

Installation of the Our Lady of Guadalupe Province Passo Fundo, Brazil



In 1923, ten German Sisters of Notre Dame arrived in Brazil and established the Saint Joseph Missionary District. In 1937, the district became Holy Cross Province, with its center in Passo Fundo. As the Province continued to grow, both membership and the diversity of its ministries, administrative changes became necessary. Therefore, in 1962, the Our Lady Aparecida Province was established, with its center in Canoas.

January 10, 2026, was a historic day for the Sisters of Notre Dame in South America. After 102 years of ministry in Brazil, the sisters of Holy Cross and Our Lady Aparecida Provinces were consolidated into a single unit, under the title of Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The new province numbered 253 Sisters ministering in Brazil, Mozambique, Peru, and Rome.

The installation of the Our Lady of Guadalupe Province took place during the Eucharistic celebration at which the Archbishop of Passo Fundo, Rodolfo Luís Weber, presided. Members of the General Government — Sister Mary Ann Culpert, Superior General; Sister Marie So-Wha Kwak, First Assistant General; and Sister Maria Nonata Bezerra, General Councilor — were also present. Sister Lucia Weiler (IDP), who served as facilitator and consultant throughout the unification process, was also in attendance.

During the ceremony, the members of the new Provincial Government and Administration assumed their offices. Sister Vania Maria Dalla Vecchia was named Provincial Superior; Sisters Rosa Maria Hoelscher, Lucileide M. da Silva Sobral, M. Elci Favaretto, and Deisi Maria Daniana Naibo, Councilors. Sisters Maria Helena Rovani and Maria Iris Marcolin became Provincial Treasurer and Provincial Secretary, respectively.

Rooted in its founding charism and with more than a century of history in Brazil, Our Lady of Guadalupe Province now begins a new chapter of its journey under the sign of the Holy Cross and beneath the loving mantle of Our Lady Aparecida. May Our Lady of Guadalupe abundantly bless the Sisters and continue to accompany the Notre Dame mission with her maternal love.