

Caritas

A publication for the Sisters of Providence and Friends ● WINTER 2005

Message from the Leadership Team

This holiday season, we begin to celebrate a landmark event: the arrival of the Sisters of Providence in the West. On December 8, 1856, Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, Sister Praxedes and Sister Blandine arrived at Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory. They were accompanied by two young women, Sisters Vincent de Paul and Mary of the Precious Blood, who wished to consecrate their lives as Sisters of Providence in the missions. These pioneers came at the request of Bishop A.M.A. Blanchet, who escorted them from Montreal to ensure their safe passage. He housed them in the only available space—the unfurnished attic of the bishop's small house.

Bishop Blanchet had known and worked with Emilie Gamelin since the 1830s and served as chaplain for the House of Providence in Montreal. He believed that the Sisters of Charity of Providence would respond to a challenge of love by bringing to the West "the civil and Christian education of the young, as well as the care of the poor and the sick ... to carry to (the Indians), along with the knowledge and love of the Creator and Redeemer, the way to live honestly among themselves and with their neighbors ... and having the care of our mission and of the sacristy of our Cathedral." (Mandate, December 31, 1856)

From December 8, 2005, through December 8, 2006, the actual anniversary date of the sisters' arrival, Sisters of Providence, Providence Associates, and co-laborers and friends will take Jubilee time to recall how this challenge has been met over 150 years. Following the thread of compassion, courage, and caring, from the frontier into this 21st century, we will celebrate a remarkable trail of God's Providence.

Like Jesus, housed in the only available space at his birth, our pioneer sisters and the people who followed reached beyond initial limits to embrace the West – and the world. "The love of Christ impels us!" That is the motto of the Sisters of Providence.

Beginning this Christmas season, we invite you to join in a Jubilee Year of reflecting, celebrating and responding to the continuing challenge of love. We will be honored to make this journey in your company. ●

Sr. Margaret

Margaret Botch, SP
Provincial/Team Coordinator

Alaine

Alaine Qualls
Team Member

Sister Kaye

Kaye Belcher, SP
Team Member

Sr. Annette

Annette Seubert, SP
Team Member

Sr. Anita

Anita Butler, SP
Team Member

Sr. Charlotte

Charlotte Van Dyke, SP
Team Member



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The Mother Joseph Award is named in honor of Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, the first provincial superior of the Sisters of Providence in the West, and is given to a person who "exemplifies the values and courage of Mother Joseph." It is presented by the provincial and the Leadership Team on behalf of all the Sisters of Providence in the province, which includes Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho, Montana and El Salvador.

Bill Bouten, PA, receives 2005 Mother Joseph Award



By Brenda L. Velasco

"Bill Bouten is a prayerful and generous man with tremendous integrity," says Betty Harrington, PA, in describing this year's Mother Joseph Award recipient. "I admire him because he works hard and gives total respect and honesty to others."

Betty, along with Sisters Michelle Holland and Dorothy Byrne, nominated Bill for the 2005 award. The award was presented to him on November 13 at Mount St. Joseph, Spokane, followed by a reception.

"He has a strong association with the sisters," says Sister Michelle. "Even with his busy schedule, he always finds time to support our ministry."

Bill, a Providence Associate since 1995, has a steadfast family history with the Sisters of Providence. His grandfather first established the relationship back in 1945 as a general contractor and consultant for the sisters through Bouten Construction. The Bouten family's business relationship with the sisters turned into a friendship which continues to this day.

Bill, who is the current owner and president of Bouten Construction, exemplifies the values of Mother Joseph through "his honesty and integrity in dealing fairly with his employees," wrote Sisters Michelle and Dorothy in their nomination form. "He values his religious commitment as a Catholic and financially supports the ministry of the Sisters of Providence and Associates."

A native of Spokane, Bill received his degree in construction management in 1984 from Mankato State University. He worked for a national company for a few years before returning to Spokane in 1986 to work for Bouten Construction with his father, Frank Bouten, who was president of the company at that time. Since then, Bill has continued his relationship with the Sisters of Providence, as both a building consultant and a friend.

When Bill first learned that he was the recipient of the 2005 Mother Joseph Award, he could not believe it. "I am deeply touched and honored that my name is associated with Mother Joseph," he says. "Mother Joseph was a builder and I think of myself as a builder. I am humbled by this award."

In fact, "humble" is a word that came up several times in his nominators' descriptions of Bill.

"Bill is a humble man who goes about things with great sincerity," says Sister Michelle. "Like Mother Joseph, Bill is very attentive about how he does his work. He always thinks of others."

Betty Harrington says that "Bill is a wonderful human being. He's been involved in a lot of charity work and goes about it in a quiet, humble way. That kind of humility makes him a good person."

Even though his work at Bouten Construction keeps him busy, Bill finds time to reach out to the Spokane community through different organizations and volunteer programs. During the winter months, he volunteers

Celebrating God's Favor

150 YEARS of Sisters of Providence in the West

December 8, 2005

Opening of the 150th Year Celebration

April 22, 2006

Celebration of 150th and Jubilee at St. James Cathedral, Seattle

August 5, 2006

Celebration of 150th and Jubilee at Cathedral of Our Lady of Lourdes, Spokane

September 23, 2006

Celebration at St. James Church
Open House at Providence Academy, Vancouver, WA

December 8, 2006

Closing of the 150th Year Celebration

For more information, look for the 150th anniversary section on our website: <http://www.sistersofprovidence.net>

with the winter sleeping program for homeless men at the House of Charity. He became involved with the program ten years ago, inspired by the sisters' commitment to the poor.

"I have met people there who I would not have come in contact with otherwise. This is a tremendous value to me," Bill says. "The people who benefit from the House of Charity have needs, just like everyone else, but have different life circumstances." This experience has also been rewarding to Bill because it reminds him of the commitment of both Mother Emilie Gamelin and Mother Joseph to the poor and the marginalized.

Bill also has served on the Holy Family Hospital Foundation, Sacred Heart Medical Center Foundation, Sacred Heart Children's Hospital Foundation and the board of Ronald McDonald House Children's Charities. He is a parishioner at Our Lady of Lourdes Cathedral.

He has undertaken several remodeling and construction projects for the Sisters of Providence, including the renovation of St. Joseph's Residence in Seattle, the remodeling of Mount St. Joseph and Emilie Court in Spokane, and other repairs, maintenance, and upgrades of buildings in Yakima, Seattle and Spokane.

In her nomination form, Betty wrote: "His (Bill's) reputation for cooperative planning, maintaining projects well within the budget or below and meeting time frames is outstanding."

Bill also sponsored an employee of Bouten Construction to travel to El Salvador with a group of Providence Associates to help build homes for the poor.

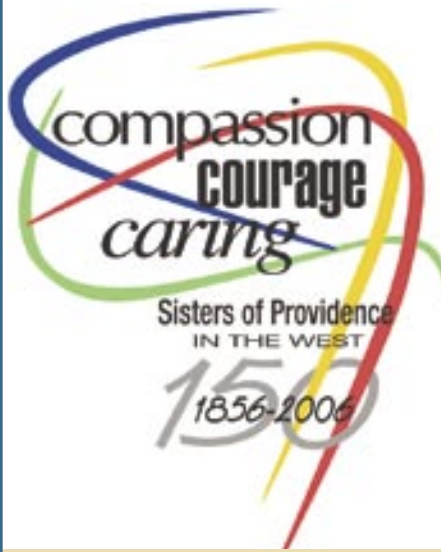
"He has been generous in giving financial assistance and supporting outreach activities for those in need," wrote Betty. "He exhibits compassionate concern for others in his personal relationships."

In 1997, Bill traveled to Romania with Northwest Medical Teams to help children at an orphanage there. Aside from working with the children, who ranged in age from 1 to 13, Bill also helped with repairs to the orphanage.

Closer to home, he also was instrumental in helping to construct a base for the bronze memorial statue of Astronaut Michael Anderson and with obtaining approval to locate it near the Spokane Opera House. Anderson was one of seven crew members who were killed when the space shuttle Columbia broke apart in space in 2003.

1856~2006

Pioneer sisters helped tame the West.



The Sisters of Providence have created a new 13-month 2006 wall calendar in anticipation of the 150th anniversary of the arrival of Mother Joseph and her four sister companions.

Black and white historical photographs of the sisters, quotes from their chronicles and writings and color images of their artifacts tell the story of 150 years of compassion, courage and caring.

Suggested donation is \$5 per calendar, which includes mailing. To order, send your mailing address and a check or money order to:

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Sisters of Providence

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For information, call (509) 474-2300
or e-mail carol.stephan@providence.org

Bill credits his parents and grandparents for his commitment to charity and ministry.

"They set a great example for me. My parents taught me about discipline, how to think of the needs of others and what I can do for others," he said. "They are very generous and always said that we (his sister and two brothers) should be interested in what others are doing and what their lives are about."

His father was also a great role model in the way in which he conducted business with others. "He was always fair and looked for ways to help people," says Bill. "I am blessed with wonderful parents and grandparents."

Bill has known the Sisters of Providence for most of his life, and says he has met many inspirational sisters. One in particular who made

a big impression on him was Sister Peter Claver. He was a nominee for this year's award given in her name by Sacred Heart Medical Center. "I admired her and think of her often," he says. "The role she played at Sacred Heart as a leader was impactful. Her belief in Providence was motivating."

He also admires the way the Sisters of Providence play a pivotal role in different ministries through prayer and financial contributions, but are not in the limelight. He feels honored to be a part of their mission.

"Their humbleness is inspiring and they are so inclusive. You are a part of a family," he says. "When I work with them (with a construction project), it is so much more than building buildings. It's bigger than that. I see it as our ministry. We are building part of the ministry and it is so easy to catch the spirit." ●

Lillian Rouzan, PA, found herself unable to sleep on a fall night in Montreal in 1996. At the Motherhouse of the Sisters of Providence for an international gathering of Providence Associates, she had been moved by being one of three witnesses to another associate's expression of private vows. Without telling the PA in the next bedroom, her husband Frank, she stole from her guest room to the chapel to pray that night. Then, alone and wearing her nightgown and slippers, she made her way to the tomb of Sisters of Providence foundress Emilie Gamelin to make a private vow she intended never to share with anyone – a vow to permanently be a Providence Associate.

Phyllis Silva-Keith is the Providence Associate whose private vows disturbed Lillian's slumber that night. Phyllis had been drawn by the example of Emilie Gamelin's act of consecrating her entire life to God and in service to the poor. Using Mother Gamelin's written vows as a model, Phyllis wrote her own private vows, intending to keep them to herself and the three Providence Associates who were her witnesses – Lillian, Frank and Barbara Cox -- but today she freely discusses them. What changed her mind was the existence of the Alternative Association Task Force, which for the past three years has been studying how to help people realize other ways to interact with the SP community short of vowed membership. "My talking about my vows may help somebody else questioning how to live out their call," Phyllis says.

With public vows, like those made by the Sisters of Providence and other religious, the church alone can sanction them or release a religious from them. Private vows are written by the individual and are made directly between that person and God. They carry no force of canon law.

In addition to alternative vowed relationships, the task force is exploring prayer companions, volunteer opportunities, and outreach to former Sisters of Providence. At the province's Gathering Days in August, Lillian reported that six sisters, ten Providence Associates and four friends had signed up for the fledgling prayer companion program, committing to either praying for a particular ministry or praying with and for a companion. Signups for prayer companions continue to grow. Sister Roberta Rorke shared information about efforts to establish a

TASK FORCE EXPLORES ALTERNATIVE ASSOCIATION

4 Lillian Rouzan, PA

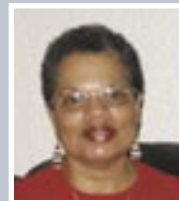
Lillian Rouzan grew up in the Los Angeles area in the only black family in Holy Family Parish. She fondly recalls visits that Sister Lucy Villanova and Sister Eugenia made to the family home. "They loved my mother and would visit her. I wanted to be just like them." When the Adams children played house, Lillian was the sister who came to visit. Sister Lucy remained friends with Lillian's mother until the latter's death in 2001.

"The Providence family was truly my second family," Lillian says. She entered the Sisters of Providence in 1967 after graduating from high school and working for a year at St. Joseph's Hospital. After a year and a half in the community, she took a leave of absence and met her husband Frank two days later. (The story of how Providence brought them together, as told by Lillian, is hilarious, but Frank may have a different twist on it.)

In 1984, the godmother of Lillian's daughter asked if she would like to become an associate of another religious community. Not even knowing whether Providence offered a similar arrangement, Lillian knew where she belonged. "I asked if such a Providence group existed and was told that one was just starting." It was then, 20 years ago, that she came back home to Providence.

"It has meant so much to me and has enriched my life so much," she says. "As an associate, I have the best of both worlds. I could be married and live out my prayer life the way the sisters do, with morning and evening prayer. I continue that with my husband and my dad," who is a deacon and a Providence Associate, as was Lillian's mother.

Lillian's vows are "that I would continue no matter what happened to the (marital) relationship. I vowed to continue to live the charism by serving the poor and those in need. If Frank died, I would continue to be a Providence person; I wouldn't remarry; it means that much to me. I took a leave of absence to decide about the community, and I am still on leave 34 years later." ●



Marcelyn (Marcie) Madden, PA

Marcelyn (Marcie) Madden was introduced to the Sisters of Providence in about 1990 when she was working as an RN at the former Providence Hospital in

Seattle. For three years, Sister Mary Clare Boland was her spiritual director, and in 2003 Marcie became a Providence Associate.

Marcie had been thinking about a vocation when Sister Mary Clare told her about the work of the Alternative Association Task Force. "I wanted an affiliation with the sisters and a more intense relationship," she recalls.

Born in Cleveland, she was 19 and a Methodist when she told her pastor she felt she was being called to religious life. When she reached her late 40s she renewed that discussion with Sister Mary Clare. She had hoped to become a Sister of Providence, but a severe car accident left her with a challenging recovery and a permanent handicap that ended that possibility.

"My whole life is dedicated to Jesus Christ; everything I do," she says. "I wanted a formal declaration from myself and from the community around me to support me in this."

Marcie explored the idea of new possibilities for association with the sisters with Sisters Roberta Rorke and Charlotte Van Dyke. "They prepped

me for making private vows with the blessing of the sisters." Marcie says Sister Roberta encouraged her to make temporary private vows and adds that she hopes to make those vows permanent.

