Caritas

Winter 2025-26

A publication for the Sisters of Providence and Friends

joy to the world

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Sisters of Providence
MOTHER JOSEPH PROVINCE

A Message from the Mother Joseph Core Group

Dear Friends,

Today, as the Sisters of Providence continue the Mission inspired by Blessed Emilie Gamelin more than 180 years ago, we are grateful for the many blessings we receive - especially our dear family, friends, collaborators and supporters.

Our Mission is to proclaim Providence as the loving presence of God, active in us and through us, watchful over the created universe and attentive to the needs of all. We do not undertake this Mission alone. You are a fundamental part of our ministry.

Together, we reach out to those who are vulnerable, underserved, and in need of compassion and support. Our Sisters carry forward Mother Joseph's vision of compassion and service, guided by her words: "Whatever concerns the poor is always our affair."

Through your help, we are able to serve in a wide range of ministries, including programs that support education and literacy, food assistance, shelter and housing, healthcare, homelessness aid, community development, youth activities, faith-based organizations, human and immigrant rights and advocacy, religious and spiritual services, at-risk women and children, environmental and health projects and many other social needs.

In addition to these ministries, we are deeply committed to caring for our elder Sisters, who have dedicated their lives to the Providence Mission serving others. They deserve comfort, dignity and love in their retirement years and declining health —something your support helps us provide.

We invite you to join us in this Mission by making a gift to the Sisters of Providence. Your donation brings tangible hope, healing and relief to those in need. You can give online at sistersofprovidence.net/support-us or by mailing a check using the enclosed envelope. You also might wish to give in honor or in memory of someone special to you or a Sister of Providence who has touched your life.

With your partnership and generosity, we keep the spirit of Providence alive, ensuring that our ministries remain vibrant and responsive to the most pressing needs.

Core Team at the Mass celebrating the 2025 Jubilarians (l-r): ***Srs. Josefina Lerios, SP, Hong Nga Nguyen, SP, and Marcia Gatica, SP.*** *(See p. 5.)*

Thank you for being part of this journey and for your steadfast support. Rest assured of our continued prayers and dedication to the Mission to which we have committed our lives.

Gratefully yours,

Sisters of Providence-Mother Joseph Core Group:

Sr. Josefina Lerios, SP, Congregational Councilor
Sr. Marcia Gatica, SP, Member
Sr. Hong Nga Nguyen, SP, Member

P.S. Your generosity makes a lasting impact. Please consider making a year-end donation today to empower the vital ministries of the Sisters of Providence. Use this QR code for easy and secure access or the enclosed envelope. And please consider a monthly donation or estate gift to ensure the Mission continues long into the future.

For donation inquiries, please contact Ann McKay at **425-525-3018** or **ann.mckay@providence.org.**

Transitions is a partnership with other Congregations to provide housing, employment and other services for women and children in Spokane, Washington.

***Sr. Beverly Dunn, SP,** helping to serve dinner to hungry people in downtown Seattle.*

***Sr. Rosa Nguyen, SP,** speaking to students at Providence High School.*

Ministry and Mission

Meeting Needs with Joy

Sr. Jacqueline Fernandes, SP, finds great joy in helping Sisters with their daily needs – everything from where they live to what car they drive. She is now the commissary for the Tacoma Dominican community. A commissary is a person appointed by the Church to act as the canonical superior of another community – often because of diminishing numbers in the community.

Here, after a community wide meeting, Sr. Jacqueline chats with **Sr. Cabrini, OP-T.**

Prayers for the Intercession of Blessed Emilie

Last year, as the celebration of the *Journey to Oneness* took place in Montreal, the cause for the canonization of Blessed Émilie Tavernier Gamelin received renewed emphasis. The archbishop of Montreal celebrated a liturgy which included the start of a formal inquiry into a presumed miracle attributed to the intercession of the foundress of the Sisters of Providence.

The Bureau of the Cause is encouraging people in need to seek Blessed Émile's intercession. If you would like a Mass said a candle lit for a special intention, the Bureau will make the arrangements for you at the International Center in Montreal.

Please send details of favors received, prayer requests, donation or contribution for Masses and prayer candles to:

Bureau of the Cause Émilie Tavernier Gamelin
12055, Grenet Street, Montreal, Qc
H4J 2J5 Canada
Sister Karin Dufault, SP
kdufault@providenceintl.org

Suggested Contribution–
Masses: $15; Prayer candles: $5

Walt Disney and St. Joseph Hospital

On a recent tour of the Disney studios in Burbank, California, **Jessica Long,** artifact collections curator for the Sisters of Providence, did one of the most important things that artifact collectors do – verify a piece of history.

Jessica visited a restored version of Walt Disney's office, set up to look like it did in1966.

Adorning one of the walls is a certificate of appreciation from St. Joseph Hospital which is across the street from the studios and is still part of the Sisters of Providence health ministry just as it was in the 1960s.

The certificate is in the secretary's office. Jessica says that the certificate is in every photo she has seen from that period. The provenance of some of the other items is questionable, however, says an eagle-eyed Jessica.

Walt Disney had a significant involvement with St. Joseph Hospital, primarily driven by his personal experiences. He had health issues that required medical attention, and he became a patient at the hospital.

He was reportedly grateful for the care he received. In appreciation, Disney decided to make a substantial contribution to the hospital. He funded the construction of a new wing, which was intended to enhance the hospital's capacity to serve the community and improve its facilities.

Family and Friends Celebrate the 2025 Jubilarians

Congregational Leadership Team (CLT) joins the celebration (l – r) - **Srs. Lenora Donovan, SP,** jubilarian; **Rollande Malo, SP,** congregational councilor; **Jacqueline Fernandes, SP,** jubilarian; **Josefina Lerios, SP,** congregational councilor; **Suzette Bautista, SP,** jubilarian and congregational councilor; **Alba Letelier, SP,** congregational leader; **Anne Hemstock, SP,** congregational councilor; **Mary Catherine McQuire, SP,** jubilarian; and **Kitsy Rutan, SP,** jubilarian. **Sr. Maureen Newman, SP,** a jubilarian who passed away this summer, is remembered with her photo on the table.

Below: Sisters celebrate with a Mass (left) and a luncheon (right) with family and friends. Hundreds gathered at Our Lady of Guadalupe in West Seattle to enjoy the celebration.

Sophia Community *(l to r)* – ***Srs. Lynn Chappell, SP, Kaye Belcher, SP, Karen Hawkins, SP, Gabrielle Nguyen, SP, Paula Cosko, SP, Vilma Franco, SP, Virginia Miller, SP*** *(seated) and* ***Jeanette Heindl, SP.***

Local Communities Are at the Heart of the Congregation

The local community serves as the foundational unit of the Sisters of Providence. It is considered a sacred, nurturing space to support Sisters involved in their individual ministries and to help them share in the life of the entire Congregation while maintaining their unique local identity.

Earlier this summer, the Sisters of Providence in the Mother Joseph area gathered for Community Days (formerly Chapter). During that time, Sisters come together to reflect on the Mission, discuss community issues and share experiences. This year, it also provided the opportunity to capture photos of most of the Sisters in each local community. (As with any big gatherings like this, not every Sister was able to attend. Over time, some local communities may merge with others as ministry, geography, life circumstances and other factors come into consideration. These are the local communities as they stood in the late summer of 2025.)

Providence SoCal Community *(l to r)* – ***Srs. Mary Miller, SP, Lang Tran, SP, Phuong Ha Nguyen, SP, Rosa Sen Nguyen, SP,*** *and* ***Teresa White, SP.***

St. Anne Community *(l to r)* – ***Srs. Sharon Fitzpatrick, SP, Jean Schultz, SP, Margarita Hernandez, SP,*** *and* ***Patricia Eley, SP.*** *(Not pictures are auxiliary members* ***Srs. Yvonne LeBlanc, SP,*** *and* ***Mary Catherine McGuire, SP.)***

Horizon Community *(I to r)* – ***Srs. Deling Fernando, SP, Anna Orellana, SP, Josie Ramac, SP, and Fe Sumalde, SP.*** *Not pictured,* ***Srs. Marisol Avila, SP, and Rosali Locati, SP.***

Kairos Local Community *(I to r)* – ***Srs. Myrta Iturriaga, SP, Marcia Gatica, SP, Margaret Botch, SP, Susanne Hartung, SP, Jacqueline Fernandes, SP, Kitsy Rutan, SP, Joan Gallager, SP, Maggie Pastro, SP,*** *and* ***Marita Capili, SP.***

Providence Peace Community *(I to r)* – ***Srs. Charlene Hudon, SP, Judith Desmarais, SP, Beverly Dunn, SP, Jessica Taylor, SP, Beatrice LaFramboise, SP,*** *and* ***Karin Dufault, SP.*** *Not pictured,* ***Srs. Chauncey Boyle, SP, Patrica Glen, SP, Marie-Thérèse Gnamazo, SP,*** *and* ***Katherine Smith, SP.***

St. Joseph Residence Local Community *(Seated, I to r)* ***Srs. Yvonne LeBlanc, SP, Clare Lentz, SP, Ida Mae Marceau, SP, Carla Montante, SP, Annette Seubert, SP, Lenora Donovan, SP,*** *and* ***Fidela Adriano, SP.*** *(Standing, I to r)* ***Chole Keitges, SP, Celia Chappell, SP, Donna Burkhart, SP, Maribeth Carson, SP, Margaret Botch, SP, Mary Fox, SP, Kitsy Rutan, SP*** *(see Kairos Community),* ***Pauline Lemaire, SP, Helen Mason, SP, Mary Catherine McGuire, SP, Chauncey Boyle, SP, Hong Nga Nguyen, SP, Lucy Vasquez, SP, and Felma Cerezo, SP.*** *Not pictured:* ***Mary Kaye Nealen, SP, Maribeth Carson, SP, Dianne Crawford, SP, Patricia Hauser, SP*** *(Rest in Peace),* ***Sue Orlowski, SP, Joyce Green, SP, Julie Macasieb, SP, Cecilia Paganessi, SP, and Mary Ann Vu, SP.***

Administrative Center Employees Reflect on the **Journey to Oneness**

By Kelly Hilton

"As I reflect on the change in governance and its impact on the Sisters and staff, I am most impressed with how the Sisters of Providence as visionaries continue to adapt and embrace change to keep the Mission alive while at the same time demonstrate care and concern for those impacted by the change.

"Twenty-five years ago, the Sisters and staff experienced the merger of Sacred Heart Province and St. Ignatius Province. The Sisters affectionately called it *Crossing the Mountains.* And now here we are engaged in a *Journey to Oneness.* The circumstances are different, but the reason is the same—to continue carrying out the Mission.

"As a longtime employee, I have witnessed the Sisters of Providence evolve as a Congregation. I have learned that holding on too tightly to old methods can stall progress. Instead, I've learned to embrace change as a way to renew my focus and strengthen my commitment. Personally, I've experienced moments where adapting felt uncomfortable, even risk. But doing so was essential to keep moving forward. Change has taught me that flexibility is not a weakness but a sign of dedication to the larger goal. It's not about changing the Mission—it's about becoming who we need to be to carry it out. In that sense, change becomes not just necessary, but a powerful part of the Mission itself."

Kelly Hilton is the chronicles coordinator for Mother Joseph area. She is based in Spokane, Washington, and has worked for the Sisters for 35 years. She is in the center row, fifth from left.

> "Change has taught me that flexibility is not a weakness but a sign of dedication to the larger goal. It's not about changing the Mission—it's about becoming who we need to be to carry it out." –Kelly Hilton

Mother Joseph area's administrative staff as of June 2025

(Front, l to r) ***Jessica Long, Lissa Cunneen, Ann Mckay;*** *(middle, l to r)* ***Elinor Alexander, Sr. Margarita Hernandez, SP, Chistina Kobbevik, Debbie Roth, Kelly Hilton, Stephanie Simons, Sr. Jacqueline Fernandes, SP, Cyndy Mathew, Jordan Reeves, Sr. Sharon Casey, OP-T, Sr. Felma Cerezo, SP;*** *(backrow, l to r)* ***Steve Pehanich, May Alipao, Pam Hedquist, Rosie Stroud-Davis, Brian Drischell, Peter Schmid*** *and* ***Susan Selbach.***

By Peter Schmid

"When I joined Providence as visual resources archivist in 2001, I remember quickly becoming used to long-time staff referring to past events by the particular provincial leadership teams: "Wasn't that during Sr. Barbara's first term as provincial?" someone might say. Much as we do with presidential administrations, it was a way of marking time. The two former Sacred Heart and St. Ignatius provinces had just merged to form Mother Joseph Province in 2000 – another milestone we often reference in placing an event before or after the merger.

> "The establishment of provinces was partly in response to growing numbers of Sisters; now, the Religious community has responded to the reality of a much smaller, but thanks to technology, much more easily connected, community."
>
> –Peter Schmid

"As we began 2025, another major milestone passed with the ending of the provinces, bringing the Religious community into a very different form of governance. In archives this has meant closing one group of records and starting a new one, and reporting to a director-level position rather than liaison to a team.

"I find it helpful during this time of transition to remember that provinces were not established until 1891 (see our Spring 2021 Past Forward newsletter). So for the first 48 years of the Religious community's existence, the works of Providence, including here in the West, were carried out as Missions and then vicariates, lacking the formal structure and authority that provinces would provide.

"The establishment of provinces was partly in response to growing numbers of Sisters; now, the Religious community has responded to the reality of a much smaller, but thanks to technology, much more easily connected, community."

Peter Schmid is the archive manager for the Mother Joseph area. He is based in Seattle, Washington, and has worked for the Sisters for almost 25 years. He is in the back row, far right, in the staff photo.

Following in the Footsteps of Mother Joseph -
Administrative staff members recently took part in a day of reflection held at Providence Academy in Vancouver, Washington. The day included the history of how the first Sisters in the Pacific Northwest built the ministry that has served those in need since 1856. Staff paid a visit to the Mother Joseph Cemetery and reflected on the life of individual Sisters by reading the obituaries of some of the women buried there.

Staff were also privileged to witness the renewal of vows of five Sisters of Providence in the Academy chapel. Much of the work in the chapel was done by Mother Joseph herself who supervised the construction of the building. The Academy is open to the public and worth a visit. Tours are available.

May They Rest in Peace

Sr. Maureen Newman, SP

Sr. Maureen Ellen Newman died on July 9, 2025, at St. Joseph Residence, Seattle. She was 80 years old and served for 60 years as a Sister of Providence.

She was born into a close-knit and faith-filled Irish Catholic family on April 16, 1945, in Spokane, Washington, to Harold Benedict and Ruth Esther (Martin) Newman. She had an older sister, Alicia Kay and a younger brother, Joseph.

At a young age, she was impacted by observing others being treated unjustly. At Holy Names Academy, Seattle, she began to hear the call to Religious life and joined the Sisters of Providence in 1964, receiving First Vows in 1967 and Final Vows in 1975. She liked how the community is service oriented, forward thinking and serves the poor.

Her academic accomplishments included: BA in Education, Seattle University, 1972; and a Standard Education Certification in History, Seattle University, 1975.

Sr. Maureen always wanted to be a teacher. She loved the diversity of her students, which she found enriching. As an educator, she ministered at St. Michael School, Olympia, Washington; St. Joseph School, Vancouver, Washington; and St. Therese School, Seattle.

She was determined to live her faith and share her boundless passion for the less fortunate, spending summers working in day care centers for migrant workers, tutoring Hmong tribespeople and visiting Central America to foster justice, peace and friendship. She also ministered on the Sisters' Leadership Team (2010-14). Her board service included Providence Hospice of Seattle Foundation and Jesuit Volunteer Corps Northwest. She was a frequent and eager volunteer for many organizations and could be found sharing her voice and presence at rallies supporting many causes.

Sr. Maureen was blessed with a beautiful and loving smile, kindness, gratefulness and deep compassion. She cherished the journey she had been on since childhood, opposing injustice and promoting peace and non-violence. She will be immensely missed.

Her parents and two nephews, Kelly and Casey Newman preceded her in death. She is survived by her sister, Alicia Kay Newman; her brother, Joseph Newman; sister-in-law, Nancy Davis; her extended family; and her Religious community.

Sr. Judith "Judy" George
(Sr. Mary Angela)

Sr. Judith (Judy) Ann George died on September 16, 2025 at 1:30 p.m. at St. Joseph Residence, Seattle, WA, at 84 years of age, after 66 years as a Sister of Providence.

Sr. Judy was born on October 26, 1940 in Missoula, MT, the first born of Elmer and Leenora (Healey) George, a young doctor and nurse. The family welcomed six more children to their close-knit and faith-filled family, each one dear to Sister Judy's heart.

Sr. Judy became acquainted with the Sisters of Providence as a young girl while accompanying her father on his rounds to St. Patrick Hospital (now Providence St. Patrick Hospital) in Missoula, giving her the opportunity to visit with one of the Sisters. And, later, in her schooling, many of her teachers were Sisters, and she saw their joy and compassion for the children and towards the patients in the hospital. After graduating from Sacred Heart Academy, Missoula, in 1958, Sr. Judy made the trek to the novitiate in Seattle. She became a novice in the Sisters of Providence community in 1959, professed her first vows in 1960 and her final vows in 1965.

Her academic accomplishments included: BA in Social Science, Seattle University, 1963; MA in French, University of Montana, 1973, and a diploma in French, Sorbonne University, 1970.

Sr. Judy's many ministries included: teaching at St. Gerald School, Great Falls, MT (1963-66); DeSales High School, Walla Walla, WA (1966-71); College of Great Falls (now University of Providence), Great Falls (1971-74). At College of Great Falls, she was assistant professor in French and chair of the foreign language department (1974-78). In Religious Community Service:

she served on the Sisters' Formation Team (1979-84); Sisters' Vocation Team (1999-2016); as a Provincial Councilor (1988-92); Translator (1994-98); Librarian, Sisters' Religious Community Library (2003-2025); receptionist, Retreat and Spiritual Director; and served on several committees.

Sr. Judy was blessed and will be remembered for her beautiful and loving smile, immense kindness, infinite gentleness and deep compassion. She was a person of deep faith, loved life and her family, and had a passion that lived in her heart for her religious community. She will be immeasurably missed.

Her parents, Elmer and Leenora, and her sister Barbara Lee preceded her in death. She is survived by her sisters, Katherine (Stephen) Murphy, Mary Harlow, and Elizabeth (Terry) Bishop; her brothers, Thomas (Jonita) George, William (Susan Ross) George, and Timothy (Donna) George; her extended family and her religious community.

Sr. Patricia (Pat) Hauser
(Sr. Christiana)

Sr. Patricia (Pat) Mary Hauser died on September 24, 2025 at 9:00 at St. Joseph Residence, Seattle, at 90 years of age, after 67 years as a Sister of Providence.

Sr. Pat was born on February 3, 1935 in Madison, Wisconsin, the eldest child of Peter and Ella Mae (Denson) Hauser. The family welcomed three more children to their loving family. Her family left the Midwest in 1944, and reestablished themselves in Bellingham, Washington. There, her parents not only provided for their own children, but welcomed some 115 foster children of all ages. This experience taught Sr. Pat a deep understanding and compassion for the poor that motivated the rest of her life and ministries.

In 1953, she graduated from Bellingham High School and then pursued an education in social work. She attended Western Washington State College, receiving a BA in 1957 with a major in sociology/anthropology and a minor in psychology. She received a Master of Social Work in 1968 from the University of Washington, Tacoma.

Sr. Pat entered the Sisters of Providence community in 1957, became a novice in 1958, professed First Vows in 1959 and Final Vows in 1964.

She was a teacher at Holy Family School, Seattle (1959-60); Our Lady of Lourdes School, Vancouver, Washington (1961-62); St. Joseph School, Vancouver (1962-63, 1964-65) and Our Lady of the Holy Rosary School, Sun Valley, California (1963-64).

Sr. Pat never lost her desire for social work. After receiving her MSW, she ministered at Catholic Charities in Yakima, Washington (1968-69). As a counselor and therapist in alcoholic rehabilitation she ministered at various rehabilitation centers throughout the province. For Religious Community service, she served on the Sisters' first Formation Team (1968-75). Her ministries with individuals with HIV/AIDS and the disabled led Sr. Pat to seek time in solitude and contemplative prayer, spending time in India and finding peace in Forks, Washington.

In 2006, Sr. Pat was honored with the James Oldham Award from the Sundown M Ranch ministry. The plaque that was presented to Sr. Pat reads "… for your pioneering spirit of alcoholism and chemical dependency treatment. Your knowledge and passion is a rich heritage for all of us."

She was blessed with an amazing, beautiful life and will be remembered for her deep compassion for others. She will be immensely missed. Her parents, Peter and Ella Mae, and her sister Beverly (Hauser) Echavez and brother David Hauser preceded her in death. She is survived by her sister, Francis (Hauser) Andrade, Honokaa, Hawaii, her extended family and her religious community.

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.**

Memorial contributions may be made to the Sisters of Providence Retirement Fund, 1801 Lind Avenue SW, Renton, Washington, 98057-9016. For Sr. Maureen, donations may also be directed to: Providence Hospice of Seattle Foundation, 2811 S. 102nd Street, Suite 220, Tukwila, Washington, 98168; or Safe Crossings Foundation, 4210 SW Oregon St, Suite H, Seattle, Washington, 98116.

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Steve Pehanich,
Communications and Development Manager

For more information, visit
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"…attentive to the needs of all."

Sisters from Around the World March in Atlanta – Many Sisters of Providence joined thousands of other Religious women, friends and staff to march through the early morning streets of downtown Atlanta to raise awareness on racism, forced migration and climate change. They were attendees at the annual gathering of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR)

LCWR often organizes events and activities that aim to raise awareness, foster community or promote social justice. The Atlanta Walk was intended to engage participants in reflection, prayer and advocacy. It also served to highlight issues pertinent to the world and nation.

Community, Spirituality & Ministries

Discerning a vocation to become a Sister of Providence is a journey of prayerful reflection and spiritual exploration. It involves seeking guidance, participating in community life, and engaging in ministries. If you feel called to explore this path further, please contact Sr. Marisol Avila at **mdelasmap@gmail.com** or call/text her at **509-901-6627.**

Please use the enclosed envelope to make your gift today in support of the many ministries of the Sisters of Providence.

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