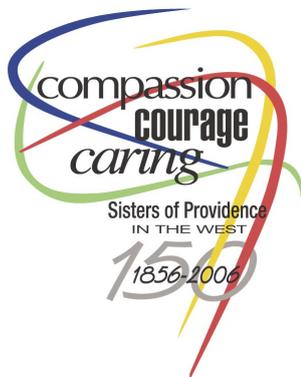


# Caritas

A publication for the Sisters of Providence and Friends ● WINTER 2006

## CHRISTMAS GREETING

FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM



**I**n concluding our year of Jubilee, we Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province, feel like we have come to the end of a long journey. The 365 days became a journey through time as we commemorated 150 years of *compassion, courage and caring*. The travel became an international pilgrimage when sisters and friends joined us to celebrate and visit places where we began or continue to carry out our ministries. The travel brought us home to our roots of *humility, simplicity and charity*, when we told our personal stories and friends shared theirs.

Now, we sisters and many who read this message may be ready for the Jubilee Sabbath, ready for a day and place and story of rest. With Christmas at hand, we also may be ready to reflect on what happened when the young travelers, Joseph and his pregnant wife, Mary, sought rest:

*"She gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the place where travelers lodged." (Luke 1:7)*

This sacred story of *humility, simplicity and charity* outshines all of ours, even while it is a foundation on which our heritage of *compassion, courage and caring* rises. It also is a tale repeated today in refugee, immigrant, and displaced families, a story that challenges us to let the love of Christ urge us forward again.

We are grateful for this Jubilee year. We are particularly grateful to you who have assisted in the celebration and honored us by sharing our journey in some way. Thank you. In gratitude, we pray that you may find a place of refuge wherever you need it; and in hope, we pray that God's loving Providence will find you with us on the journey ahead.

**A blessed Christmas and new year to each and all of you. ★**

*Sr. Margaret*

Margaret Botch, SP  
Provincial/Team Coordinator

*Sister Kaye*

Kaye Belcher, SP  
Team Member

*Sr. Anita*

Anita Butler, SP  
Team Member

*Sr. Charlotte*

Charlotte Van Dyke, SP  
Team Member

*Sr. Annette*

Annette Seubert, SP  
Team Member

*Alaine*

Alaine Qualls  
Team Member

### Vancouver celebrates 150 years

*Sisters of Providence are warmly welcomed by their first home in the West... →→*



St. James Church, Vancouver, WA

**For a child is born for us, a son is given us...  
His dominion is vast and forever peaceful...  
which he confirms and sustains by justice and judgment  
...both now and forever. (Isaiah 9: 5-6)**

# Vancouver celebrates 150 years

## Sisters of Providence are warmly welcomed by their first home in the West

**H**undreds thronged Vancouver on September 23 to celebrate the lives, works and rich legacy of five women who braved the untamed frontier in 1856. This was both a homecoming for the Sisters of Providence from all corners of Mother Joseph Province as well as a reunion for those who once attended school or worked at Providence Academy, the first permanent Catholic school in the Northwest.

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The day began with a morning prayer service at St. James Church. Rev. Dominic Hahn welcomed participants to the place where Mother Joseph worked, was buried and “spent her last day in front of this altar.” In her greeting, Sister Margaret Botch, Provincial/Leadership Team Coordinator, wondered aloud what it was like when Mother Joseph and the other sisters came to the Washington Territory. “Praise God for the blessing of being called here to the Northwest,” she added.

Beautiful music filled the church, first from harpist Sile Hariss and then, from above, the voices of the Southern Deanery Women’s Choir. Choir director Dr. Maria Manzo also coordinated the liturgy with Sister Maureen Newman.

In her reflections at St. James Church on the Gospel reading from Matthew 25:32-40, Sister Margaret noted: “Our Gospel is a surprising one. It does proclaim God’s favor – the promise of an inheritance; but also it is a word of judgment and a challenge. It is a call to caring, courage and compassion.”

Sister Margaret described a “near death experience” of Providence foundress Blessed Emilie Gamelin, the last days of Mother Joseph as she lay dying of cancer, and the barriers in language and culture that complicated early ministry to the Native Americans. “Again – a word of judgment and challenge ... A call to courage, caring and compassion.”

Russ Danielson, Chief Executive-Oregon Region, Providence Health System, served as a lector.



Dr. Maria Manzo directed a children’s choir from St. Joseph School.



Sr. Lucy St. Hilaire, first principal of Our Lady of Lourdes School, joins the entrance procession followed by Mariette Sauv e, first lay teacher of Providence Academy grade school.

Sile Harriss plays the harp.



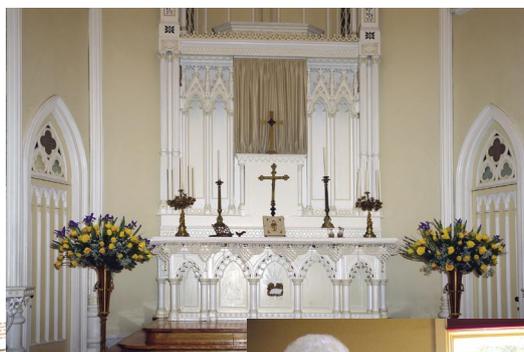
The challenge continues in modern times. Sister Margaret ended her reflection with a memory of the resolve of her own sister, Bernadette Botch, SP, as she was dying of cancer in 2000. Sister Bernadette accepted her impending death but would not resign her position as finance director for the Diocese of Spokane. “...She was a person with a ‘can do’ spirit and this was not something she could imagine.”

*“We have ordered our lives that justice and truth might be served. We have reflected on God’s presence among us and within us that we might walk more humbly with our God ... Ours is a call to go beyond the passive concern for those in need, to a demand for justice that will bring peace.” — Bernadette Botch, SP, 1981.*

(Note: To read Sister Margaret’s reflections in their entirety, please log onto the Sisters of Providence website, <http://www.sistersofprovidence.net>)



*The chapel at Providence Academy is beautifully preserved.*



*Three who helped Mother Joseph's birthday become a state holiday are (from left) Kelsey Milne, Jan Davey and Irene Holbrook.*



*Sr. Lucy St. Hilaire, in habit, converses with Sr. Chauncey Boyle.*



*Members of the St. James Altar Society hosted a reception after Mass.*

*Sr. Alexis Melancon, in the traditional habit, is surrounded by other PAV alumnae.*

Following the prayer service, friendships were begun and renewed at a reception in the church courtyard hosted by the St. James Altar Society and employees of Providence Milwaukie, Lab Services.

The beautiful, sunny afternoon was filled with an open house at Providence Academy, a few blocks away. Donna Quesnell, a member of the St. James Historical Society, was mistress of ceremony for the program which was televised by Clark Vancouver Television (CATV). It began with Sister Margaret's challenge of condensing 150 years of history into a few brief minutes. (See pages 4-5 to see her outline. For a more complete historical outline, go to the Providence Archives at <http://www.providence.org/phs/archives>). There was more music from Dr. Manzo with a choir from St. Joseph School, where the sisters taught for many years. That was followed by recollections from teachers and a legislator of the successful efforts to put Mother Joseph's statue in Statuary Hall in the nation's capitol and to make her birthdate of April 16 a Washington State holiday.

At first, not everyone was convinced about the statue, former Sen. Dan Marsh recalled, noting that competition for one of two statues the state was allowed in Washington, D.C., included Chief Seattle, Chief Joseph and railroad magnate James J. Hill. Evergreen School District teachers Jan Davey and Irene Holbrook recalled how their sixth graders lobbied senators, representatives and the city council for the birthday holiday, cleaned graves at St.

James Acres, where Mother Joseph is buried, and raised funds for a granite bench in her memory. "Mother Joseph's work was a model for these children, who now are sophomores in college," Jan said. One of those students, Kelsey Milne, was applauded as she joined the teachers onstage.

Rev. Tom Tucker, who led participants in prayer, recalled that the Methodists already were in the area when the first Sisters of Providence arrived and took up a collection to help them get settled. In an impromptu moment, alumnae of Providence Academy burst into their school song.

Tours of the academy, historical exhibits and a PowerPoint presentation from Providence Archives, as well as a buffet lunch, followed. A guide to "Footsteps of Mother Joseph," prepared by the Archives, offered opportunities for self-guided tours of sites including Fort Vancouver, St. James Acres and the sisters' poor farm.

The afternoon continued with a prayer service in the chapel at Providence Academy, now owned by the Hidden family that made the bricks for the historic structure built under Mother Joseph's supervision. Later in the evening, the Knights of Columbus hosted a barbecue downtown to mark the occasion. ●

**If you were fortunate enough to be in Vancouver on September 23, you know what a special gathering this was. If you were not there, you still can enjoy events at PAV by clicking on the link to the CATV broadcast on the Sisters of Providence website, <http://www.sistersofprovidence.net>**



Margaret Botch, SP, shares a brief history

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF 150 YEARS of Sisters of Providence in the West

As told by Margaret Botch, SP, Provincial/Leadership Team Coordinator, at Providence Academy, Vancouver, WA, September 23, 2006

## 1856-1902

### The Pioneers

**Second try ...** (The first sisters sent to the West from Montreal, in 1853, settled in Chile, forming Bernarda Morin Province)

Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart and four other Sisters of Providence arrive in Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory, from Montreal. They open their small home to orphans and the elderly, and they begin the first permanent school in the northwest...They extend their ministry in caring for the sick, for the mentally ill... and the story continues as they break new ground in the midst of challenging circumstances.

**1891 – Transition to becoming settlers ...** The sisters establish seven administrative provinces with three in the West: Sacred Heart Province based in Vancouver, WA; St. Ignatius Province, based in Missoula, MT; and St. Vincent de Paul Province, based in Portland, OR.

**1902 –** Mother Joseph dies...

## 1903-1960

### The Settlers

More and more institutions are established ... St Vincent de Paul Province is closed and its U.S. institutions become part of Sacred Heart Province...

**1943 –** The Sisters of Providence celebrate 100 years of existence...

**1956 –** The Sisters of Providence in the West celebrate 100 years, and a biography of Mother Joseph, *The Bell and the River*, is published...

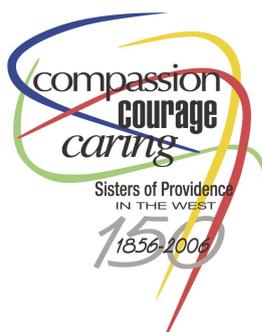
**1960 –** There are 22 hospitals, 1 college, 9 academies, 12 parish schools, 4 homes for the elderly and 3 other care facilities...

**1950s – Transition to becoming change agents ...** Sister Formation Movement develops, and Sisters of Providence, along with other Northwest communities, are in the center of it ...Sisters who enter in 1955 are the first to be educated with the Everett Curriculum

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## 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary closing events

December 8, 2006



### Burbank:

The sisters' local community will attend a liturgy at Providence High School. That evening, the sisters will have prayer, then go out to dinner. They plan to use the local community's charity funds to make a donation to a worthy cause in honor of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

### Great Falls:

6 p.m. Mass at Trinitas Chapel, on the University of Great Falls campus. Celebrant will be the Most Rev. Anthony M. Milone, Bishop Emeritus. A reception will follow.

### Portland:

5:30 p.m. Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, NW 18<sup>th</sup> and Couch Street. Celebrant will be Archbishop John Vlazny. A reception will follow in the parish hall. The public is invited.

## 1961-1974

### *The Change Agents*

Pope John XXIII calls the Church to open its windows and to let the Holy Spirit blow through

**1961** – Move to Providence Heights – College of Sister Formation, a hotbed of new ideas, closes after only 8 years in this place

**1962-1965** – The Second Vatican Council calls for renewal of the Roman Catholic Church and leads to sweeping changes in liturgy, social awareness, scriptural base, lifestyles

**1966** – Sisters wear modified habits – then no habits

**1966** – Religious education, parish ministry flourishes

**1969** – Lay administrators of hospitals

**1970s** – Due to declining numbers and a change in focus for ministries, the sisters withdraw their commitment to staff parish school. Individual sisters remain, working with lay people. Many go into adult education. Many schools close

**1974** – 17 hospitals, 1 high school, 1 college and several care centers for children or the elderly

**1975 – Transition to becoming collaborators ...**  
Sacred Heart Province administration moves to downtown Seattle and the system office for ministries begins as more lay people join in the ministries...  
LCWR Northwest – NABORS – collaboration among religious communities which had its beginnings in Sister Formation

#### **Seattle:**

6:30 p.m., Mass in the chapel at St. Joseph Residence, 4800 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW, followed by refreshments.

#### **Spokane:**

6 p.m., vespers in the chapel at Mount St. Joseph, 9 East 9<sup>th</sup> Ave., followed by refreshments and entertainment. Sisters, Providence Associates and friends are invited.

#### **Walla Walla:**

Sr. Helen Mason and area Providence Associates will plan and participate in the liturgy for the 5:30 p.m. Mass at St. Patrick Church. They also will undertake a group project for the poor by contributing to Heifer International, which purchases animals to give to poor families.

#### **Yakima:**

Renewal of sisters' vows and Providence Associates' commitments at 5:30 p.m. Mass at St. Joseph Church.

## 1975-2006

### *The Collaborators*

**1979** – Providence Hospitality House, Seattle

**1986** – Transitions, Spokane

**1987** – Mary Conrad Center, Anchorage

**2000** – Mother Joseph Province is formed by combining St. Ignatius and Sacred Heart provinces

**2006** – Providence Health System and Providence Services join to form Providence Health & Services

*Many thanks to sponsors of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration events:*

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