

**Perpetual Profession of Sister Sally Vega Alvarado, CDP**  
**Reflection by Sister Karina Conrad, CDP**  
**Isaiah 62:1-5; 1 Cor 12:4-11; Jn 2:1-11**

It is a joy for all of us to be here with you Sally as you make your perpetual profession. And I am deeply honored that you asked me to reflect on the scriptures you chose for this special day. Sally, my *only* classmate, what a journey it has been! What you are doing today touches something deep and personal in the hearts of each one of us. Your family, friends, sisters in community truly are proclaiming the words of Isaiah: “You shall be a glorious crown in the hand of the Lord, a royal diadem held by your God - You shall be called *My delight*.” We are delighted that you responded “YES” to our Provident God. God delights in you and rejoices over you today and always... “as a bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so does God rejoice over you.”

God has been rejoicing over Sally since the day she was born. Sally first heard God’s call to be a woman religious in her homeland, *en la isla del Encanto*, the island of enchantment, Puerto Rico. After 9 years as a vowed Franciscan sister, Sally’s journey with God led her to the Sisters of Divine Providence. Her journey, sometimes clear and straight, sometimes filled with twists and turns, has been a

journey of joy, faithfulness and unconditional service to God's people. Her steadfast love for God in the midst of the unknown is admirable. Sally's YES is a gift conceived through prayer, discernment, and reflection over many years.

And Sally, we give thanks to your mother, Ana, and father, Dolores, who are very much with us in spirit, your brothers and sisters. Born from a family of faith and love, Love is the gift you now have to give to this life. Love dwells in your heart and it shines through the many and diverse gifts the *Spirit of all gifts* has given you.

In today's gospel we hear a story about Jesus, his mother and his disciples taking part in a festive party. One clear message of this gospel is that our Christian faith and our vocation is one of joy. Jesus knew how to enjoy life. His presence at the wedding feast is one example. To live out our vocation is to experience a real sense of joy, life, freedom, peace, *encuentro*, encountering others as Jesus encounters us. Just as Jesus did not keep away from "las fiestas," neither does Sally. Today as a community we join in the fiesta.

Mary had a profound knowing that her son would provide the wedding guests with an abundance of whatever was needed. It seems Jesus did not notice the lack of wine, the emptiness of the jugs, nor did he seem to be anxious that the wine was running out. Jesus somehow knows there is an abundant supply of wine. So, too, we who have been invited to this celebration are filled with the abundance of life and love that overflowed the earthen jars with Jesus' sweet wine. Jesus' story, the narrative of his life is the manifestation of abundance. From the proclamation of Mary's Magnificat, Mary understood the story of abundance, and in this moment of need her trust in Providence spoke: "do whatever he tells you." Like Jesus and Mary, in all the situations of life when it appears that the wine is running low, one thing we know for sure: our story is one of abundance. In the midst of the uncertainties of the future, we know one thing to be true: we have each other.

For a moment, let us imagine Sally in the midst of this wedding party....

What would Sally do? Knowing Sally from the days of our novitiate, I have no doubt that she would be totally and actively present to the needs of others. Sally has a heart so in tune with Jesus. Sally has her eyes fixed on Jesus. Sally is a risk taker. She is steadfast. She is a woman of hope. She is a woman of Providence.

Mary, woman of Providence, present at Cana, was the first to recognize the wedding hosts' shame should there not be enough wine to serve all the guests.

Mary exemplifies the gift of total presence and attentiveness to the needs of others.

Mary's urgency to respond to the needs of others is reflected in Sally's life. Sally, you are called to reflect Mary's dynamism, gentleness, and attentiveness. You

heard Mary speaking to you deep within your heart: "*Do whatever he tells you*"

*"Hagan lo que el les diga"* She speaks these same words, inviting you, us, and all to *actively* participate in co-creating a world of justice and peace.

Sally, today we celebrate, *estamos de fiesta*...as Jesus filled the water jugs with luscious wine at Cana, so he fills your heart with overflowing love and joy. Truly, you are God's delight, *eres la favorita de Dios*, and from this day forward may you always hold in your heart Mary's words: "*Hagan lo que él les diga.*"