property and was the first all-girls Catholic high school in Pittsburgh's South Hills. The Academy served as a bastion of Catholic education for more than fifty years, closing in 1991.

1941 A novitiate opened in Vila Alpina, São Paulo, Brazil. Joanna Askinis (Sister M. Bernarda) entered as the first postulant.

The Sisters opened their first elementary school in Vila Alpina, Our Lady of Carmel. Dr. Vicente Giacagliini generously donated the land and an abandoned building.



1944 The Sisters expanded their ministries to include healthcare and assumed the administration of Good Samaritan Hospital in Mt. Vernon IL. The Sisters sponsored this ministry as it grew and expanded to a new facility until 1988.

1949 The Congregation's name was officially changed to the Sisters of Saint Francis of the Providence of God to reflect their broader mission beyond the Lithuanian community.

1952 St. Michael the Archangel School opened in Vila Zelina, São Paulo, Brazil.

1954 Pius XII School was built and opened in São Paulo, Brazil. As the school grew, a larger facility was built in the Morumbi neighborhood.

1959 St. Clare Hall was constructed to house prep girls from St. Francis Academy. Over the years, it was used for other ministries, including low-income senior housing from 1976-1991.

With the collaboration of parents, educators and volunteers, Pius XII Little School opened in Paraisópolis, Brazil to serve children, adolescents and impoverished families for 50 years.

1966 Sisters from the United States volunteered their summer vacations to educate the teachers of Carriacou, a Caribbean island that is now part of Grenada.

1968 Sisters expanded ministries to rural areas of São Paulo and other states in Brazil.

1974 Sisters assumed responsibility for St. Joseph Hospital, in Alton, Illinois, where they served until 1988.

1982 The Franciscan Child Day Care Center opened in St. Clare Hall in Pittsburgh. The growing ministry moved to the St. Francis Academy building in 1994. The Center celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2022, and continues to offer programs for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.



1985 The Pittsburgh Auxiliary was reestablished. The only remaining Auxiliary in the United States, it continues to provide friendship and financial support.

1986 A Sister began mission work in a clinic operated by the Consolata Fathers in Assela, Ethiopia. She returned to the United States in 1991 due to civil war.

1990 The Sisters' Associate Program in the USA began with the first laywomen making their commitments to the charism and mission of the Congregation.

Mt. Providence in Pittsburgh was dedicated as a Peace Site in response to an emergent militarized and pro-nuclear weapons worldview.

1992 A year after Lithuania's independence from Soviet occupation, two Sisters volunteered to teach religion in the Saule Catholic School in Utena. Other Sisters from the USA and Brazil joined them during the 20 year mission that included initiating a food program, pastoral services and the founding of St. Clare Hospice.

1993 The Sisters partnered with other religious communities in Pittsburgh, PA to open Sisters Place, a supportive housing ministry for single parents and children experiencing homelessness that expanded to include programs and outreach that provides opportunities to overcome poverty and homelessness through empowerment, wellness and professional advancement.

Sisters participated in a Franciscan Inter-Congregational mission in Gallup and Roswell, New Mexico and provided pastoral and educational ministries to indigenous and Latino communities.

1994 St. Clare and St. Francis Social Center opened in Vila Alpina, São Paulo, Brazil to serve children in need through an after-school program.

1995 The Franciscan Spirit and Life Center opened in St. Clare Hall in Pittsburgh, PA and served as a dedicated space for retreats, spiritual direction and community gatherings. Three hermitages in the wooded area of the property provided a unique Franciscan retreat experience among God's creation.

1997 An inter-cultural mission began at St. Peter Parish in Danbury, CT with Sisters from the United States and Brazil serving the parish and local Brazilian community.

2000 Recanto Paz e Bem residence for senior and infirm Sisters opened in Jardim Leonor, São Paulo, Brazil.

2005 Expanding to Bolivia, the Sisters worked in ecclesiastic pastoral programs, in education, healthcare and pastoral ministries in Guanay, Guayaramerim, and Riberalta for more than a decade.

2015 In response to a request from the National Conference of Religious of Brazil, the Congregation sent a Sister to Haiti to share her medical expertise, helping persons in a region still devastated by the 2010 earthquake.

The Congregation made the bittersweet decision to sell Mt. Providence and move Sisters and offices to more sustainable spaces for the aging Community in the United States. Yet, the Franciscan presence remains, as several Sisters live in townhouses on the property and the Franciscan Child Day Care Center remains in the St. Francis Academy building.

2016 The Congregation's Generalate headquarters moved to Jardim Leonor, São Paulo, Brazil.

The Congregation officially inaugurated an Associate Program (Lay Franciscans) in Brazil for persons choosing to commit to their charism and mission.

2017 The Sisters began a mission in Óbidos, Pará, Brazil to provide healthcare and pastoral services to area communities, including indigenous and quilombola populations along the Amazon River.

The St. Francis of Assisi School was inaugurated in Barbacena, Minas Gerais, Brazil to assist children, adolescents and their families who live in profound social vulnerability.

2022 Under the gaze of our Provident God, the Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God celebrate their 100th anniversary and renew their Franciscan commitment. Guided by the Gospel and animated by their Charism, the Sisters faithfully embrace the challenges and opportunities of a new century proclaiming:

“Confidently, joyfully, we go Forward, for God is with us!”

