



On the way to the

56° GENERAL CHAPTER  
2024

## PROVINCE OF MEDELLIN

### A PROVINCE FACING THE SYNODALITY OF THE CHURCH

#### STATING HISTORY

The Province of Medellin, always inspired by Providence, makes the way of the Church, following in the footsteps of the humble, pious and charitable Marie Poussepin, making of its mission, a simple and close preaching that continues to be a fire that lights other fires, so that the Gospel may stroll through its paths with audacity and prudence.

A history that is born in the generosity of the response of many to the ever-new call of God, proposed in the style of Blessed Marie Poussepin. Some milestones in this history of salvation:



After their arrival in Colombia on June 21, 1873, the Sisters arrived in Medellin three years later, on July 16, 1876, to offer services of charity at the St. John of God Hospital, today St. Vincent de Paul Hospital.

The communities and works grew, as did the number of Sisters, who responded to the freshness of the charism, which proposed a new way of serving others.

Mother Leon Joseph, Superior General at the time, communicated through her circular: "The Council of the Congregation decided to create a new Province in Medellin, which the Sacred Congregation in charge of the affairs of Religious Societies ratified by a rescript dated December 13-16, 1929".

The new Province was erected on May 11, 1930 and Mother Felix Joseph arrived in Medellin on July 15, 1930, to be the first Provincial Superior for 460 professed Sisters and 51 establishments that existed at that time.

The Province lived restructuring of the Congregation at the time, attentive to the new evangelization and the transformation of the missionary map. It was the call of the Church and of the poor that indicated the new foundations, the convenient fusions and closings forced by the most diverse situations.



A special chapter was written on October 17, 1936, with the closing of the Province of the Coast (erected on May 1, 1884), since then the 13 communities located in Barranquilla, Cartagena, Santa Marta, Ciénaga, Ocaña and Convención became part of the Province of Medellin.

In 1954, in a letter dated March 9, Mother Thérèse Augusta announced a new restructuring for the Provinces of Bogota and Medellin to give rise to two new structures: Bucaramanga and Manizales, independent and with their own Councils, and would later have their Novitiate.

Since that date, the Province of Medellin has been made up of the Departments of Antioquia, Atlántico, Bolivar and Chocó. The foundations in the United States, Puerto Rico, Peru and Bolivia have already formed new structures. In 1965 Panama was born as a place of mission and since 1998, by decision of the General Government, Haiti became part of the Province.



## TODAY, WE ARE

### 303 Sisters:

299 of perpetual vows  
4 of temporary vows

5 Postulants

**34 Communities:** 5 in Panama, 1 in Haiti y 28 in Colombia.

## MISSIONARY PRESENCE

"Wherever the Church calls us, wherever our brothers and sisters need us", this is fulfilled and is confirmed through the history.

The reality puts limits to the desire to live the service of charity with greater amplitude, decisions of the government, State regulations, situation of the families and many other factors, make that our missionary commitment changes in a radical way at times.

### **“BE FILLED WITH TENDERNESS TOWARD THE CHILDREN THAT YOU TEACH” (G. Advices)**

Education suffers the consequences of politics and the impoverishment of families. Today we have a few private schools: Our Lady of Lourdes in Barranquilla, Colegio de la Presentación Medellin, Envigado, Bello, Rionegro and La Estrella are the ones that have passed the test of the Covid 19 pandemic and now have a total of about 2,000 students; 33 of our Sisters live their mission in these schools.

Education ministry is also a reality in Riosucio-Chocó, Churuquita Chiquita and Curundú in Panama and at the Nursery School Marie Poussepin in Haiti. These educational institutions, like Marie Poussepin in Barranquilla, are public ones, i.e. subsidized by local governments, archdioceses or dioceses and even parishes. Some receive a subsidy from the Province.

It is remarkable the process of certification of education in different schools, a process that is developed with technique and high quality to offer the best to the students who come to our schools to prepare themselves for a good future.

The Society recognizes the quality of education that is offered and welcomes our own style based on the pedagogy of the Charism of Blessed Marie Poussepin.



**Riosucio**



## "SERVE THE SICK WITH GREAT CHARITY" (G. Advices)

Today twelve Sisters are faithful to the charism of caring for the sick in the Rosary Clinic in its two branches and in St. Peter's Hospital, Urabá. Four other Sisters also carry out the health ministry in Riosucio, El Bale de Ñurúm and in Haiti.

The pedagogy of teaching others about health care and providing employment for more than thousand people, is an expression of the desire of Marie Poussepin in the school of life, that marks the existence of each Sister and the Province.



Rosary Clinic has received many national and international recognitions for the management of the different circumstances that it must assume so that the health service has the guarantee of knowledge, quality of the processes and safeguards our spirituality.



The Employees' Fund, with an activity in honest growth, teaches workers the discipline of saving, while accompanying them in the moments when they need economic support for subsistence.

## OUR ELDERLY SISTERS

We have always considered the elderly Sisters as the pillars that support the mission of the Province with their prayer life. In recent years, substantial improvements have been made to the spaces dedicated to care for the lives of those who offered their lives, sparing no effort, so that the Congregation could grow.



Initially we had 5 houses for older Sisters, but later the communities of San Bernardo and Santa Teresa were merged and the one in Girardota was closed. Thus our Sisters are located in the communities as follows: 57 Sisters in San Bernardo, 48 Sisters in San José y 32 Sisters in Santo Domingo.

## SOCIAL WORK

We could say that all our mission is social work, because they offer to help those most in need, or they could be defined as institutionalized works of mercy. In every area of the mission there is a place for this qualified service of charity.

The Dispensary, a work at the heart of the Province, serves more than a hundred homes, represented by women who are heads of households, where they receive attention, listening, grocery and learn to do various things that will later serve them to earn a living and cover some household expenses.

In Haiti, given the reality of the country, it is becoming more and more difficult to welcome and provide services to people in need; however, the Sisters continue to make efforts to keep the doors of the Pediatric Center open to those who come in search of help.



The work of the Bale de Ñurum, founded by the Dominican Sisters of the Presentation, has a beautiful chapel, a health care center and an excellent center for the reception of young people, where they receive training and help with academic skills.

Riosucio (Chocó) always deserves special attention. It lives on the banks of the Atrato River and works with the locals, providing them with the care they need at all levels. There, a child care center is an oasis of welcome and affection for those who have had to live in the most precarious conditions of poverty.



Apartadó (Antioquia) is always a place to look at when talking about the Sisters' dedication and commitment to the most vulnerable people: women and children. The work of COMPARTIR (share) is well known, with the victims of violence and all its efforts to teach them and help them overcome the difficult situations they have had to live through.

Today the migrants demand all our attention. They are our new brothers and sisters who change the face of the Church. From Apartadó, the Sisters move to different places where they meet the migrants in their obligatory path of a flight from reality, in search of a new paradise where it is possible for them to live with the dignity of the children of God.



Making the Charism legible is the mission of our Sisters in the houses of welcome: El Picacho, Sainville - Cartagena, Santa Inés and Maison Marie Poussepin and in the Welfare Centers of the Elderly in Girardota and Rionegro.



## FORMATION IS A LIFE LONG ENDEVEOUR

The vocational youth ministry and initial formation in the Province, assume the challenge of guiding the young women who come to know about the charism of Blessed Marie Poussepin and her work. This mission involves accompanying the youth in their decision making process, to respond to the call to follow the Lord, consecrating their life forever.



Today the Province has welcomed 11 young women who are being formed in the Interprovincial Postulancy:

- 5 from the Province of Our Lady of the Presentation
- 1 from the Province of Bogota
- 5 from the Province of Medellin

As C. 64 says "There should be continuity in the sisters' formation after their first profession. Formation is a life-long endeavor, and must be adapted to the different phases of the sisters' life, in order to favor their personal growth and integration." It is the effort that every day accompanies the journey of the Sisters and of each local community. It is suggested during meetings and studies accompanied by the Government of the Province and the Formation Commission especially.

## COMMITTED TO THE CAUSE OF CANONIZATION OF BLESSED MARIE POUSSEPIN



We have responded promptly to the initiative proposed by Monsignor Mauricio Velez, Auxiliary Bishop of Medellin and to the invitation of Sr. Maria Escayola Coris in her New Year's greeting on December 31, 2022, to resume the process of canonization of Blessed Marie Poussepin and offer means to the people to get to know her, to promote their faith and trust in her, and thus we can obtain from the Lord the miracle we need for her canonization.

In the Province, the year 2023 has been declared the YEAR OF THE CANONIZATION, we are working on many ways to make Marie Poussepin known and now there are innumerable expressions of people who say they obtain from her favors and consolation in their needs.

At the Rosary Clinic, places have been organized so that those who want to pray can do so and if they wish, leave their supplications in the urn prepared for the same.

The Parish is the privileged place for evangelization, that is how we have always understood it, that is why the Sisters participate in the Pastoral services in the Parish to which their local Community belongs and also in others, to which they are called to animate the catechesis and the liturgy, many times.

A parish bears the name of our Foundress and is an opportunity to tell many of the faithful about the life and work of Blessed Poussepin.



We are motivated by the commitment to build a Province with a "synodal face". That is to say, with the capacity to show it in every day life, to make evident the identity that permeates our existence, to make ourselves visible in different actions, in such a way that the word can be accompanied by the attitude, and this one, reflects the coherence of the words. We cannot run the risk of intellectualizing synodality, because we would end up knowing too much and doing too little in this ecclesial goal to "walk together".



**"Let's walk together again"**