



# Caritas

Fall 2024

A publication  
for the Sisters  
of Providence  
and Friends



## Journey to Oneness

*Members of the Peace Community  
pray for **Sr. Marie-Thérèse**  
during the final vows liturgy.*

**“The human heart plans the way,  
but the Lord directs the steps.”**

Proverbs 16:9

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# Bill Bouten Honored at Retirement

On May 21, the Sisters of Providence in the Seattle area hosted members of **Bouten Construction** for a Mass and luncheon at St. Joseph Residence. The Bouten family and the Sisters have collaborated for many years.

The company built the Providence Sacred Heart Women's Center and Children's Hospital in Spokane, the St. Joseph Residence in West Seattle, and many other projects for the community. **Bill Bouten** is retiring this year and will be heading to Africa for two years of ministry – a move he attributed to the example he saw in the Sisters of Providence over many years.

Bill, the recipient of the 2005 Mother Joseph Award, sponsored an employee of his company to travel to El Salvador with a group of Providence Associates in 2001 to build homes for the poor. In 1997, he traveled to Romania with Northwest Medical Teams to help repair an orphanage.

For ten years, Bouten has been a volunteer with the winter sleeping program for homeless men at the House of Charity. He also 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, Spokane

*(Top right) **Sr. Maggie Pastro, SP** presents a Mother Joseph statue to Bill Bouten.*

*(Right) Current leadership of Bouten Construction with Bill outside St. Joseph Residence.*



## Friendship Between Religious Communities

The Sisters of Providence and the Tacoma Dominicans presented **Sr. Noelina** (in blue habit), Mother Superior of Daughters of Mary in Uganda, with a quilt during her visit with her community's sisters living in Seattle. Two Sisters from the Daughters currently reside at St. Joseph Residence while they study at Seattle University. In center (with the white blouse) is **Sr. Jo Ann Showalter, SP**, who served as the "Commissary" for the Dominicans. She passed away shortly after this photo was taken. (A Commissary provides leadership to a religious order who are too few in number to provide their own.)



*In the closing ritual, Sisters and other participants place cardboard "bunches" of grapes on a vine. The grapes contain notes about their thoughts for the future and their contributions in shaping the new governance structure for the Congregation.*

## Sisters Hold Final Chapter of Mother Joseph Province

Religious communities hold Chapter meetings to make important decisions about the community, elect leaders and reconnect with each other. With the Sisters of Providence moving to a local-community governance model in 2025, these meetings will no longer be held although different types of gatherings will be held. Sisters from the General Congregation in Montreal and other provinces in Canada and Chile as well as Providence Associates, Companions and staff joined in the hoped-filled, three-day meeting.



*Liturgies were designed by different groups for each day of the meeting. Here, the Vietnamese Sisters and Associates form a choir for one of the liturgies.*



**Sr. Barbara Schamber** and the Leadership Team present a token to each participant to symbolize their missioning to the world as they perform their various ministries.

*(Right) Sr. H       Mamert Nga, originally from Cameroon and now a councilor on the General Leadership Team, delivers a formation status report with the assistance of a translator.*





*Sr. Josie Ramac (Del's Sister-in-law), Sr. Jacqueline Fernandes, Del and Carmen (Del's wife).*

## Mother Joseph Award Recipient Serves Meals to Homeless for More than Four Decades

If you are homeless or hungry in the neighborhood, **Del Catunao** and other volunteers will serve you a delicious Sunday dinner. For his decades of service to the hungry and his ceaseless support of the Sisters of Providence, Del has been named the 2024 recipient of the Mother Joseph Award.

"Del is dedicated to the care of the poor especially the homeless and the hungry," explained the members of the **Sophia Community** in their nomination. "Since 1979, he has served the homeless in the Seattle area as a volunteer for the Blessed Sacrament Parish Sunday Feed-In, most of these years as the Coordinator, working many hours each week fundraising, recruiting volunteers and organizing the Sunday dinners."

Del is a "connector" who invites inviting local restaurants, grocery stores and bakeries to donate food. Volunteers come not only from Catholic parishes but also from other church congregations and organizations. Many Sisters of Providence have volunteered at the Feed-In over the years.

As many as 500 people have been served on a Sunday. When necessary, as in during the pandemic, meals were delivered via take-out containers.

In addition to the Sunday dinner, Del and his team have set up other support services. Student nurse volunteers check blood pressures, provide first-aid as well as simple wound care, health consultations and referrals.



*Del's extended family joins the celebration.*

“In Del, we see an ordinary man accomplishing extraordinary things, following in the footsteps of Jesus, his mother Mary, the Apostles and disciples and all those who have done so since Jesus showed us how to love God and love our neighbors.”

The team opened a library and recruited social workers to help clients access needed services.

For the Sisters of Providence who live in the Seattle area, Del provides computer and cell phone assistance, making sure that sisters have computer access and technical assistance. He is renowned for his patience and ability to teach Sisters what they need to do to use the computer effectively.

“In Del, we see an ordinary man accomplishing extraordinary things, following in the footsteps of Jesus, his mother Mary, the Apostles and disciples

and all those who have done so since Jesus showed us how to love God and love our neighbors,” said the Sophia Community.

*(Below) Members of the Sophia Community join Provincial Leader, **Sr. Barbara Schamber**, in the presentation. (Left to right) **Sr. Paula Cosko, Sr. Barbara, Del, Carmen Catunao, Sr. Karen Hawkins, Sr. Kaye Belcher, Sr Virginia Miller, and Sr. Jeanette Heindl**. Other members of the community not pictured are **Srs. Vilma Franco, Gabrielle Nguyen and Lynn Chappell**.*



### Mission Ambassadors Lend a Hand

Mission Ambassadors surround **Sr. Charlene Hudon** at Mount St. Vincent. The Ambassadors are employees from all over the health system who come together and perform service projects at one of the ministries. This group, from Human Resources, did some mulch distribution, window washing, planting, and trimming. They hail from Washington, California, Alaska, Texas and Montana.

# Sr. Marie-Thérèse Professes Final Vows



*Professing final vows with Sr. Alba.*

In a ceremony reverberating with her Cameroonian roots and surrounded by her fellow Sisters in the Peace Community, **Sr. Marie-Thérèse Gnamazo, SP**, made her final profession of vows at Our Lady of Guadalupe in West Seattle in August.

The joyous ceremony was attended by her sister, family and friends from Africa, Europe and the United States and others who were instrumental in her vocation. The Peace Community and many others wore garments created and tailored by Sr. Marie-Thérèse's brother, who runs a tailoring business in their hometown of Abong Mbang, Cameroon.

Her journey to become a fully professed Sister of Providence began in a small Cameroonian village called Mission Catholic which was part of Holy Family Parish in her west African nation.

Sr. Marie-Thérèse credits her mother, who passed away in 2019, as one of the biggest influences in her vocation.

"She made me the person I am today," explains Sr. Marie-Thérèse, "because she enriched my life with her passion for helping others in the village where she served as a midwife.

"From a very young age, I knew I wanted to be a nun – from primary school all the way through university," she said.

Sr. Marie-Thérèse attended boarding school in Yaoundé, the capitol of Cameroon, and received a degree in Social Communication from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome.

After her formal education, she worked with non-governmental organizations (NGO) serving poor families in eastern Cameroon where, as a woman, she faced many challenges. The challenges merely strengthened her vocation and it showed in all her endeavors.

**"I have learned over the years that there is nothing more valuable in a discernment than a healthy prayer life built on a real and personal relationship with Jesus."**

**–Sr. Marie-Thérèse**



*The song and movement of an African liturgy bring joy to the Mass and the involvement of the entire body in worship.*

When she served the Baka Pygmies who live in the Dja Faunal Reserve in southeast Cameroon, she learned some important lessons.

"My work with the pygmies helped me gain more experience and a sense of compassion for the poorest of the poor. They receive virtually no respect in Cameroon and are given no consideration," she explained.

The love and respect was returned. The people she worked with told her mother that Marie-Thérèse was "now their daughter, too."

After her work there, she set up her own NGO, African Solidarity in Action. She began work on a medical clinic in Abong Mbang which her brother continues today as she raises funds for the project.

*Continued...*



**Fr. Emmanuel Mbock Mbock**, who introduced Sr. Marie-Thérèse to the Sisters of Providence, provides a blessing.



*Offertory procession led by  
Sr. Marcia Gatica, a Patagonian,  
now ministering in El Salvador.*

## Sr. Marie-Thérèse Professes Final Vows, continued

“I have learned over the years that there is nothing more valuable in a discernment than a healthy prayer life built on a real and personal relationship with Jesus,” Sr. Marie-Thérèse says. “If you love him, trust him and talk with him regularly, you will find that following where he leads comes naturally.”

In addition to her mother, Sr. Marie-Thérèse reflects on the importance of **Fr. Emmanuel Marie Mbock Mbock, Sr. Kitsy Rutan, SP, and Sr. Clare Lentz, SP,** in her vocation journey.

“In the course of my discernment, I was quite happy to discover the life of Mother Gamelin and her dedication to the poor. Fr. Emmanuel guided me to the

Sisters of Providence, where I found that the spirit and charism of the Congregation inspired me. It gave me the courage and desire to undertake my own mission to serve the poor,” says Sr. Marie-Thérèse.



*The Peace Community of  
the Sisters of Providence.*

# Gifts of Water and Mountains Tells the Story of the Sisters of Providence in the West

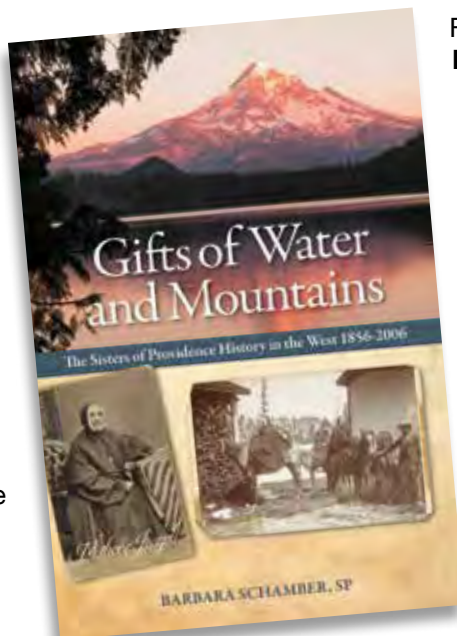
**Sr. Barbara Schamber** has completed a real labor of love recently with the publication of *Gifts of Water and Mountain*. The book tells the challenging history of the first 150 years of the Sisters of Providence in the American West, 1856-2006.

Utilizing extensive archival histories, many written and maintained by the Sisters themselves in chronicles, Sr. Barbara recounts the founding of the Sisters of Providence to minister to the poor in Montreal, and soon after, their call to expand this mission to the Northwest Territories of Washington, Oregon and Montana.

Led by the vision and tenacity of Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, the sisters established the first hospitals, schools and orphanages across the untamed territories of the West. These mission-oriented, pioneering women religious established many indelible and lasting institutions that still provide far-reaching benefits in the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

No history of the Pacific Northwest is complete without understanding the extensive role of the Sisters of Providence.

Sr. Barbara describes the struggle of the sisters, at first, to respond to the needs of the French-Canadian trappers at Fort Vancouver in Washington Territory and, after, the expansion and growth of their mission inland to meet the needs of frontier communities. She also relates in detail, the decades of adaptations to rapid secular and religious changes of the 20th century.



From the Foreword, by **Sr. Margaret Botch, SP:**

“This book written in faith and filled with people, places, projects, events, and surprises comes to life through (Sister Barbara’s) careful and adept use of the resources she researched, assembled and developed. When I read her manuscript, which is spiced with quotes from letters, biographies, personal interviews, and archive treasures, some stories I’ve heard many times became for the first time episodes in the lives of real people sharing what matters to them. At times a smile, a lump in my throat, or a prayer accompanied my reading. I got clearer images of where, when and how missions and ministries began and ended, and gained a deeper sense of the Spirit guiding Sisters of Providence and their collaborators into creative and risky projects that serve the needs of poor and marginalized people. I identified with struggles, and found a new appreciation for the humility, simplicity and charity manifested in small beginnings and appropriate endings.”

Proceeds from sales will benefit Sisters of Providence.



Buy at Amazon.com: <https://tinyurl.com/GiftsWaterMountains>

Led by the vision and tenacity of Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, the sisters established the first hospitals, schools and orphanages across the untamed territories of the West.



*Jubilarians during the liturgy; (r to l) **Sr. Clare Lentz, Sr. Lucila Vasquez, Sr. Felma Cerezo and Sr. Chloe Keitges.** Not able to attend but also celebrating their Jubilees: **Sr. Charlotte Van Dyke, Sr. Virginia Miller and Sr. Susan Fitzmorris.***



## Celebrating Our Jubilarians

Sisters, family and friends celebrated the Jubilees of seven Sisters this summer with a Mass and reception at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in West Seattle. The Jubilee is not just a celebration of many years of ministry, it's a celebration by the entire community of the service and dedication of all the women in the Sisters of Providence who have answered God's call and devoted their lives in service to others.

### **Lucila (Lucy) Vasquez, SP** 25 years



It was a providential journey! **Sr. Lucy Vasquez** had just retired from twenty years of employment with National Steel Corporation and while in transition to her new job, a friend asked her to accompany her on a visit with the Sisters of Providence.

"She and I met in the chapel before the visit,"

said Sr. Lucy. "While there, **Sr. Margaret Bishoff**, who was then the Vocation Director, answered every one of

my previous thoughts about entering religious life even though I had never mentioned them to anybody," said Sr. Lucy.

After that short visit, a major paradigm shift took place for Sr. Lucy. The needs of her family were taken care of by her retirement package and, instead of taking the new job, she entered the Sisters of Providence.

"As I continue my journey, may I joyfully see God in the people I mingle with and may those I encounter each day see God in me. Thus, to grow old gracefully," she says.

"Without God, I am nothing."

# Thank you for your service and dedication

## Felma Cerezo, SP

60 years



If there is a celebration to organize, a photography or art project to be done or just a time to enjoy each other's company, **Sr. Felma Cerezo** is probably involved in one way or another.

She is a bundle of energy and always on the move. On any day, you can find her helping a Sister get to an appointment, sewing

a new habit for someone in another congregation or cooking an extravagant meal for a party.

Sr. Felma is best known for teaching and creating art. After graduating from Bellevue Community College in 1968 she joined the occupational department at Mount St. Vincent and delighted in designing projects for the residents to complete during therapy.

Sr. Felma taught art at Providence High School in Burbank, California, for 26 years.

"I count my blessings every day. I could never ask for more," Sr. Felma said. "I consider myself very lucky to have this community which fulfilled all my dreams, encouraged me to pursue my creativity and provided me all the opportunities to practice and share them."

## Sr. Clare Lentz, SP (Sr. Clare Mary)

60 Years



**Sr. Clare Lentz**, a spiritual director and companion for most of her ministry, is constantly discerning where God wants her to be. Whether it's good times or challenging times, the answer has always been the same.

"I've never really questioned that God wanted me to be a vowed

religious," she says. "The details were not always clear but a lifetime of discernment always brought me back to the same place."

When she finished her post-graduate work, the Church was undergoing rapid changes and she was hired as a director of religious education for St. Michael's in Olympia, Washington. However, she was soon called to minister with the Provincial Council as director for religious development. She accompanied many Sisters in their spiritual journey as she taught the Congregation about liberation theology and served on several boards.

"I've loved what I did, all the way through my ministries," says Sr. Clare. "Sometimes it was very difficult and I struggled, but always Providence brought me back to where I belonged."

## Sr. Charlotte Van Dyke, SP (Sister Paulette)

70 years



**Sr. Charlotte Van Dyke** has ministered as an educator, nurse, administrator and attorney. When she entered the novitiate, the congregation had not changed much in the preceding 100 years.

After two years of nursing school at Seattle University she entered the community and completed her studies

at St. Vincent Medical in Portland, Oregon. Soon, she became a staff nurse at St. Joseph's in Burbank.

In 1969, she completed an MBA and went on to serve for twenty years in administrative positions in the Providence Health System. She served as chief executive officer of St. Elizabeth Medical Center in Yakima and St. Joseph in Aberdeen, Washington.

Then, it was time for law school.

Sr. Charlotte earned her Juris Doctor from the University of Puget Sound and promptly set up her practice in one of the poorer sections of downtown Seattle.

"Part of my motivation for becoming an attorney," explains Sr. Charlotte, "is that I love people. Women are not often well represented in the profession or the courtroom, so I wanted to do something about that."

*Continued...*

## Jubilarians, continued



### **Sr. Chloe Keitges, SP** (Sr. Matthew Marie, SSMO)

70 years



**Sr. Chloe Keitges** is naturally full of life and energy. So, her roles as “play lady” at Sacred Heart Medical Center in Spokane and then Providence Hospital in Everett, Washington, were a natural fit for her and the patients.

She spent many years in elementary schools and “loved the children but grew

tired of teaching,” says Sr. Chloe of her transition to recreational therapist. “As the play lady, I got to do all the fun things with the children.”

Eventually, she started a healing ministry at Still Point Spirituality Center in Seattle. There she organized prayer groups and brought healing teams into local jails before she moved to Yakima, Washington.

At the Sisters’ house in Yakima, Casa Guadalupe, she once again organized a house of prayer in addition to teaching English as a second language at Casa Hogar, a ministry serving the migrant community.

In celebrating her 70th Jubilee, Sr. Chloe expressed deep gratitude for her many opportunities to minister with the poor.

### **Sr. Susan Fitzmorris, SP** (Sr. Paulette)

70 Years



From Southern California to Alaska, **Sr. Susan Fitzmorris** taught children of all ages and in many subjects during more than two decades of ministry in education.

“There was something about every place that I taught that I enjoyed,” she says. Students in Seattle, Walla Walla, Vancouver and

Moxee, Washington, gained from Sr. Susan’s respect, compassion and fun. She also ministered in Fairbanks and Anchorage, Alaska, and at St. Finbar’s and Providence High School in Burbank, California.

Born in Olympia, Washington, she was one of ten children and was taught by the Sisters of Providence at St. Michael’s School in the Olympia. The gift for teaching was nurtured in a loving and supportive home.

In 1974, Sr. Susan retired from teaching, taking up a new ministry at St. Joseph Residence where she eventually became supervisor of housekeeping and laundry at Mount St. Vincent, the adjacent facility.

While at the Mount, she found new joy in the training program for physically and mentally challenged young people. In her work she marveled at their ability to learn new skills and use them in housekeeping, maintenance, laundry and other jobs.

“Each one had a gift,” she remembers. “The ministry was helping each one find out what their gift was.”

### **Sr. Virginia Miller, SP**

75 years



Of the three girls in the family of Margaret and Leon Miller two became Sisters of Providence. **Sr. Virginia Miller’s** own calling was strengthened when she witnessed the joy of her older sister and the women with whom she ministered.

Sr. Virginia entered the congregation in July 1948 but, just before her final

vows, she was diagnosed with tuberculosis. The condition did not prevent her from taking vows, which she did in Sacred Heart Hospital, Montreal, but it did prevent her from having family and friends with her for the occasion.

In 1967, as the Church was going through many changes, Sr. Virginia and Sr. Elizabeth Joyce inaugurated the Vancouver Apostolate, an outreach program to train volunteers in five rural parishes. They expanded the ministry elsewhere in Washington as well.

As the Congregation once again enters a time of change, Sr. Virginia had one piece of advice for the community: “Love one another. We’re all in this together and support will be very important.”

# Rod Hochman Retires from Providence St. Joseph Health System

After 45 years in health care, including 17 with the Providence family of organizations, **Rod Hochman, M.D.**, announced that he will retire as president and CEO of Providence at the end of this year, moving into a CEO emeritus position effective Jan. 1, 2025.

“Serving alongside everyone at Providence has been the highlight of my career,” said Dr. Hochman. “Every day, our physicians, nurses and caregivers make an important difference in the lives of millions of people, delivering compassionate, high-quality care, one patient at a time. I have no doubt that, with our caregivers’ ongoing dedication to the Mission, Providence will continue to flourish and grow in ways we have yet to even imagine.”

On behalf of the Providence St. Joseph Health Sponsors Council, **Sr. Maggie Pastro, SP**, and **Sr. Sharon Becker, CSJ**, shared: “Dr. Hochman reflects the pioneering and compassionate spirit of the Sisters of Providence and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange. Our tradition of responding to the needs of our communities, especially for those who are most vulnerable, dates back well over 165 years and will live on for many more thanks to his visionary and caring leadership.”

Under his leadership, Providence expanded to meet growing community needs, especially for people who are most vulnerable. Today, Providence is a family



*Sr. Barbara Schamber presents a Mother Joseph statue to Dr. Hochman for his years of service. Accompanying him is his wife, Nancy.*

of 120,000 health care professionals, serving in 51 hospitals, more than 1,000 clinics and hundreds of programs and services across seven states.

An immunologist and rheumatologist, Dr. Hochman served as chair of the American Hospital Association Board of Trustees in 2021 at the height of the pandemic. In this role, he helped guide a coordinated response to COVID-19 among the nation’s hospitals and health systems.

Read more: [tinyurl.com/RodHochman](https://tinyurl.com/RodHochman)



## Erik Wexler to Lead Health System as CEO

The Providence St. Joseph Health Board of Directors announced that Providence Chief Operating Officer **Erik Wexler** has been named the health system’s next president and chief executive officer. Effective Jan. 1, 2025, Wexler will succeed Dr. Rod Hochman.

“With his unwavering commitment to the Mission and more than 30 years of experience in health care, Erik is the right person to inspire and empower Providence caregivers, medical staff and community partners to continue to build on our vision of Health for a better world,” said Providence Board Chair Michael Murphy.

# May They Rest in Peace



**Mary Hawkins, SP**  
(Sister Francine Marie)

Sister Mary Frances Hawkins, age 84, a Sister of Providence for 63 years, died June 16, 2024 at St. Joseph Residence, Seattle.

Sister Mary was born a twin with her brother Larry (Lawrence) on March 4, 1940 in Tacoma, Washington to parents Albert and Magdalena (Weiss) Hawkins. She was the first born of four children, including brothers Steve and Don. Her father was a teacher and later a smelter worker during World War II. Her mother, known as "Mack" was a homemaker who loved to read and learn, and ran a small neighborhood grocery.

Sister Mary grew up in a family full of love, instilled with religion, community and learning. Sister Mary once reflected, "If I could be half as loving as my mother was, and is, and my father continues to be, I would consider my life a success."

After high school at St. Leo's in Tacoma, Sister Mary worked at Boeing for a year. She enjoyed attending Mass, and recognizing feasts and holy days, which created a peace within her and a calmness that was a special grace. She entered the Sisters of Providence community in 1959, became a Novice in 1960, received First Vows in 1963 and Final Vows in 1967.

She earned a BA in Education from Seattle University in 1967; a teacher certificate in 1969; and a Masters in Education/Curriculum from University of Oregon in 1972. She also earned educational certificates in counseling, spiritual theology and ministry, and clinical pastoral education.

Sister Mary ministered as a teacher at Our Lady of Lourdes Grade School, Vancouver, Washington; Holy Family School, Seattle; St. Catherine School, Seattle; St. Finbar School, Burbank, California; and Providence High School where she also served as an assistant vice-principal, and academic vice-principal.

She ministered on the community's Formation Team (1979-82) and served in community leadership (1983-89). After ministering at Providence High School, Sister Mary moved from Burbank to Seattle in 2009 and continued to serve on the Board of Regents

for Providence High School and on the Community Ministry Board for Providence St. Joseph Health.

Sister Mary will be remembered fondly for her compassion, loving presence, wonderful sense of humor, intelligence, and as a mentor and an unwavering advocate for young people, social justice, the poor, and her Providence community. She was thankful for her community and knew being a Sister of Providence was a way of life.

She is preceded in death by her parents and brothers Lawrence and Steve. She is survived by her brother Don and sister-in-law, Judy, many loving nieces and nephews, and her religious community.



**Jo Ann Showalter, SP**  
(Sister Jo Ann)

Sister Jo Ann Showalter, age 77, a Sister of Providence for 29 years, died July 26, 2024 at St. Joseph Residence, Seattle.

She was born Josephine Ann Herb on August 24, 1946, in McMinnville, Oregon., to Donald and Verna Herb.

Sister Jo Ann was the eldest of seven children and, being the oldest child in a large family, she had many childcare responsibilities for younger siblings. She graduated high school in 1964 from Central Linn High School, Halsey, Oregon

Sister Jo Ann first thought of being a Sister was when she was 12 but was too young to enter a religious community. She continued her schooling, and also enjoyed a busy life as a wife and mother but the call to religious life kept coming back, even after raising two sons from a marriage that ended. After discerning and attending a Sisters of Providence vocation retreat, Sister Jo Ann entered the Sisters of Providence community in 1993, became a Novice in 1994, received First Vows in 1996 and Final Vows in 2000.

Sister Jo Ann's educational achievements include: an AS degree in Medical Radiography, Oregon Institute of Technology, Klamath Falls, Oregon (1967); a BA in Religion, Philosophy, Pastoral Care, Marylhurst University, Marylhurst, Oregon (1999); and a MA in Earth

Literacy, St. Mary-of-the-Woods College, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind. (2008). She also attended many continuing education workshops, classes and seminars.

Sister Jo Ann ministered as an ultrasound technologist at Providence Milwaukee Hospital (1995-96) and Providence Portland Medical Center (1996-99). She served on the religious community's formation team, both as a member and as a director (2000-2007) and in religious community leadership as a councilor (2005-19). She also valued working with the Providence Associates. Because of her passion for earth sustainability and environmental causes, Sister Jo Ann was always educating herself, and helping others on how to be good stewards of the earth.

Sister Jo Ann was especially grateful for her religious community and the many ways she was able to help those in need. She had an infectious love of life and readily shared her beautiful smile. She will be immensely missed.

She is preceded in death by her parents and her son Cloyd Showalter. She is survived by her son, Ralph Showalter, her brothers, Stanley Herb, Donald Herb, Thomas Herb, and Matthew Herb; her sisters, Sharon Thompson and Cecilia Dulin; and by the Sisters in her community.



**Anita Butler, SP**  
(Sister Francesca)

Sister Anita Butler, age 87, a Sister of Providence for 69 years, died July 26, 2024 at home in Seattle.

Sister Anita was born on July 29, 1936, in Los Angeles, but raised in Burbank. She was the oldest child of Leslie and Ruth Butler.

She had two brothers, Gerald and Michael. Family was important to Sister Anita - her stable family values shaping her life.

When Sister Anita was a young child, her father, a ground transportation worker transferred to the new Los Angeles International Airport and moved his young family to St. Finbar School in Burbank, California. This is where Sister Anita, a fourth-grader, met and was taught by the Sisters of Providence. While as a high school student, Sister Anita remained close to the Community, visiting the Sisters after school and on

weekends. In 1954, she graduated and entered the Sisters of Providence as a Postulant. She became a Novice in 1955, received First Vows in 1956 and Final Vows in 1961.

Her educational achievements include: a BS in Education, College of Great Falls (now University of Providence) in 1965, and a MEd (Masters in Education) in Education and High School Administration in 1971 from Loyola University, Los Angeles. Plus, she undertook on-going educational training and seminars in long-term care and health care administration.

Sister Anita lived life to the fullest, her philosophy being, "My whole life has been an adventure." Her first mission as a Sister of Providence was as an elementary teacher at St. Joseph Grade School in Vancouver, Washington (1956-58). Other missions as an elementary teacher took her to Sacred Heart School, Tacoma, Washington (1957); Our Lady of Lourdes School, Vancouver, Washington (1958-61); St. Finbar School, Burbank (1961-63); Holy Rosary School, Moxee, Washington (1963-64); and Providence High School, Burbank, as a teacher and assistant principal (1964-72).

She was principal at St. Catherine School, Seattle (1972-74) and then served as academic vice principal at Kennedy High School, Burien, Washington (1974-79). After serving in teaching and administration in grade schools and high schools, Sister Anita became the religious community's Provincial Treasurer (1980-89; 2005-10). She ministered as the regional director, long-term care, Providence Portland Medical Center (1993-98) and as the superior/administrator at St. Joseph Residence (2000-2005).

Because of her love of the Sisters of Providence mission, she was selected to be on the first team of Providence sponsors of Providence Health & Services (2010-17). She also served on several healthcare and financial boards.

Sister Anita will be remembered fondly for her compassion, loving presence, quick wit, wonderful sense of humor, intelligence, and an unwavering advocate for her Providence community. She was thankful for her community and knew being a Sister of Providence was a way of life.

She is preceded in death by her parents and her brother Gerald. She is survived by her brother Michael, many loving nieces and nephews, and her religious community.

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To view the complete obituaries of these Sister and to sign their memory books, please visit the website for Bonney-Watson Funeral Home at [bonneywatson.com](http://bonneywatson.com).

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## Community, Spirituality & Ministries

The Sisters of Providence are women of all ages who come from many countries and cultures. We are dedicated – in the spirit of humility, simplicity and charity – to serve those most in need. Are you discerning your vocation? Does our charism speak to your heart?



If you would like to learn more about life as a Sister of Providence, contact **Sr. Marie-Thérèse Gnamazo, SP**, at 206-937-4600 ext. 1226 or 206-225-6828, or email her at [sprovidence1856@gmail.com](mailto:sprovidence1856@gmail.com).



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 **Sisters of  
Providence**

MOTHER JOSEPH PROVINCE

### FROM OUR VIDEO LIBRARY

## History of the Mother Joseph Province

During the Chapter meeting (see page 3), the participants enjoyed three videos celebrating the recent history of the Sisters of Providence in the Western United States:

### From Crossing the Mountains to Journey to Oneness: The Story of the Mother Joseph Province

In 2000, the St. Ignatius and Sacred Heart province created a new entity, the Mother Joseph Province. This look back at the last 24 years examines the early challenges in the process as well as some of the historic, fun and endearing events and developments that impacted the Sisters and their ministries.

### In Memoriam

Every year at Chapter, the Sisters remember those who have passed away in the preceeding 12 months. *In Memoriam*, commemorates ALL of the Sisters from the Mother Joseph Province who passed away during the history of the Province, 2000-2024.

### Part of Our Journey Together

Lisa Kumar, Sr. Hong Nga Nguyen and Pou Jennings tell of the exciting adventures of living at St. Joseph Residence (SJR), the Mother Joseph Province's long-term care facility. The video offers a fun look at the life of the Sisters who call SJR home.

Available on our YouTube Channel:  
[youtube.com/@SP-MJP](https://www.youtube.com/@SP-MJP)



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