Winter/Spring 2020

Caritas

A publication for the Sisters of Providence and Friends

Meet Your 2020-24 Sisters of Providence Leadership Team

for Mother Joseph Province

Pictured from left:

Elinor Alexander, provincial secretary
Barbara Schamber, SP, provincial leader
Margarita Hernandez, SP, provincial councilor
Jacqueline Fernandes, SP, provincial councilor
Karen Hawkins, SP, provincial councilor
David Neisius, provincial treasurer

New Leadership Team begins term at Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province

Four Sisters of Providence began a five-year term of leadership and service for Mother Joseph Province on Jan. 1, 2020: Sister Barbara Schamber, provincial leader, and Sisters Jacqueline Fernandes, Karen Hawkins and Margarita Hernandez as provincial councilors.

In addition, two laypeople have been appointed to serve on the Leadership Team: David Neisius, provincial treasurer and Elinor Alexander, provincial secretary.

The provincial leader and councilors were elected by the sisters in Mother Joseph Province in June 2019, during the Discernment Chapter of Elections in Renton, Wash. They were confirmed by the congregation's General Council in Montreal. David and Elinor were both previous employees of Providence. The team's term will extend through 2024.

Learn more about the Leadership Team members below.

Barbara Schamber, SP, Provincial Leader

Originally from Chicago, Sister Barbara Schamber entered the Sisters of Providence after graduating from Providence High School, Burbank, when her family moved to Southern California.

Sister Barbara was educated in the College of Sister Formation of Seattle University where she received a bachelor's degree in social sciences. She completed her master's degree in educational administration at Central Washington University.

Though her early ministries focused on teaching and administration in Providence schools in Seattle; Vancouver, Wash.; Portland and Burbank, Sister Barbara's service over the years has included leadership roles in the religious community and Providence health system. She served as provincial superior for Sacred Heart Province and chair of the board for Providence Health Corporation, became the first provincial superior of Mother Joseph Province and presiding member of Providence Health System and Providence Services, co-chaired the Sisters of Providence Sponsorship Committee which recommended the public juridic person model used by the organization today, and served as sponsor of Providence Ministries since its inception.

In the wider community, Sister Barbara served as trustee for Catholic Community Services and Archdiocesan Housing Authority, Western Washington; member of Women of Providence in Collaboration; and member of the Catholic Health Association Sponsorship Committee.

Jacqueline Fernandes, SP, Provincial Councilor

Sister Jacqueline Fernandes traveled from her family home in Hong Kong to the U.S. to join the Sisters of Providence. Her educational background includes coursework from the College of Sister Formation of Seattle University and Seattle Community College.

Sister Jacqueline's ministry began at St. Vincent Hospital, Portland, Ore., as admitting clerk. As she developed her business skills, she was assigned to the office of the provincial treasurer where her responsibilities grew through the years, including positions as community budget advisor, community financial advisor and assistant to the provincial treasurer. Her next assignment was Providence High School, Burbank, Calif., as office manager, treasurer and registrar.

Sister Jacqueline was then called to serve as provincial councilor for the former Sacred Heart Province and for Mother Joseph Province. Her responsibilities included coordination of the sisters' ministries, and provincial council liaison to the province Formation Team. During these years she also was on the board of Intercommunity Housing of Seattle, served on the Alaska Airlines Customer Advisory Board and was a member of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, Region XV.

Most recently, Sister Jacqueline served as superior/administrator of St. Joseph Residence, Seattle, where retired sisters from several religious communities receive supportive and skilled residential care.

Karen Hawkins, SP, Provincial Councilor

Sister Karen Hawkins took a less traveled path to religious life, first becoming a Providence Associate, then making her vows as a Sister of Providence later in life after raising a son.

Her education includes a bachelor's degree in human services with a minor in addiction counseling from University of Providence, Great Falls, Mont., and a master's degree in transforming spirituality from Seattle University.

After a career as a financial analyst, Sister Karen's focus shifted to health and human services when she became a Sister of Providence. Her ministries have included certified nursing assistant at Providence ElderPlace in Portland, Ore., campus minister at University of Providence, addiction counselor in Great Falls, care manager at Sojourner Place transitional home for women in Seattle, vocation director and formation director for the religious community, and board of directors for the national Religious Formation Conference. Sister Karen also recently volunteered at the U.S.-Mexico border assisting immigrants and refugees.

Margarita Hernandez, SP, Provincial Councilor

Originally from El Salvador, Sister Margarita Hernandez lived next door to the Sisters of Providence mission in her hometown, which inspired her to enter the religious community.

Her education includes religious coursework at Universidad Centro Americana, El Salvador; Conferre Centro de Estudios para Religiosos, Chile; Gonzaga University, Spokane, Wash., and Mexican American Catholic College, San Antonio. She holds a bachelor's degree in pastoral ministry from University of Incarnate Word, San Antonio.

Sister Margarita's ministry experience began at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, San Marcos Lempa, El Salvador, where she worked with the base community, provided in-service education for catechists and volunteers, and built community among them.

Within the religious community, Sister Margarita co-chaired/chaired the chapter planning committee, and served as vocational director for the province. At the diocesan level, she co-chaired V Encuentro for the Diocese of Spokane and co-directed a training program for catechists. At the parish level, she served as director of religious education and catechist.

Elinor Alexander, Provincial Secretary

Elinor Alexander's rich and diverse experiences in community action at home and abroad have engaged her in a variety of roles.

Most recently, she worked on special projects for Sisters of Providence. Prior to that, she held positions as global education specialist and network lead for World Vision International; global ambassador and trainer for the Global University of Lifelong Learning; director of administration, co-founder and professional coach for EducateSuccess; development director for Women's Leadership Network; high school department head; and prison outreach director and board member for Christian Aid, U.K., and Schema Therapy Institute.

Elinor holds a professional doctorate in leadership development and a master's degree in education. She currently serves as board president for REACH, an ecumenical nonprofit serving families experiencing poverty and homelessness in Renton, Wash.

David Neisius, Provincial Treasurer

Originally from Wisconsin, Dave Neisius graduated from University of Wisconsin, Madison, with a bachelor's degree in accounting and a master's in business administration.

David moved to the Seattle area to work in public accounting, and spent 35 years with Providence health system in various finance-related positions at the system and regional level. He began as assistant controller in Washington and later held positions as system director and regional director of financial consulting services in Oregon.

After a brief period of retirement, Dave brought his expertise back to the Sisters of Providence in the role of treasurer for Mother Joseph Province. He currently serves on the Sisters of St. Dominic corporation board, as well as the boards of the Mother Joseph Province Retirement Trust and the Northwest Women Religious Investment Trust.

A prayer for our Earth

By Pope Francis

All-powerful God, you are present
in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.
O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten
of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty,
not pollution and destruction.
Touch the hearts
of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature
as we journey towards your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
For justice, love and peace.

Reclaiming Earth, one drop at a time

By Jo Ann Showalter, Sister of Providence and congregational leader for Tacoma Dominicans

As we move from winter into spring and watch the gift of new life begin to emerge in its seasonal cycle, it is the perfect time to pause and consider the state of our beautiful planet, Earth, and what we are doing to heal our home.

This year, 2020, includes significant events for reflection and action. It is the fifth anniversary of Pope Francis' encyclical "Laudato Si" on Care of Our Common Home, the fifth anniversary of the Paris Agreement – the United Nations effort to combat climate change – as well as the 50th anniversary of Earth Day on April 22. These international milestones create opportunities for us to be more attentive to what is being done locally and globally, what is being neglected, and, perhaps most important, what you as an individual can do to reclaim Earth – actions I call "drops in the bucket."

It's hard to hear about such complex and enormous issues without feeling overwhelmed and helpless. But everybody can do something to make a difference. Even if you think it's not much, all of the small efforts, when many people are participating, add up to meaningful impact in our lives, in our communities and in this ball of wonderful creation God has entrusted to us. Enough drops, and the bucket gets full.

In "Laudato Si," Pope Francis explained the concept of integral ecology – the complex ways in which social and environmental crises are interrelated. "Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live," wrote the pope. "We are part of nature." In other words, when the environment degrades, the community degrades – and it hurts those on the margins first and foremost.

Taking action

The Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) recently made a statement, supported by the Sisters of Providence and the Sisters of St. Dominic of Tacoma, expressing disappointment about the U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement citing concern for the Earth and humanity: "Catholic teaching is clear – climate change is a grave moral issue that threatens our commitment to protect human life and dignity, exercise a preferential option for the most vulnerable, promote the common good, and care for

God's creation. The failure of the U.S. to fulfill its 2015 commitment dishonors our nation and threatens our common home."

There are many ways Sisters of Providence and the Tacoma Dominicans have used their voices, advocacy, ministries and prayers to reclaim Earth. We participate in local, national and international organizations and committees, and collaborate with other religious communities, to support climate justice and work for systemic change. One less-well-known strategy is responsible investing.

For over 25 years both congregations have used their investments to call for and support care of the Earth. As members of the Northwest Coalition for Responsible Investment, they collaborate with faith-based investors in shareholder advocacy by dialoguing with corporations on environmental issues, filing shareholder resolutions and voting.

For example, in 2019 the sisters filed a shareholder resolution with Tyson, the largest industrial meat producer, addressing the company's failure to adequately manage water quality risks and provide remedy to impacted communities. In 2020 the sisters joined a coalition of shareholders calling on ExxonMobil to respond to our climate emergency by aligning its operations and investments with the Paris Agreement's goal of maintaining global temperature rise well below 2 degrees Celsius.

More drops in the bucket!

Learn more about climate justice

This is a great time to get educated about the issues and start making your own drops in the bucket. Here are some helpful online resources.

- tinyurl.com/lauditosi
- earthday.org
- globalcatholicclimatemovement.org
- ncronline.org/earthbeat
- earthministry.org

10 ways to do your part for the environment

We all know we're supposed to reduce, reuse, recycle; conserve energy and water; and try to avoid the car. Here are some other ways to take action.

1. Reduce food waste
2. Swap out meat and dairy items for plant-based options
3. Eat locally
4. Use less food packaging
5. Carry reusable beverage bottles and utensils
6. Use or make non-toxic cleaning products
7. Purchase products from renewable resources
8. Choose secondhand goods (clothing, furniture, tools, toys, etc.)
9. Say no to the throwaway culture
10. Get involved in an Earth Day activity or community cleanup

Sister Marie-Thérèse Gnamazo professes first vows as a Sister of Providence

Sister Marie-Thérèse Gnamazo of Cameroon made first profession of vows as a Sister of Providence in a multicultural liturgy on Nov. 23, in the chapel at St. Joseph Residence (SJR), Seattle.

"Marie-Thérèse Gnamazo, SP, is a woman of faith, called by Providence to journey to a new land, to offer her life in service to others as a religious sister," said (former) Provincial Leader Judith Desmarais, SP. "She is concerned with and has a heart for those who are most vulnerable and in greatest need. She established a nonprofit organization, African Solidarity in Action, to help children in Cameroon, in the area where she grew up. Her love of God and love of people is evident in all she does, generously and competently."

Mass was presided by Father Peter Ely, S.J., concelebrated by Father Jack Walmesley, Father Emmanuel Mbock Mbock from Cameroon, and Father Colleen Nsame, S.J., from the Seattle-area Cameroonian community.

The ceremony was attended by Sisters of Providence from Washington, Oregon, California, El Salvador, the Philippines, Chile, Alberta and Quebec. Others in attendance included Sister Marie-Thérèse's relatives from France and Cameroon, the choir from her home parish, Our Lady of Guadalupe in West Seattle, and three Ugandan sister from the Daughters of Mary who accompanied the choir on the drums. The liturgy incorporated prayers and song in Sister Marie-Thérèse's native language, as well as French, Spanish, Vietnamese and Tagalog in honor of the international sisters and guests.

Incorporating both a traditional and contemporary approach to the ceremony, Sister Marie-Thérèse's brother, sisters, nieces and nephews celebrated with her virtually. They attended Mass and a party in Cameroon, while viewing the Seattle festivities real-time via livestreaming on WhatsApp.

The first vows liturgy was followed by a simple afternoon reception at SJR. In keeping with the tradition of Sister Marie-Thérèse's culture, a festive evening event hosted at nearby Caritas Court, (a Sisters of Providence residence) brought together sisters, family and friends to enjoy a lively celebration featuring African music and international food prepared by the religious community.

"First vows are really important because they are my 'yes' to God," said Marie-Thérèse. "Taking my vows is a continuation of my life as a sister. I will live those vows and continue to learn and serve the poor as Blessed Emilie Gamelin did."

(Left) Sisters Karen Hawkins, Marie-Thérèse and Judith Desmarais sign first vows documents.

Opposite page:
(Left) Sister Marie-Thérèse with Sister Margarita Hernandez and other Sisters of Providence following presentation of the gifts at Mass.

(Right) Daughters of Mary sisters and the choir from Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish provided music.

"First vows are really important because they are my 'yes' to God." *–Sister Marie-Thérèse Gnamazo*

Originally from the rural village of Lomié in eastern Cameroon, Marie-Thérèse is one of eight children born into a poor but faith-filled family. Her father died when she was nine and her mother worked multiple jobs to provide for her children. Sister Marie-Thérèse described her mother as a model of hard work and generosity. Her mother died in 2017, shortly after she became a novice.

Marie-Thérèse first felt called to religious life at age 14. While she was encouraged in her calling, she was encouraged first to finish high school and college. After completing her education at Gregorian Pontifical University in Rome, she embarked on a period of discernment through discussions with a pastor and conversations with Sisters of Providence. She relocated to Seattle for a Come & See experience 2008-10.

Because she was not yet certain of her calling, Marie-Thérèse chose to become a Providence Associate and return to her hometown in Cameroon, inspired by the spirit of foundress Blessed Emilie Gamelin and the community's charism to serve those who are poor and vulnerable. In the ensuing seven years, she made a significant impact in villages around Lomié, Abong-Mbang, through a nonprofit she founded called African Solidarity in Action. Through this organization she raised funds to build a well to provide clean water for residents. African Solidarity in Action has since expanded to offer tuition support for more than 30 youth, training programs to become a nurse or teacher, and funded construction of a small clinic and residence.

Despite this, Marie-Thérèse felt "God was asking me to do more." She wrote a letter to the Sisters of Providence asking if she could return and was welcomed back in 2017. She spent part of her canonical year as a novice in Holy Angels Province, Edmonton, Alberta, working with Sister Celia Chappell, novitiate director, while attending university and participating in ministries with elderly sisters and at a food bank. She returned to Seattle for her apostolic year with a focus on English language classes and ministry with immigrants and the poor.

Sister Marie-Thérèse is an active member of the Immigrant and Refugee Committee of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish and previously volunteered with immigrants and refugees in Rome. Her empathy and compassion for this population is rooted in her own experiences as an immigrant, learning to navigate the language and customs of the various countries where she has lived for study and work, including Gabon, France, Switzerland and Italy. She is also involved in the St. Vincent de Paul Committee at the parish, which serves people experiencing poverty in West Seattle.

Sister Marie-Thérèse will spend three to six years living in community under temporary vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, and sharing in full-time ministry before making final vows.

Emilie Gamelin Mission Fund Committee & Leadership Team Donations 2019

Last year, Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province, supported more than 130 organizations that furthered the sisters' work to serve the most vulnerable members of our communities. Donations included grants, memberships, sponsorships, operating funds, salaries, stipends, capital campaign contributions, program advertisements, tuition and scholarships.

Adelante Mujeres, Forest Grove, OR
Advocates for Immigrants in Detention Northwest, Tacoma, WA
Afrique Future, Mulhouse, France
Annunciation House, El Paso, TX
ASHA Inc., Portland, OR
Associated Ministries of Tacoma/Pierce County, Tacoma, WA
Burbank Temporary Aid Center, Burbank, CA
Call to Action, Chicago, IL
Casa Hogar, Yakima, WA
Catherine Place, Tacoma WA
Catholic Charities of Eastern Washington, Spokane, WA
Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, CA
Catholic Charities of Spokane, WA
Catholic Community Services Foundation, Salem, OR
Catholic Community Services Fund Development, Seattle, WA
Catholic Community Services, Tacoma, WA
Catholic Community Services of Whatcom County, Bellingham, WA
Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Silver Spring, MD
Catholic School Endowment Foundation of Oregon, Portland, OR
Central Washington Catholic Foundation, Yakima, WA
Children's Alliance, Seattle, WA
Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking, Los Angeles, CA
Daughters of Mary, Uganda
De La Salle Blackfeet School, Browning, MT
Dominican Missionaries for the Deaf Apostolate, New Britain, CT
Downtown Emergency Service Center, Seattle, WA
Duwamish Tribal Services, Seattle, WA
Earth Ministry, Seattle, WA
El Salvador Scholarship Program
Faith Action Network, Seattle, WA Ministry, Seattle, WA
Family Promise of Spokane, Spokane, WA
Food Bank at St. Mary's, Seattle, WA
Freedom Project Washington, Seattle, WA
Fulcrum Foundation, Seattle, WA
FutureChurch, Lakewood, OH
Great Falls Catholic Schools, Great Falls, MT
Guardian Angel Catholic School, Pacoima, CA
Habitat for Humanity of Missoula, Missoula, MT
Holy Rosary School, Tacoma, WA
Hope House, Spokane, WA
Hospice of Spokane, WA
Housecall Providers, Portland, OR
House of Charity, Spokane, WA
Housing Hope, Everett, WA
Ignatian Spirituality Center, Seattle, WA
Immaculate Heart Retreat Center, Spokane, WA
Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center, Seattle, WA
Interfaith Women's Conference, Tacoma, WA
Jesuit Refugee Services, USA
Jesuit Volunteers Corps Northwest, Seattle, WA
Jubilee Women's Center, Seattle, WA
Kids' Community Dental Clinic, Burbank, CA
La Casa Hogar, Yakima, WA
L'Arche Noah Sealth, Seattle, WA
L'Arche Noah Sealth, Portland, OR
La Salle High School, Union Gap, WA
La Posada Providencia, San Benito, TX
Law Offices of Bart Klein, Seattle, WA
LCWR Immigration Coalition, Silver Spring, MD
Leadership Conference of Religious Women, Silver Spring, MD
Loyola Sacred Heart, Tacoma, WA
Mary's Pence, St. Paul, MN
Mary's Place, Seattle, WA
McLaughlin Research Institute for Biomedical Sciences, Great Falls, MT
Medicines for Humanity, Rockland, MA
Mercy Corps, Portland, OR
Mercy Housing Northwest, Seattle, WA
Micah Corporation, Langley, WA
Missoula Catholic Schools Foundation, Missoula, MT
Monastery of St. Gertrude, Cottonwood, ID
Navos Seattle Children's Home & Ruth Dykeman Children's Center, Seattle, WA
National Catholic Reporter, Kansas City, MO
National Religious Vocation Conference, Chicago, IL
Nazareth Guild, Spokane, WA
NeighborWorks, Great Falls, MT
Neighbor Impact, Redmond, OR
New Beginnings, Martin, GA
North by Northeast Community Health Center, Portland, OR
Northwest Catholic Counseling Center, Portland, OR
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, Seattle, WA
Nuestra Casa, Sunnyside, WA
Oblate Sisters of Providence, Baltimore, MD
Oregon Food Bank, Portland, OR
Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish School, Seattle, WA
Our Place, Spokane, WA
PAX Christi USA, Washington, DC
Pioneer Human Services, Seattle, WA
Poverello Center, Missoula, MT
Providence Associates, Spokane, WA
Providence Centralia Hospital, Centralia, WA
Providence Health Care Foundation, Tukwila, WA
Providence Health Care Foundation of Eastern Washington, Spokane, WA
Providence Health & Services O' Trees, Seattle, WA
Providence High School, Burbank, CA
Providence Hospice of Seattle Foundation, Tukwila, WA
Providence Marionwood Foundation, Tukwila, WA
Providence Milwaukie Foundation, Milwaukie, OR
Providence Mount St. Vincent, Seattle, WA
Providence Mt. St. Vincent Foundation, Seattle, WA
Providence Newburg Health Foundation, Newburg, OR
Providence Senior & Community Services, Seattle, WA
Providence Willamette Falls Medical Center Foundation, Oregon City, OR
Refugee Women's Alliance, Seattle, WA
Religious Formation Conference, Chicago, IL
Roncalli International Foundation, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
Rose Haven, Portland, OR
Salvation Army King County, Seattle, WA
Salvation Army William Booth Society, Seattle, WA
Salvation Army, Yakima, WA
San Marcos Church, El Salvador
Second Harvest, Spokane, WA
Shalom Ministries, Spokane, WA
SOA Watch, Tucson, AZ
Society of St. Vincent de Paul Council, Seattle, WA
South Central Los Angeles Ministry Project, Los Angeles, CA
St. Andrew's House, Union, WA
St. Anthony Catholic School, Renton, WA
St. Francis Dining Hall, Portland, OR
St. Joseph Marquette School, Yakima, WA
St. Joseph Parish, Yakima, WA
St. Mark the Evangelist, La Papalota, El Salvador
St. Martin de Porres Mission, Great Falls, MT
St. Michael Catholic School, Snohomish, WA
St. Placid Priory, Lacey, WA
St. Vincent de Paul Society, Seattle, WA
Sunrise Outreach Center, Yakima, WA
The Fig Tree, Spokane, WA
The Ministry Institute of Mater Dei, Spokane, WA
Transitions, Spokane, WA
Trinity Catholic School, Spokane, WA
Washington Office of Latin America, Washington, DC
West Seattle Food Bank, Seattle, WA
Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics & Ritual, Silver Springs, MD
World Relief, Spokane, WA
University of Providence, Great Falls, MT
VAMOS!, Woodbury, NJ
Xavier Society for the Blind, New York, NY
Youth with a Mission, Seattle, WA
YWCA Pierce County, Tacoma, WA

Planning the Providence Associates 2020 International Gathering

By Kathe Boucha, PA, executive director, Providence Associates of Mother Joseph

Vowed congregations for a long time have relied on the talents and gifts of lay people, known as associates, to serve in communities and in their international missions. Planning the future and the succession of the Providence Associates is an important part of sustaining the ministries of the Sisters of Providence. A gathering of sisters, associates and guests from all four Sisters of Providence provinces will provide the forum for this planning session in Montreal, May 18-23, 2020.

Strengthening the relationship between the sisters and the associates is one of the primary goals of the meeting. The theme is "Bearers of the Providence Flame in our 'I' World." The "I's" refer to the international, intercultural, intergenerational and interdependent nature of the congregation as outlined in their Constitutions and Rules. Each province has responsibility for preparing and presenting the program for one day of the gathering: international - Mother Joseph Province, western U.S.; intercultural - Holy Angels Province, western Canada; intergenerational - Emilie Gamelin Province, Montreal; and interdependent - Mother Bernarda Morin Province, Chile.

Providence Associates leaders and Sisters of Providence liaisons from the four provinces met in Montreal in May 2019 and again in January 2020 to plan the Providence Associates 2020 International Gathering, which will be hosted at the Sisters of Providence Motherhouse in Montreal.

The committee includes Hortense Damia-Mbailaou, SP, general councilor; Annette Noel, SP, general councilor; Bertha-Alice Collette, SP, Emilie-Gamelin Province; Gloria Garcia, SP, Mother Bernarda Morin Province; Christina Wong, SP, Holy Angels Province; Lucy Vasquez, SP, Mother Joseph Province/ Philippines; Mary Tyllia, PA, Mother Joseph Province; Mary Anne Nissen, PA, Holy Angels Province; Fresia Flores, PA, Mother Bernarda Morin Province; René Lafebvre, PA, Emilie-Gamelin Province; and Kathe Boucha, PA, facilitator, Mother Joseph Province.

A team of five excellent, simultaneous translators from Montreal speaking English, French and Spanish supported the multi-lingual committee and will provide their services for the International Gathering, as well.

With more than 130 registrations already received, this is one of the largest gatherings thus far. The last Providence Associates International Gathering was held in 2001 with about 50 in attendance. The sisters and staff in Montreal are working diligently from now until May to prepare for the welcoming, ground transportation, lodging, meals, technology, venue and much more. Visas are required for many of the attendees, so the sisters of the General Leadership Team are preparing the required letters and documents to assist in this process.

One of the highlights of the gathering is an opportunity to learn more about the lives of the Sisters of Providence foundress, Blessed Emilie Gamelin, and the two women who established the Sisters of Providence in the western U.S./Canada – Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart – and in Chile – Mother Bernarda Morin. Pilgrimages are planned for the last two days of the event.

Learn more about Providence Associates at sistersofprovidence.net/providence-associates.

Like the vowed Sisters of Providence, the Providence Associates are inspired by the love, compassion and charitable works of Blessed Emilie Gamelin, foundress of the congregation, depicted in this new art installation in the Basilica of Saint-Anne-de-Beaupre in Quebec.

Around the Province

Sister Jessica begins new ministry

Sister Jessica Taylor started a new ministry with Catholic Community Services (CCS), Family Behavioral Health in Tukwila, Wash. While her title is continuous quality improvement manager and intake specialist, she is also operations supervisor and human resources liaison.

"What excites me is I get to use all my skills, not just therapy, which was my master's degree; I also use my organization, team-building and supervisory skills," said Sister Jessica. "I also enjoy working for a Catholic organization and love what CCS brings to the table for their clients."

Sister Jo Ann does double-duty

Last year Sister Jo Ann Showalter took on the role of congregation leader for the Tacoma Dominicans as part of the covenant relationship between the religious communities. This year she adds another ministry – that of St. Joseph Residence (SJR) community leader, where she oversees the day-to-day needs and activities of the Sisters of Providence as well as other religious communities who live at the supportive care residence.

Sister Jo Ann divides her time between the Dominican sisters' Tacoma, Wash., office and the SJR office in West Seattle.

Sister Rosa Nguyen goes back to school

Sister Rosa Nguyen started classes in January at Woodbury University, Burbank, Calif., to earn a master's degree in business administration with a concentration in accounting and finance.

"I would like to grow more in the financial field to become a more productive worker, take on more responsibilities, and serve others better," said Sister Rosa, who connected with Woodbury University's motto, "Transform the world by transforming yourself."

Sister Rosa is balancing her studies with work in the finance department at Providence High School, Burbank, a ministry that has had "a special place in her heart" for five years.

Sister Ana Orellana confirms her father's martyrdom

In October, Sister Ana Orellana flew to El Salvador with her mother and brother. In addition to visiting family and friends and serving the poor, Sister Ana and her mother met with a representative of the archdiocese to receive information on the recognition of the martyrdom of Sister Ana's father, Stanislaus Orellana. He was murdered in the patio entrance of their parish church on March 17, 1983.

This priest assured them that Mr. Orellana has been officially recognized by the Vatican as a martyr and that his biography is presently being written. A memorial photo of Mr. Orellana pictured with the Bible and his guitar hangs on the wall of the church.

Sister Suzette Bautista answers call to spiritual care ministry

Recognizing God's gifts and having been equipped with the experiences and skills in the past 10 years in hospital chaplaincy, Sister Suzette Bautista recently accepted the offer to take on the spiritual care managerial position for St. Joseph Hospital, Orange, Calif., and St. Jude Medical Center, Fullerton.

"The call to move into a new leadership role in spiritual care was inspired by a colleague friend who had lit up some dark spaces in my life," said Sister Suzette. "I viewed this ministry as another 'yes' to the many 'yeses' I have given to God in the past. I hope to contribute to the advancement of spiritual care programs toward the realization of our mission and strengthen the collaboration with Providence St. Joseph Health. Guided by faith in God's Provident care and in the sisters' loving support, I am embarking on this journey with joyful hope and confidence."

Sister Felma Cerezo brings out sisters' creativity

After receiving a grant in 2018, Sister Felma began offering calligraphy classes to the sisters at St. Joseph Residence (SJR) in West Seattle. Soon other sisters were asking to take her art classes, and she added painting.

Last summer Sister Felma taught a unique style of painting called "pouring painting" or "dirty painting" – a technique she learned about on YouTube. She thought the sisters would enjoy it because it required no sketching, no drawing and no artistic background – just a willingness to get messy. She hosted the class in her backyard for easy cleanup. It was a hit!

Sister Felma continues to offer art classes for the sisters at SJR, to fan their creative flames. Next summer she may even open up her backyard once again. She already has a wait list!

Sister Susanne Hartung honored with Health Care Leadership Inspiration Award

Sister Susanne Hartung, chief mission integration officer for Providence St. Joseph Health (PSJH), was honored with the Health Care Leadership Inspiration Award by Puget Sound Business Journal (PSBJ) on Dec. 6, during a luncheon event at The Westin Bellevue.

The award was presented at PSBJ's inaugural Health Care Leadership Awards ceremony, a celebration of outstanding leaders in health care from around the Puget Sound area. Sister Susanne was one of 15 honorees recognized as an innovative and influential thinker, on the front lines of the health care industry, whose leadership has had a lasting impact on the region. She used the opportunity to challenge the Puget Sound community to harness the spirit of innovation that we are known for to address the homelessness crisis.

Please Remember in Prayer

Eugene "Gene" Kelly, uncle of Phyllis Silva-Keith, PA, died Sept. 28 in Spokane, Wash.

Eduardo Iturriaga, brother of Myrta Iturriaga, SP, died Oct. 23 in Chile.

Irene Gleason, sister of Louise Gleason, SP, died Nov. 6 in Walla Walla, Wash.

Robert Hutton, Sr., son of Pinkie Hutton, PA, died Nov. 15 in Spokane, Wash.

Felicidad Cerezo, sister-in-law of Felma Cerezo, SP, died Jan. 25 in Burien, Wash.

Ken Van Dyke, brother of Charlotte Van Dyke, SP, died Feb. 4 in Seattle, Wash.

CARITAS is published by the Office of Communications, Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province.

Anita Wilkins, *Director of Communications*

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SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE
Mother Joseph Province
Provincial Administration
1801 Lind Ave. SW, M1-C
Renton, WA 98057

Sisters of Providence

Become a bridge of Providence between God and his people.

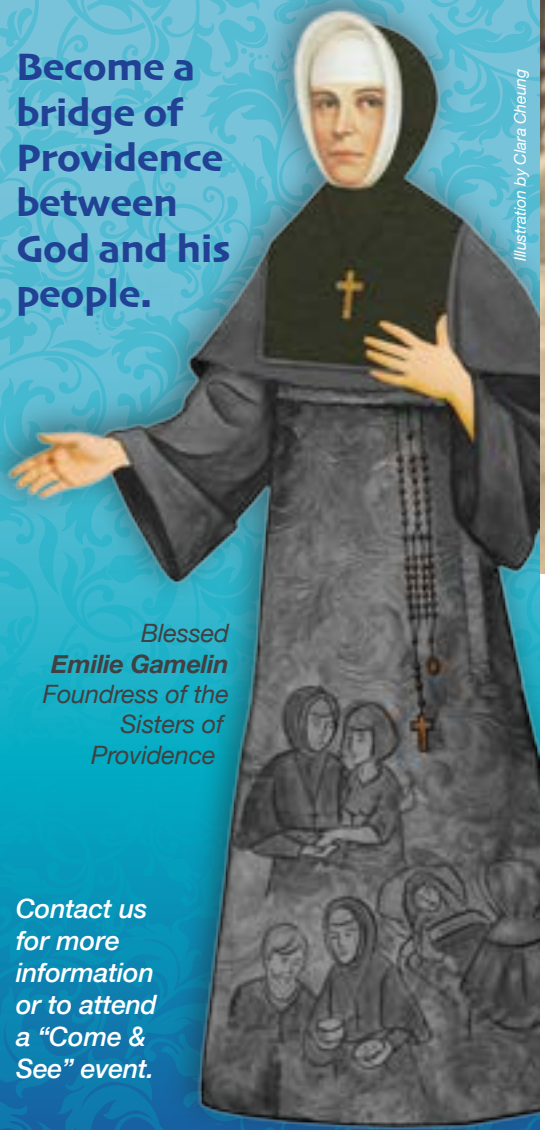

Illustration by Clara Cheung

Blessed ***Emilie Gamelin*** *Foundress of the Sisters of Providence*

Contact us for more information or to attend a "Come & See" event.

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sistersofprovidence.net

Historical Corner

Photo courtesy Providence Archives Seattle

This year we welcome a new Leadership Team to the Sisters of Providence Provincial Administration office in Renton, Wash. *(more on pages 2-3).*

The image above shows the leadership of the day in 1916, seated on the steps of Providence Academy in Vancouver, Wash. At that time, the sister leaders were referred to as the Provincial Council of the Sacred Heart Province. Later a discernment process between the sisters of Sacred Heart Province and St. Ignatius Province resulted in the formation of Mother Joseph Province.

Today's team includes four sisters – one who serves as provincial leader and three provincial councilors – plus two lay people in the roles of provincial secretary and treasurer. Together, the group of six is referred to as the Provincial Leadership Team. During their five-year term, they oversee Mother Joseph Province and collaborate with the General Leadership Team in Montreal to promote unity within the congregation to further the mission of the Sisters of Providence.

Learn more about the history of the Sisters of Providence in the West at Providence Archives Seattle, providence.org/about/providence-archives.