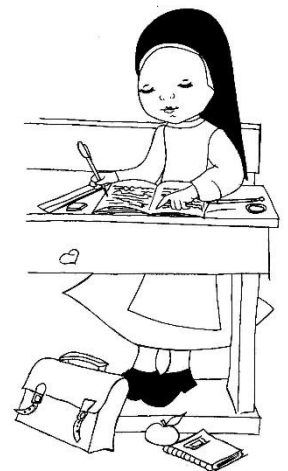


Brief historic review of the Province of El Caribe

The history of the Province cannot begin without a heartfelt THANKS!, to the generosity of the Sisters from the Provinces of Bogotá, Bucaramanga and Medellín, and also to our French sisters. Their audacity and boldness gave birth to whom we are today

We can say, without fear of being mistaken, that since its origins, our Caribbean Province, lived what we now talk about interprovincial relations, interculturality, even though at that time it was simply a missionary response to the urgencies of the moment

In this historical review we make a general tour of several of our mission. There will be more information of some than from others, but we do not intend to me a detailed study of each, with a simple heart we want to give thanks for the past, value the present with its lights and shadows and look to the future with, hope and Faith in the Lord who keeps calling us every day.



A curious fact is that the first two foundations on Venezuelan soil: are the result of the request of lay people, who knowing the quality of teaching imparted by the Dominican Sisters of Charity of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin, they go first with faith and then with much insistence to request their presence in the field of education.

Today the Province of the Caribbean is composed of three countries: Venezuela with 80 yrs, Puerto Rico with 57 yrs and Curaçao with 44 yrs of missionary presence. In the beginning Haiti and Dominican Republic were also part of our Province. Let us see how our story began in the “Land of Grace”, Venezuela.

The first foundation of the Congregation in Venezuelan lands dates back to 1939. By this time, there was no school in Tovar that responded to the needs of women's education. Mr. Belisario Gallegos Ortiz, President of the Municipal Council of Tovar, considers it convenient to resort to some religious to found this school. To achieve this dream he resorts to General López Contreras, President of the Republic who authorizes the foundation of the new institute with the Primary Degrees, and secondary education: Normal and Commerce. It also authorizes the entry of foreign



religious personnel to be in charge of the Direction and education of youth. Excited by the welcome of the President of the Republic to his project, he addresses Mother Eduardo, Provincial Superior of Bogotá, filled with zeal and self-denial, widens the radius of action of the Community, and transcends the Colombian borders consenting to open the First School of the Presentation in Venezuelan land. The first Sisters arrived in Tovar on August 17, 1939 at 4:30 p.m. They were: Sr. Ignacia del Rosario, Director, Sr. Carolina de la Cruz, Sr. Lucia Mercedes, Venezuelan of origin, who came to her country to be an active member of the foundation of foundation in Tovar. They are also accompanied by the First Assistant and the Provincial Secretary. On September 17 of the same year the Presentation School of Tovar was inaugurated. Its first headquarters was the old house in front of the current Cultural Center of Mocotíes. On September 18, the School began operating with a total of 116 students, divided between grades 3 to 6 of primary school and First of Normal and Commerce. The school has for this moment with boarding service and there are 13 internal students.



Two years later in 1941, the missionary expansion of the Congregation began with the Foundation of a School in the City of Maracaibo, Zulia State, this second missionary work also in the educational field originated in the fervent longing of Mrs. Josefina Faccini de Hernández D'Empaire, who was educated at the Sister's School in Cúcuta Colombia, and living in the city of Maracaibo, she hoped that the girls of this city would enjoy the same education of excellence that she received from the Sisters at

the School of Cúcuta Therefore, with the full support of her husband, Dr. José Hernández D'Empaire, she asks Mother Eduardo, Provincial Superior of Bogotá, religious to found a school in Maracaibo. After a terrible voyage through the storm in Lake Maracaibo, the first group of Sisters for this new foundation finally arrived at the coast of Maracaibo: Sr. Stephanie de la Croix, (French, Superior), Sr. Cecilia Inés, Sr. Soledad María, Sr. Rosa de los Ángeles and Sr. Isabel of Jesus. The School started with 80 girls, a Kindergarten, 5 grades

of primary education, the 1st of Commerce, in addition to the subjects of English, French and music and singing classes.

The Congregation continues expanding its missionary radio in Venezuelan land with the foundation of the Mater Christi School on June 21, 1958. Located in Chacao, in the Campo Alegre Urbanization, it is the first establishment in Caracas. The Provincial Superior for this moment is Sr. Rita de la Merced, and Sister Eva de la Cruz was appointed as local superior. The name of the School "Mater Christi" arises because already in Caracas another religious community had a School with the name of Presentation, when a Marian Year is being celebrated, the name of "Mater Christi" is suggested, which was accepted with pleasure by all . On September 22, the School began its work, these were the first Sisters who sowed the seed of the Presentation at the Mater Christi School: Mother Eva de la Cruz, Superior, Sr. Luis Javier, 1st and 2nd grade of children, Sr. Luis Ángel, Kinder and Preparatory of girls, Sr. Sofia of Jesus, 3rd and 4th of girls, Sr. Sabina, Coadjutor

The School was closed in 1987, it is currently the Provincial House, it houses the Community of Hospitality (Welcome) and the House of Elder Sisters.



On October 15, 1962 the Marie Poussepin Basic School was founded in the Sierra Maestra neighborhood in Zulia. Among the first group of Sisters were: Mother St. John Bosco, Sr. Berta, Sr. Lucia of Jesus. Also this year, on August 14, the Province of Medellín founded the first community in the town of Bayamón. This foundation was not the result of missionary exploration, as recorded in the annals, in 1961 a young university student residing in the house in Washington, motivated by the community and apostolic spirit of our Sisters, and the vehement desire that someday the Congregation would reach Puerto Rico, wrote to Father Jaime

Visker, Vicar General of the Dominican Fathers, Province of Holland, communicating his appreciation for the Sisters and the desire to make a foundation in Puerto Rico; Father met with Mother Margarita Cecilia, at Rosary House Studies, whom he named as intermediary for an upcoming foundation. Sr. Thérèse Dominique, Provincial Superior of Medellín, informed the Mother General that she was planning a visit to America.



On January 10, 1962, Sr. Thérèse des Anges and Mother Lucia del Socorro, Provincial Secretary of Medellín, visited Puerto Rico, where they were welcomed by the Dominican Sisters of Brooklin. Finally, to respond to the request of the Dominican Fathers, came from Washington DC: Mother Bernardo de la Inmaculada, Sr. Lucia de Fatima and Sr. María Inés del Sagrado Corazón, to work at the Santa Rita School in Bayamón. As an interesting note of the Congregation in Puerto Rico, we highlight the fact that in 1966, four years after its foundation, Puerto Rico passed to the Vice Province of the United States, in 1975 again to the Province of Medellín and finally on December 19, 1982 ADSCRIPTION from the communities of Puerto Rico to the Vice Province of the Caribbean, being Vice Provincial Sr. Carolina Llano Posada.

Casa Cuna "Blanca Baldó" was founded on September 2, 1963, located in the urbanization El Paraíso, Distrito Federal. It belongs to the San Juan Bautista Parish and depends on it. The children whom it serves come from marginal neighborhoods with scarce economic resources, mostly from disintegrated families. The Sisters withdrew from this work on September 17, 2010, but it continues with lay personnel.



Another educational work founded in 1966 was the Fe y Alegría School la Rinconada, in Caracas. It depends on the NGO Fe y Alegría. On September 1, 1997, the Community withdrew from this work, but like Casa Cuna Blanca Baldó, it continues to provide educational services to young people in the area.

For the year 1969, in La Vega, a popular and very marginal area of Caracas, the Vicary Our Lady of Carmen was founded, located in the Carmen neighborhood, La Vega-Federal District parish. For many years it was a place of intense missionary activity, training of community leaders and popular dispensary. The Community withdrew on January 9, 1997

All these intense missionary activity leads to the creation of the REGION OF VENEZUELA ,in the year 1970, dependant upon the Province of Bucaramanga. Sr. Beatriz Alvarez Gomez was appointed as first regional. Also this is the year of the foundation of the School La Presentación, in Merida, State of Merida,as an answer to an urgent need for catholic education. It began with the Diversified Studies in Science and Humanities.

While this was taking place in Venezuela, in Puerto Rico the Province of Medellín establishes a community in Villa Carolina, for the educational mission and the Diocesan Catechesis.

In the year 1971 Sr. Luz Elena González Ruiz, was named as second Regional. At the El Guarataro sector, another popular and marginal area of Caracas, the Vicaría Nuestra Señora de la Presentación (Vicary Our Lady of the Presentation) was founded on November 3, 1973. This work was definitively closed on August 24, 2003.

The presence of the Congregation in Haiti begins in 1975 and responds to the request of the Dominican Fathers: Pierre Salvetti, Frantz Grandoit and Paul Antoine Bieanaime to lead a primary school that the parish viewed as one of the greatest emergencies. At this request the Congregation responded by sending Mr. Hermine Blaise to the "Chapelle" small village of Verrettes in the Diocese of Gonaives. Mr. Hermine simultaneously attends the training of the students, the school and the teachers. Due to the lack of personnel and as part of the process of revision of works, Haiti passes to the Province of Medellín, on April 17, 1997

During the month of July 1974, the Great Mission was held in Curaçao with the collaboration of the Sisters of the Provinces of Colombia. In 1975 he started the first community under the province of Sr. Julia de la Sagrada Familia, Superior of the Province of Bucaramanga for this moment. The first sisters who settled in the Seru Fortuna neighborhood were: Sr. Ruth Hernández, Sorayda Carrascal and María Olimpia Ramírez in Habay.

The Congregation arrives at the Guárico State with the foundation of the El Sombrero Missionary Center on September 24, 1976 at the request of Bishop Miguel Antonio Salas and Father Luis Meza, who addressed Sister Luz Elena González Ruiz, Regional for this moment. Afterwards, they had the opportunity to speak personally with the Superior General, Mère Marie St. Thérèse, who was visiting in Venezuela and with Sr. Julia de la Sagrada Familia, Provincial Superior of Bucaramanga. The first Sisters sent to this mission were: Sr. Margarita de Jesús, Sr. Cecilia Inés and Sr. María Matilde, animator. The purpose of the foundation was to directly help the Parish, especially the preparatory catechesis to the Sacraments; The visit to the homes and the direction of the APEP School was also proposed. The work closed on August 12, 1989

In the year 1977 there is a new change of Regional being named Sister. María Florinda Ramírez as the third Regional, with two councilors: Sr. Aura Lucia Caro, Master of novices and Sr. Luisa Prada, Treasuresr. The novitiate was founded in Qta. Corbet in the urbanization project "La Paz".

The third presence in Puerto Rico, established by the Province of Medellín was the San Vicente de Paúl Home for the Elderly. This request arose through a layman, Mr. Francisco Lago, and by insinuation of Fr. Dimas Soberal, who communicates with Sr. Inés Marulanda and through her with Sr. Margarita de la Encarnación, at that time Superior Provincial of Medellín, to see the possibility of bringing Sisters for this work, initiative of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The first three Sisters of this new foundation on Isla del Encanto were: Sr. Clelia González, Sr. María Herminia and Sr. María Josefina Alzate Henao. The contract was signed on September 30, 1977 the community was established on January 1, 1978. Due to lack of

personnel the community withdrew on July 20, 1999, but it continued under the responsibility of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Paul.

The Province of Medellín makes a fourth foundation in Puerto Rico, this time in the town of Arecibo on January 24, 1979. The founders of this work that was in its beginnings was for the mission in the Parish and for a brief time attention in a the House of Single Mothers, were: Sr. Rosalba Martínez, Sr. Luisa and Sr. Gilma Osorio Castaño. After several years of missionary presence it was closed on June 30, 1993

Vice Province of El Caribe

The erection of a new structure is just the beginning of a work that will be built every day...

Marie Poussepin's project is not yet fully realized; it is up to us to build this great work day by day ... Let us not forget that "we commit our personal and community responsibility before the whole Congregation" Sr. Inés Mercedes Mejía Toro.

On June 29, 1981, in simplicity and solemnity, like all the great events, at 10 a.m., 85 sisters met, almost all the sisters of the Vice Province; Sr. Carmen del Pilar, in representation of Sr. Inés Mercedes Mejía, Superior General and the beloved Provincial Sisters of Colombia and some of their Councilors.

Full of emotion and joy we hear the voice of Sr. Inés Mercedes Mejía who, through a recording, sent us her message, words of profound meaning, charged with affection, compromising, that enliven the desire for a more generous delivery in following the Lord. Sr. Carmen del Pilar read the act of erection, solemn moment, as solemn is the silence in which life is gestated.

It was a day of immense gratitude, towards Sr. Julia de la Sagrada Familia for her constant dedication, for her sacrifices and sleeplessness that we have today transformed into life. Moment of thanks to Sisters Rafaela Isabel and Aura Lucía Caro for their generous dedication.

The first government of the nascent Vice Province of the Caribbean was formed by the Sisters: Carolina Llano Posada, Vice Province and as Councilors: María del Socorro, Luz Elena González Ruiz, Luisa Dolores Prada Girón, María Hersilia Carrascal Conde.

The new Vice Province of the Caribbean continues to extend its missionary horizon with the opening of the Vicaría in Curimagua, Edo. Falcón in 1981. The religious community of this work moves to Tunapuy on December 5, 2005.

A year later, on September 12, 1982, the Missionary Center of San Carlos, Edo Cojedes, was founded. Also in Puerto Rico, the Province of Medellín founded a community in Puerto Rico on March 1 in Toa Baja, which would welcome the Puerto Rican postulants. The community closes on August 1, 1986. A few months later, as we mentioned earlier, on December 19, 1982, the Communities of Puerto Rico were assigned to the Vice

Province of the Caribbean. Event of the Congregation that is part of the restructuring process, directly related to the mission, in whose service are the structures ... and we ourselves!

The Province of El Caribe

As recorded in the annals of the history of the Province is read on the date of July 30, 1984. "With immense joy we have received the telegram that the General Chapter sends us communicating so pleasant and desired news, says textually:" Pleased communicate decision Chapter conclusion process Province Caribbean united missionary aspirations fidelity charism affectionately Chapter. "

The first government team of the Province appointed by the General Government was made up of: Sr. Carolina Llano Posada, Provincial. Councilors, Srs. Luz Elena González Ruiz, Hersilia Carrascal Conde, María Florinda Ramírez Gómez, Noemí Noguera

Two years after the erection of the Province, August 1, 1986, was founded in Quebradillas. Puerto Rico, the new community of initial formation (postulancy), with projection in the Parish and School San Rafael Arcángel. The first three Sisters sent to this mission were: Sr. Gilma Osorio Castaño, Superior and responsible for the postulants, Sr. Delis Aurora Dávila, Sr. Milagros Pérez Otero. This work served the people of Quebradillas until February 4, 2000, where due to lack of personnel we had to abandon it.



When the Presentation of Maracaibo School celebrated its 50 years of foundation, with the support of the alumni, the Casa de la Misericordia (House of Mercy) was founded, to care for the most needy in Zulia, it was the dream of Sister Cecilia Inés, who before her death asked Sister Francisca de Los Angeles to support this work in favor of the most needy. This is how in 1986 a new presence was born to care for the neediest.

In 1986, on October 11, the Province arrived in the Dominican Republic, with a foundation in the South, in the Province of Barahona, Jaragua Municipality, poor and abandoned village of all, without light, without water, the sisters lived in a rented house. They were very close to the border with Haiti. A beautiful work of evangelization and promotion that among its achievements has initiated a school with Faith and Joy, called Marie Poussepin, and have left a good group of lay people committed to their people. The pioneers of this

mission outside the headquarters of the Province were: Sr. Rosa de Fatima, Superior, Sr. Blanca Martinez, Sr. Marta Elena Velez and Sr. Nilsa Marrero Caro

The mission in a restructuring process went to the Province of Santafé on April 15, 1997.

Another educational work is established in 1988 on October 16, with the founding of the Fe y Alegria la Presentacion School in the town of Temblador, in the state of Monagas, Venezuela. Being Provincial Superior Sr. Carolina Llano Posada. The first sisters were: Angélica Ramírez, Director. Sr. Leonor Pérez Prada, Promotion - Evangelization, Sr. Clea Marina López Páez, Youth groups and Catechesis. Sr. Blanca Lía Montoya, responds for the Pre School. Sr. Irma Mendez, education, Sr. Amanda Garbiras, education and Sr. María del Socorro Superior. The School began in the most marginal neighborhood of the town, in a house of rent, the construction of the present headquarters were made possible by the old Lagoven, petroleum industry that at the moment does not exist. Later the house for the Sisters was built, sponsored by ADVENIAT, at the suggestion of Fr. José Luis Echeverría S.J. who asked the Province for the Sisters for the foundation, taking advantage of the closing of the Mater Christi School with the commitment to open another educational work where there was no religious presence. The Sisters stayed until September 9, 2008. Being an establishment of Fe y Alegría, the work continues to function with lay people

The life of our Province continues with the celebration on January 1, 1989 of the **First Provincial Chapter of election**. Sister. Carolina Llano Posada, was elected as Provincial Superior, and Councilors were Sisters: Fanny Escobar Vélez, Eugenia Osorio Avendaño, + Luz Elena González Ruiz and Carmen Sabina Flórez Barrera.

In 1987, a missionary center was founded in Cabure, Edo. Falcon with the Sisters who were in the Community of Curimagua.



In the Second Provincial Chapter in 1993, Sr. Luz Elena González Ruiz and her council team, Sr. Eugenia Osorio Avendaño, Sr. Eva Cecilia Romero Vargas, Sr. Blanca Oliva Zapata Olaya, Sr. Berta del Carmen Marín Artigas.



In 1997, a restructuring of the Province was carried out, with the entire community of the Dominican Republic, Srs. Carmen Santoro, Fanny Escobar and Nilsa Marrero to the Province of Santa Fe and the mission of Haiti, on December 28 goes to the Province of Medellin. During this year the foundations of Maracay, Cornelio Vegas Hospital closed on the 9th of September, 2005 and a Community in Guatire, San Martín de Porres School, loaned in commodatum by the Dominican Fathers of the Bética Province were also established. The community withdraws from the School on August 15, 2007.

The Postulancy formation house began on January 31, 1998 at the Casa de la Misericordia, (House of Mercy) then moved to Los Teques on April 26, 2007.

During the **Third Provincial Chapter held in 1998**, was elected as Provincial Sr. Gloria María Zamora Carrillo, and her Councilors: Sisters: Noemí Escobar Vélez, Carmen Sabina Flores, Blanca Oliva Zapata and Diana Dolorita. This year, two communities are closed in Puerto Rico: the Home for the Elderly of Vega Baja and the San Rafael Arcángel School of Quebradillas; but a community is established in the Cristo Rey de Ponce Academy, P.R. to attend the pastoral and the direction. The Sisters retire on June 30, 2001.



In 1999, the Children's Home of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus was founded in Arecibo for children, victims of mistreatment between the ages of 2 and 5 years at the request of Bishop Iñaki Mallona, then Bishop. Today the presence of a Sister in this work is maintained.

In the Fourth Provincial Chapter in 2003, Sr. Gloria María Zamora was re-elected Provincial Superior, and her government team were the sisters: Noemi Escobar Velez, Cecilia Parra, Eugenia Osorio and Nilsa Marrero.

On December 6, 2005, the sisters who were in the community of Curimagua moved to Tunapuy and it closes in 2009.



On June 6, 2004, a community was founded in the town of Naranjito, Puerto Rico. With the mission of the Catechesis and Parish Pastoral. Currently, a Sister also directs the Catechesis of the Diocese of Caguas.

In Venezuela a mission is established in the field of health "Madre San Pedro" in the Los Modines sector of Maracaibo. This began on December 8, 2005 and ended on May 25, 2008.



Life goes on and we arrive at the fifth Provincial Chapter in 2008, were was elected as Provincial. Sr. Nilsa Marrero Caro and her government team the Sisters Marina Mendoza Villamizar, Berta del Carmen Marín Artigas, Diana Gisela Dolorita and Luisa Magleni Jiménez

During this period of pain and lack of personnel, the Parish of San Juan Bautista del Paraíso, the Cuna Blanca Baldo House, was handed over in September 2010. **During the 6th Provincial Chapter, in 2013,** was re-elected Sr. Nilsa Marrero Caro and the Council, elected were the Sisters: Hersilia Carrasca Conde, Nícida Amparo Díaz Leal, Antoinette Camacho and Diana Gisela Dolorita; who was elected as a Counselor in the General Chapter, reason for which during the second session of the Provincial Chapter took place the election of a new councilor, being elected Sr. Eugenia Osorio Avendaño.



This is and has been a time of many difficulties for the Province, the situation of Venezuela under the command of a narco-tyranny that is leading the country to the most atrocious poverty, the social problems never seen before, with an increasing misery, an economy in complete recession, the currency increasingly devalued, the migration affecting the mission, the family and the serious problem of insecurity, the lack of food, light, water, gasoline, really a reconstruction is needed at all levels. In Puerto Rico, the consequences of the natural phenomena that hit us hard, was the invitation to a renewal at all levels that we may not have been able to take advantage of. All this reality hits the sisters hard, many have asked to return to their structures of origin, not all of us are called to live in places of conflict, of difficulty. Curacao, it can be said that it is the only country that is a little more stable although it also suffers from the Venezuelan reality that hits

the island, there are many unemployed, prostitution and poverty are feeling stronger.



This period of government can be classified as the time of resistance. Also as the time in which we have seen the mercy of God, expressed through the fraternal closeness of both the General Government and the other structures that have accompanied and sustained us with one and a thousand details. Today we take this opportunity to tell you with a grateful heart THANK YOU.

In the seventh Provincial Chapter, in 2018, sadly we were not able to look for the common good and to elect a Provincial Superior and therefore her Council. It was a very difficult moment in which it seemed that the same crisis experienced by our countries and our Province did not allow us to reach a consensus in the election. Therefore, according to C. 141, Sr. María Escayola Coris, Superior General appoints the Provincial. Sr. Luisa Magleni Jiménez, assumes with immense generosity this responsibility and after a consultation process are also appointed the Councilors: Sr. Clea Marina López Páez and Sr. Nícida Amparo Díaz Leal. (For a transitional period of one year) It is now up to us as Province to assume this reality, and strive with our Sisters Luisa, Clea and Nícida to continue the renewal that the Caribbean Province needs today.



¿Where are we?

At present, the Caribbean Province is made up of three countries, 8 communities, in 12 mission locations. We maintain a strong presence in the middle of formal education, in four own schools and one of the Diocese of San Carlos, Cojedes State, in Puerto Rico we attend the educational pastoral in two schools, and Curaçao we have the Coordination of Catechesis in all the schools of the Diocese and of Aruba., presence in the parishes, in the Dioceses and in the field of health, visiting patients in hospitals and their residences, attention in the field of natural medicine, in different social works, such as the house Saint Therese of the Child Jesus – Home for children victims of abuse, and the House of Mercy. There is a group of sisters working for youth ministry at an inter congregational level.

In the international Novitiate of Medellin we have now three novices.

About us?

At the moment 47 sisters.

- Colombian 25
- Venezuelan 17
- Curaçao 2
- Puerto Rican / American 3

It is interesting to note that of the 25 Colombian sisters, 23 are nationalized; Venezuelan or American All for the mission.

We cannot let the current situation of Venezuela pass, as the crisis becomes more acute. Affecting our mission, among other because the staff and families of our institutions slowly leave the country. It affects us because this regime humbles the dignity of the person, including religious life.

Given this situation and also at the suggestion of the General Government, we saw the need to transfer our elderly and sick Sisters to the Province of Bucaramanga, for a better quality of life. We are grateful for the welcome they have given to the two Sisters who are in Bucaramanga, while we continue with the passport procedures for the other two that remain in Caracas.

Finally, in the midst of so much adversity, we want to continue betting on tomorrow for our Province of the Caribbean and for the Congregation.

For this reason, as a Province, we want to prioritize the following perspectives:

- ✚ Youth Vocation Ministry as the central axis of our mission.
- ✚ The reorganization of the works of the state of Zulia and Puerto Rico.
- ✚ Process for reviewing our missionary presence
- ✚ Beginning of a systematic study of the process of restructuring in the Province.
- ✚ Preparation of a Sister in order to integrate the interprovincial formation community.

