



Year of St. Joseph

*Providence* *Missive*

April 2021

A publication of the Sisters of Providence



Providence Missive is the bulletin of the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence published by the General Administration three times a year. It presents news, activities, articles for reflection, and personal testimonies of the life and mission of the Sisters of Providence throughout the world.

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COVER : St. Joseph at the Providence International Centre

# Dear Sisters,

Like St. Joseph,  
we are invited to be bearers  
of hope in an evolving world.



While it is hard to believe, we are at the end of the first quarter of 2021 and our second year of the Covid-19 pandemic. Wisely, Pope Francis declared 2021 to be the **Year of St. Joseph** acknowledging the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the proclamation of Saint Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church by Blessed Pius IX and asking St. Joseph for his protection.

In his Apostolic Letter, ***Patris Corde*** (***With a Father's Heart***) Pope Francis described how Joseph loved Jesus, protected Jesus and Mary, and taught Jesus, as a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father, a creatively courageous father, a working father, and a father in the shadows. ([http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_letters/documents/papa-francesco-lettera-ap\\_20201208\\_patris-corde.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco-lettera-ap_20201208_patris-corde.html))

In this **Missive**, we look to St. Joseph as a model of being a **bearer of hope in an evolving world**. Indeed, we are called to

be **bearers of hope in our evolving world**

at this time when the suffering people of our world are desperate for HOPE.

We know that St. Joseph has had a special place in our Congregation. Our Constitutions and Rules (*R44b*) state: "...we honor Saint Joseph as a model of the interior life and protector of our Congregation." In March, 1849, a statue of St. Joseph was placed at a side altar dedicated to him at Mother Gamelin's precious Aisle of Providence. (Chronicles of the Aisle of Providence, page 96). The side altar at the Mother House and other chapels of our congregation also are dedicated to St. Joseph.

Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart proudly bore St. Joseph's name and called on him for protection. With the support of the Superior General, she named after him the first Sisters of Providence hospital (1858) in the US West, located in



Vancouver, Washington. Saint Joseph was appointed as the President of the Civil Corporation of the Sisters of Charity of Providence in the Territory of Washington, January 1959, "to testify its confidence in the protection of St Joseph and humbly request him to be the protector and guardian of all the works, property and affairs connected with it." At the same time, the Corporation resolved on March 19, 1859 "to feed and maintain forever a poor person under the name, and holding the place of St. Joseph", a promise that has been kept to this day by leadership teams of Western United States.

Mother Joseph crafted a concrete statue of St. Joseph of the Flood to raise needed funds for the ministries after the devastation caused by the flooding of the Columbia River in 1894 and to acknowledge his special protection. The statue found its way back to the Sisters of Providence in 2012, was restored and proudly stands in the lobby of St. Joseph Residence in Seattle.

Mother Bernarda also expressed her devotion to St Joseph. For example, "Let us trust in the protection of St. Joseph." "I hope that St. Joseph will help you in everything." (Letters to Sister Maria Elvira in March, 1909). Traditionally in our Congregation, Wednesday has included a

prayer to Saint Joseph, St. Joseph Day has been celebrated, and hymns to St. Joseph are found in each of our three official languages.

Many other Providence institutions throughout the Congregation have been named after St. Joseph, including residences, schools, hospitals, and nursing homes. Providentially, the healthcare, education, housing and social ministries of Mother Joseph Province are now jointly sponsored by the Ministerial Public Juridic Persons established by Sisters of Providence and by Sisters of St Joseph of Orange.

Personally, I had the privilege of growing up in St. Joseph Parish, attended St. Joseph Grade School and St. Joseph Academy, taught by Sisters of Providence in Yakima. St. Joseph was very visible and loved dearly for his role in the lives of Jesus and Mary, the Church, and our daily lives! Shortly after arriving in Montreal as Congregational Leader, Sister Claire Dumont, SP, one of our dear sisters who was living in the infirmary, visited me in her wheelchair bearing a gift of welcome. The gift was a picture of St. Joseph cradling Baby Jesus in his strong arms while Mary was resting. Sister Claire advised me to turn to St. Joseph often and he would help our leadership team, and me, as lovingly as he cared for Jesus and



Mary, especially in challenging time. She had examples within her own long life of dedicated service to those most vulnerable especially immigrants and refugees. I have followed her advice and the picture is a daily reminder for me of her words.

This year we have the opportunity once again to remember the inspiring life of St. Joseph and to renew our devotion to him. We ask him to help us be **Bearers of Hope** to each other and to all in need, especially those most vulnerable. We ask him for the grace to listen attentively, even in dreams as he did, to what God is calling us to do and for the courage to act with love as he did in difficult and uncertain times. Love makes all things possible.

Pope Francis describes so well the many lessons that we can gather from the life of St. Joseph that have significance for the challenges our times. We can see in St. Joseph's way of being and acting that he truly was a **Bearer of Hope** for Jesus and Mary. We call on him to guide our efforts to be **Bearers of Hope** and to see Jesus in every person we encounter.

In closing, let us remember our SP community prayer to St. Joseph and as we pray it, let us be inclusive in praying for all peoples and their needs. Let the "us" in the prayer represent our solidarity with all humanity.



*O blessed Saint Joseph, who accompanied  
Jesus and Mary in all their journeys,  
accompany us in the journey of our life.*

*Be our guide and our protector in all our  
works, for ourselves and those we serve;  
watch over us; preserve us from all dangers,  
support us in our fatigue, and aid us in  
offering all in trust to God.*

*Make us ever mindful that we are  
sojourners here; that heaven is our true  
home; and help us to persevere on the  
straight road that leads us to eternity with  
you in the company of Jesus and Mary.*

*Amen.*

Peace, hope, and love be with you as we continue our Lenten journey and live the Pascal mystery.

Affectionately in Providence,

*Karin Dufault SP*  
Congregational Leader





# Special *SP* Experiences, reflections Report



## « Year of St. Joseph »

Like St. Joseph, we are invited to be bearers of hope in an evolving world.

Here are some testimonies on the devotion to St. Joseph,  
patron of the universal Church, which has taken different forms  
throughout the history of the Sisters of Providence ...

LIKE SAINT JOSEPH, WE ARE INVITED TO BE BEARERS OF HOPE IN A CHANGING WORLD

by Danielle Charron, SP



It is a pleasure for me to respond to the invitation to share with you my reflections on this theme which has given me a lot of food for thought. My joy was profound when our Holy

Father, Pope Francis, announced that the year 2021 would be dedicated to Saint Joseph. 150 years ago, the Church declared him Patron of the Universal Church.

For the past 10 years, the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence has sponsored a superb work of the Church: The CHSLD Providence Saint-Joseph. In Quebec's Health and Social Services System, CHSLD stands for Centres d'hébergement de soins de longue durée

(Residential and long-term care centres). We can accommodate 143 residents. Saint Joseph is the patron saint of our CHSLD. What I wish to share with you is how I am a bearer of hope in this living environment which is a world in evolution.

In my ministry, I am involved in the spiritual care of our residents: liturgies, sacraments, end of life accompaniment for residents and families. Given the global situation of the COVID 19 pandemic, this has not been an easy year for anyone and certainly not in CHSLD. We lost 27 of our residents and one of our staff during the year. Our staff needed to feel supported as also did the families of those affected by the virus and the families who were bereaved by the death of their loved one.

I can say that what hit me the most in that context was that our residents were facing a lot



of loneliness and misunderstanding. They felt abandoned by their loved ones, not understanding what was happening in our suffering world. Family caregivers and families could not visit them during the first wave and felt helpless. Those who died did it alone, because it was impossible to accompany them at the end of their lives. Their family members would not see them ever again because, following their death, the body was cremated. I could touch human suffering. So how can I be a bearer of hope in such a context?

Joseph found himself in the need to question the mission that Providence had entrusted to him during the incomprehensible pregnancy of Mary, to whom he was promised in marriage, and he then abandoned himself to the Lord. Following his example, I also questioned myself to try to discover the message that my Beloved was sending me

through my current experiences. I understood that in every circumstance of his life, Joseph, like Mary and Christ, chose to announce and own his decision. I could then understand that I had to announce my yes again and abandon myself to the divine will of my Beloved. More than ever, I could experience what is inscribed on the cross "my only hope", which I received at the moment of my profession answer.

I took time to listen to the suffering of those who called me or met me to confide their distress. I provided support and encouragement to the employees I met who were affected by the pandemic. Finally, there was the opportunity to re-establish the activities related to spiritual care. This is, as far as I am concerned, the way I made myself a bearer of hope.

## ST. JOSEPH IN MY LIFE

by Fabiola Reyes, novice



Behind the most important "Yes" in history is hidden St. Joseph, the silent man in whom I have placed my vocation with complete trust.

In God's plans, my entrance to the pre-

novitiate was on March 19, his day. And my destiny was to be able to work at San José School. As a special education teacher, I was able to work for a few months in that school, where I continued to confirm my love that persists for students with special educational needs. Thus, I am completely moved to respond to the needs they may have.

They are the most needy of our times as our

beloved Pope Francis mentions in the Apostolic Letter, "Patris Corde", in which he presents St. Joseph as the Father of creative courage which reminds us that in the midst of difficulties it is necessary to draw from within ourselves the resources and the ingenuity to be able to respond in the best way.

In this case, with the example of St. Joseph, we had to respond in the middle of the pandemic in the most creative way, trying to lighten the cross that each student carried, with activities that perhaps we would never have imagined, using technology and learning new methodologies to give the best of ourselves to our students.

Having him as our patron saint helps us to shape ourselves to be able to give of ourselves

in a more constant, loving and simple way. He invites us to be like him, silent, of service and hardworking, but always with our heart and our eyes on God. As he did during his life with Jesus and Mary Most Holy, we are always seeking the good of others

One of the characteristics that I love about St. Joseph is that, despite pains and uncertainty, he was always faithful and respected God's designs until the end. He let Jesus find his way and to discover that it was worthwhile to give his life away by giving it to others. For when it is given away, it is not spent, but earned.

Let us ask St. Joseph to protect our hearts, our inner lives and to make us more docile in spirit that we might be able to shape ourselves more and more to the heart of God.

## A BEARER OF HOPE IN HIS EVOLVING WORLD

by Mary Phillips, SP



Saint Joseph, the patron of our Universal Church, had a deep faith in his loving Father, trusted in God's Providence, had a contemplative spirit that never lost hope in the God whom he loved, adored, and journeyed with each day. He also had a compassionate heart. This

enabled him to be a bearer of hope in his evolving world.

We can see how these characteristics of Saint Joseph helped him in his discernment in the many situations where God called him to action. When Joseph was betrothed to Mary, he saw that she was pregnant and brought it to God in prayer. God sent an angel in a dream to give him a message that Mary had conceived by the Holy Spirit, the promised





Messiah. When Joseph heard the message, he promptly responded to God's will and took Mary as his wife. He embraced his responsibility as protector, provider and head of the family with great love and humility, trusting in God's Providence and guidance. Joseph took Mary with him to Bethlehem where he was to be counted in the census that was ordered by King Herod. While there, Jesus, the promised Messiah, was born in a stable. Although Joseph would have loved to have provided a more comfortable and dignified place for his wife and the birth of the Son of God, he accepted it as God's will for Jesus to be born in such a lowly manner.

In this attitude he was able to be open to receive the shepherds and the magi who came to worship Jesus, enabling the promised Messiah to touch their hearts as they were open to receive Him. The Holy Family was a bearer of hope for those whom God sent to them.

When Jesus was still an infant, Joseph again had a vision of an angel telling him to get up during the night and take Mary and Jesus to Egypt for Herod wanted to kill the baby. Joseph again heard the message, and responded immediately, heading to a foreign land, to a place that would be of a very different culture, language and faith. He had to cross a desert which could be quite dangerous, especially with an infant and a young wife. Joseph did not know when he

arrived in Egypt if the people would accept them and if he would find work as a carpenter to provide for his family. Joseph trusted in our God of Providence and went forward with hope.

Today, as Sisters of Providence, we are to be contemplatives in action, embracing our future with trust and hope. As our loving Father led Blessed Emilie and our Sisters before us, God will continue to lead us if we remain open and in unity with God's will, staying true to our charism and mission. During the COVID-19 pandemic I had the privilege to journey with our Sisters at Providence Centre, Edmonton. I have heard their pain and loneliness, especially when family members or Sisters living outside of Providence Centre could not visit, when loved ones were in the hospital and they could not visit them, and when loved ones died and they could not attend the funeral. In our world today, with so much unrest and injustice, many of our brothers and sisters are on the move looking for a safe place to call home. There are so many people in our world, even in our midst, suffering from loneliness, psychological, spiritual, and emotional pain. They are needing someone to be a compassionate presence who can listen to their story and with whom they can share their pain. Like Saint Joseph and the Holy family, we are called to be bearers of hope in an evolving world.



## ST JOSEPH, BEARER OF HOPE IN AN EVOLVING WORLD

by Mary Kaye Nealen, SP

Throughout Christianity St. Joseph has shown himself to be a hero of faith, wisdom, mercy, and justice. He has interceded for countless necessities such as healing for a sick person, fuel for a needy family's home, and protection during crises in the church. What impact did his life have beyond the few important details found in the gospels?

St. Joseph's ancestor, the patriarch Joseph, offers some insights pertinent to our theme "bearers of hope in an evolving world." We know that Joseph of the gospels suffered serious hardships as he followed God's will in his love for Mary and care for her and Jesus in a time of religious oppression. He remained faithful to God's word through every challenge. He hoped in God's guidance for the means to go forward, becoming a staunch helper for countless believers over the centuries.



How can the patriarch Joseph help us understand the gospel Joseph as a "bearer of hope"? Joseph in Exodus (37ff) came close to death at the

hands of his jealous brothers, but escaped to safety in Egypt. All the while, he trusted God and shared with the Egyptians his gifts of wisdom. When Joseph's brothers came during a famine to obtain food in Egypt, he went beyond blame and alienation to care for their needs and to be reconciled with them and their father.



How can this ancestor, the foster father of Jesus, illuminate our theme? Both Josephs, at great personal cost in difficult circumstances, hoped for guidance from the God who stays faithful to the divine promises. Both address in a merciful spirit the evolving challenges that God's will entails in daily life. And both use the gifts of God to reach out beyond difficulty and opposition to do good where it is most needed. St. Joseph, "bearer of hope in an evolving world," show us the way.

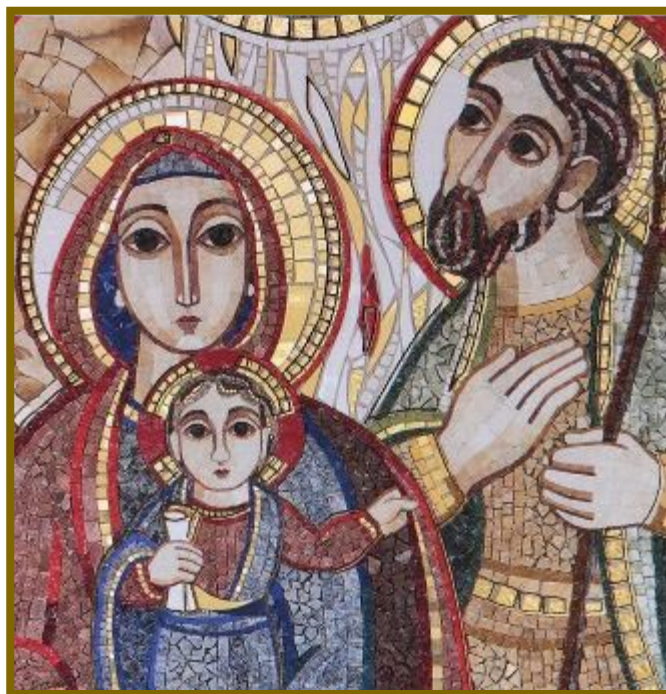


*Hortense Demia-Mbailaou, SP*  
*JPIC liaison to the*  
*General Leadership Team*

**Peace and joy to you in Providence.**

We, the Sisters of Providence, continue to consider JPIC (Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation) as a way of life, and we feel called to discern and transform our ways of being and acting in our daily lives. As citizens of this world infected and affected by the pandemic, we do not remain isolated, indifferent and insensitive to the suffering and clamour of the poor and the weeping of the planet. We are also aware of the importance of our daily actions to preserve the planet and to take care of the social aspect and needs of others as well as ourselves. Taking care of others and ourselves is of great importance in this time of global crisis, especially as the pandemic tends to cause us to drift apart.

Our greatest desire is to revitalize our relationships by seeking new ways to collaborate with each other across borders, with the Great Providence Family and to collaborate with other congregations that work for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of



Creation. This union will give us the energy and the creativity to mobilize ourselves more to help those most in need. Our desire for unity moves us to be One Body that loves, practices and witnesses justice, peace and the integrity of creation at all the levels of our life and of our mission.

By living our charism of compassion, we are called to listen deeply to the cries of afflicted





humanity. Our SP Mission binds us together in our common effort to act compassionately to alleviate the suffering of a wounded humanity.

Indeed, an ethics of caring is fundamental to living Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation, for it constitutes a source of hope and is an inspiration for all our actions. The weeping of our wounded earth calls for an urgent and deliberate response and taking care of our common home is both a call and a message of hope. Our commitment towards JPIC urges us to be *Artisans of Hope* in our afflicted and broken world, in the contexts in which we are living. In this, we follow the example of St. Joseph, the man of hope. This year is dedicated to St. Joseph, husband of the Virgin Mary,

protector and guardian of the Holy Family. Let us pray for the special grace to grow in love as a Providence Family. In fact, Pope Francis inaugurated on Saint Joseph's Day, March 19, the Year of "Amoris Laetitia Family" "Love in the Family" that will end on June 26, 2022. This Year of the family aims to reach out to all families in the world and invites them to grow in love. The experience of the pandemic has elicited the central role of the family and the importance of building family and communal bonds. A family life based on God and love can become a light for the world today. Let us celebrate love as a Providence Family and cultivate an ethics of kindness and openness that welcomes the new.

## The SP Mission

By Marie Émeline Ezami  
Atangana, SP



Social networks



Every beginning is difficult. The story of the miraculous catch of fish in the Gospel of St. Luke (5: 4-5) has profound implications for all those who, like Peter and his companions, have the

primary vocation to become fishers of men. Jesus said to Simon: "'Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.' When they brought their boats to the shore, they left everything and followed him." Lk 5:10b-11.

I, too, am called to cast my nets in deep waters rather than in shallow or warm waters. Indeed, Christ's call for me is to cast my nets in deep

water. This deep water is that of my multiple ministries. Among others, Vocation Ministry, my involvement in the Cartier Emilie team, one of our charitable organizations of which I am a secretary and member of the board of directors, and in spiritual animation at the Pavillion Providence of the Sisters of Providence Motherhouse..

I welcomed these ministerial assignments with an attitude of interior availability and following in Virgin Mary's footsteps. I cannot but say: "I am the handmaid of the Lord". At the same time, I confess that I shudder a little when I consider the importance of these different ministries and especially the expectations of a greater number of people in the process of broadcasting funerals on our Facebook page and the projection, using the Pavillion Providence's closed circuit, of spiritual activities, or any other activity proposed by the Provincial or General Councils.

This deep water is one of my multiple challenges related to our closed circuit sound system at Pavillion Providence as well as the sound system for recording and livestreaming the funerals via social media. The pandemic offered us this opportunity to continue our activities using the zoom platform. This is one of the reasons why the Vocation Ministry of which I am a member is currently done through our Facebook page called Pastorale



Vocationnelle Montréal where I can make the congregation known through all of its historical dates. In response to the orientation of the Sisters members of the vocation ministry committee, I make Jesus known and loved through a commentary on the word of God and I participate in the virtual meetings organized by Centre PRI (Intercommunity religious presence). The meetings with the members of the board of directors are done via zoom.

I am becoming more and more aware that virtual communication can be at the service of a culture of encounter. While respecting health measures and despite all my limitations in the face of the mastery of modern means of communication, how is it possible to be truly close to those to whom my ministries are dedicated? I find an answer in the parable of the Samaritan, which is also a parable about a communicator. The one who communicates indeed becomes close. And the Good Samaritan not only comes close, but he takes charge of this man whom he sees half-dead



on the side of the road. Jesus reverses the perspective; it is not a question of recognizing the other as my fellow man, but rather of my capacity to make myself like the other.

Today, we run the risk that certain media condition us to the point of making us ignore our true neighbour. It is not enough to pass along the digital roads, that is to say to be simply connected; the connection must be accompanied by a real encounter. In the current context of the pandemic, we are not able to live alone, "confined in body and mind" and withdrawn into ourselves. We need to love and be loved. Moreover, the world of media is no longer strange to the concern of communication for humanity. I wish with all my heart that the icon of the Good Samaritan, who heals the wounds of the wounded man by pouring oil and wine on them, will be our guide to revitalize our charism and our SP mission and adapt them to the current dimensions of our humanity.

Let us not be afraid to become citizens of the digital territory. The attention and presence of the Church are important in today's world, to dialogue with Internet users, to bring them to meet Christ: In a Church, a congregation of the Sisters of Providence... In the current Coronavirus context, the revolution of social networks is a great and exciting challenge, which requires dynamic energies and new

imagination to convey the beauty of God to others.

Through the pandemic, I have learned to be patient with myself, patient with my local community sisters, patient with my service colleagues, patient with the authorities, patient with the sound system when it does not work. I remain aware of my limitations and possibilities in manipulating the communications tools that are available to me to reach the world via the live-streaming and broadcasting of spiritual activities through the Pavillion Providence's closed circuit. I am convinced that the pandemic brings hope and that together we will succeed in demystifying these modern means of communication, encouraging each other rather than criticizing, judging and condemning the fruit of our efforts.

Every beginning is difficult.





## Holy Angels Province



Western Canada

### Year of St. Joseph in Holy Angels Province

Here is a project carefully prepared by Sister Margaret St. John,  
assisted by the Provincial Archivist, Diane Lamoureux,  
specifically for this edition.

In this year of St. Joseph, Holy Angels Province is pleased to share with you names and photos of Sisters with the name of Joseph, photos of our works/missions that were named after St. Joseph with additional information, and a photo of the St. Joseph statue today in the chapel at Providence Centre, Edmonton, where hundreds of people joined us each week to celebrate Eucharist (pre-Covid).

### Missions / Works / Residences

#### St. Joseph Mission / School, Blackfoot Crossing / Cluny, Alberta



St. Joseph School - Cluny, AB

St. Joseph Residential School in Blackfoot Crossing, Alberta and later in Cluny, Alberta. The Sisters first arrived in Blackfoot Crossing in December 1899 to operate a residential school for the Blackfoot children.

The first year there were only 10 children enrolled and numbers were slow to increase, in part because the children stayed at the mission all year round until 1911. The federal government opened a new school building in nearby Cluny in 1914 for the Sisters and the children. Enrollment increased steadily until 1965 when numbers reached 90 boarders and 329 day students.



St. Joseph Statue  
Providence Centre Chapel



The school year was spent in academics and learning general trades while summers were spent camping and attending various events around the province. Until 1934 when administration was turned over to the Oblates, the Sisters were financially responsible for the administration of the mission. This meant annual collection trips to see them through another year. When the Crowfoot School residence, as St. Joseph's School had been renamed, was closed in 1968 the Chief asked the Sisters to remain on the Reserve to visit the people and teach religion.

### **St. Joseph Residence, Cluny, Alberta**

St. Joseph Residence in Cluny, AB. The Sisters of Providence arrived in Blackfoot Crossing on December 19, 1899. The federal government opened a new residential school building in nearby Cluny in March 1914 and the Sisters and children moved from Blackfoot Crossing. The Sisters had the responsibility of financial administration until 1934. In 1968, the federal government closed the boarding school, which at some point had been renamed Crowfoot Residential School. The Chief asked the Sisters to remain on the Reserve to visit the people and teach them religion. Since that time there have been Sisters living on the Reserve and working with the people in various ways. Sister Yvette (Celine) Milette was the last Sister of Providence to work in Cluny. She left in 2000.



St. Joseph Hospital - Kenora, ON

### **St. Joseph Hospital, Kenora, Ontario**

Series documents the administration and operation of St. Joseph Hospital in Kenora, ON, formerly known as Rat Portage. The Sisters of Providence arrived in Kenora in 1902 and took charge of a four-storey brick edifice, only 50 feet square. The Sisters continued with their work with the poor during this time, in the form of home visits and care, and eventually in baptisms and conversions. In 1929, St. Joseph Hospital, which had been founded by the Mother House, was transferred to Holy Angels Province, to which it belonged until 1960, when it was transferred to St. Vincent de Paul Province. In 1968 St. Joseph Hospital merged with the Kenora General hospital to create the Lake of the Woods District Hospital.





St. Joseph Hospital - Grouard, AB

### St. Joseph Hospital, Grouard, Alberta

St. Joseph Hospital, in Grouard AB. St. Joseph Hospital opened in 1909 with only 18 beds. It continued to receive patients until it burned with most of the other mission buildings in 1933.



St. Joseph Hospital. Dawson Creek, BC. 1962

### St. Joseph Hospital, Dawson Creek, British Columbia

St. Joseph Hospital in Dawson Creek, British Columbia. St. Joseph Hospital was still under construction when the Sisters of Providence moved in on September 1, 1932, and was not officially opened until the end of November 1932. Staff was short, and St. Joseph Hospital

had no resident surgeon until 1936. Often the hospital relied on help from Grande Prairie, Alberta, 100 miles away. After the building of the Alaska Highway in 1942, the local population increased dramatically and by 1947, the 40-bed hospital had three doctors. A new 70-bed hospital was built in 1961 and enlarged to 100 beds in 1964. The sisters transferred ownership of the hospital in October 1973.



Here is a chart showing the Sisters of Providence in the province who have chosen to honor St. Joseph by their religious names. Some pictures follow in the next page:

Religious Name with Joseph	Years with Sisters
Joseph-Albert	1891-1937
Joseph-Onésime	1895-1849
Joseph-Anselme	1897-1961
Joseph-Napoléon	1911-1918
Joseph-Etienne	1919-1964
Joseph-Napoléon	1919-1995
Joseph-Wilfrid	1923-1951
Joseph-Omer	1929-1993
Adrien-Joseph	1934-1993
Joseph-Augustine	1934-1993
Alphonse-Joseph	1934-2001
Joseph-Herménégilde	1938-1987
Joseph-Gédéon	1941-2002
Joseph du Bon-Pasteur	1943-1967
Joseph-Vincent	1960-







Sister Adrien Joseph - St. Joseph Hospital,  
Kenora, ON



Sister Joseph-Wilfrid, Pharmacist at St. Paul's Hospital,  
Vancouver, BC. ca. 1944



Sister Elizabeth (Betty) Kaczmarczyk  
(Vincent-Joseph)



Sister Joseph-Vincent  
(Elizabeth Kaczmarczyk)



Sister Joseph-Napoléon with Joe (Joseph) at  
Providence Creche, Calgary. 1955





## Bernarda Morin Province



Chile, Argentina

### We begin the discernment process for the elections of the new Provincial Leadership.

*Provincial Communication Office*

With the formation and first meeting of the Discernment and Elections Committee in January, the Bernarda Morin Province begins the six month discernment process which seeks to

prepare us for the Chapter of Elections which will determine the new Provincial Leadership Team.

The general goal of the Committee is to motivate, prepare and guide the process of searching for the leaders that God Providence will call to serve in the coming years. The means and methodologies will encourage personal,

communal and provincial reflection.

In April, the Committee will hold a first Provincial Meeting in this regard, via videoconference in order to respect the quarantine in some cities and the social distancing. On this occasion, we will share a general view of the whole process, which will be facilitated by Sister Salomé Labra, member of the Congregation of Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit.

In addition, the chosen motto, *Ruah, breath of God within us*, will guide the reflection of these months. Also, the image or logo has been chosen. Through both of these, we seek to make clear in a graphic way the necessary disposition for active and attentive listening to the Spirit of God, in a personal and communitarian, reflective and intergenerational way.

We invite all the sisters of the Congregation to remain in prayer for our province, asking God's guidance and protection for us.



Ruah, breath of God within us -  
Discernment for the elections 2021

### The Elderly Sisters and people of the Province's works were immunized against the coronavirus.

*By the Communication office of the Province*

Under the vaccination program of the Chilean government, during February and March, the elderly Sisters of the Bernarda Morin Community, together with the Sisters

and staff of Campus Providencia who care for them, were able to receive the vaccine against COVID-19, thus easing somewhat the worries about this serious disease that has



The residents and staff of the Providencia Nursing Home in Valparaiso, the San Jose Nursing Home in Santiago and the Nuestra Señora de los Dolores Residence, located near our Provincial House, received the vaccine in February and March. "All the residents wanted to be vaccinated. Since the pandemic began, they have been asking God that the vaccine would be invented and arrive," says

already cost the lives of more than twenty thousand people in our country.

Lastenia Letelier, assistant director of the Providencia Nursing Home.

The vaccination process developed by the country's Ministry of Health is carried out gradually and progressively, according to the number of doses that arrive in Chile, and the fact of belonging to priority groups. Fortunately, most of the Sisters of our Province have been immunized now. We are also grateful that the vaccination process has reached the residents and staff of the nursing homes of the Bernarda Morin Foundation and of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores Residence.

We also thank God that the vaccination process is already reaching the teachers of the educational establishments in Chile, considering that 11 primary and secondary schools, as well as two kindergartens, are administered through different Foundations in our Province.

In Chile, during the first quarter of this year, they expected to vaccinate around 5 million people, which is equivalent to almost 27% of the total population of the country. We pray





that these figures have been reached and that during the first half of 2021, we can move towards the immunization of 80% of the population, which is a necessary step to returning to normalcy.

We pray for the families who have suffered the loss of a loved one, as well as for all the deceased Sisters of our Congregation. May our sorrows turn to joys as we continue to trust in God's Providence and receive Mary's consolation.

## Mother Joseph Province



United States, El Salvador, Philippines

### Making the most of life in lockdown at St. Joseph Residence

*by Anita Wilkins, Communication Director*



Caregiver blessing in SJR lobby

Sisters of Providence are accustomed to community life, which, with spirituality and ministry, forms the foundation of the congregation. But community life hasn't been the same since COVID. As vaccines roll out, however, so does a sense of relief – along with

the anticipation of reconnecting in person and sharing hugs!

The pandemic has been particularly challenging for those who live in community. While there is no central Mother House where





all the sisters of Mother Joseph Province reside, many live in communal arrangements such as a shared home or a building with individual rooms and shared gathering spaces.

St. Joseph Residence (SJR) in West Seattle has been housing retired Sisters of Providence since 1966. Today it is home to 38 Sisters of Providence and religious women of other congregations, as well as a number of laywomen. SJR offers independent and supportive living as well as a floor dedicated to skilled nursing services for those who require more advanced care.

From the beginning, the pandemic hit eldercare facilities particularly hard. St. Joseph Residence took preventive measures early on, putting infectious disease protocols in place, closing the building to all visitors, adjusting group dining and making Mass virtual. This was also the case at Emilie Court, the supportive housing facility where sisters live in Spokane.



Sisters Beverly Dunn and Fidela Adriano

While sisters at Emilie Court have continued to be confined to their rooms due to the protocols for their facility, independent-living sisters at SJR have had a bit more leeway.

During lockdown, the sisters at SJR have found safe and creative ways to stay engaged, connect across distance and keep their spirits up. As Sister Mary Kaye Nealen, SJR community co-leader says, "For a place that's locked down, there's a lot of interest in activities. It's alive and busy."

Program Coordinator Lisa

Kumar works with Sister Mary Kaye and Sister Helen Brennan, the other co-leader, to offer opportunities for community outreach, social justice advocacy, creative projects, education, games and celebrations of all kinds.

Added technical capabilities have enabled activities that used to be held in person to be adapted to a virtual format. Sisters can view live events on televisions in their rooms and follow along with provided materials. Mass, renewals of vows, funerals, Stations of the Cross, retreats, community



meetings and more are now available remotely.

"One of the toughest activities to replicate safely is outdoor walks – and the sisters are anxious for the freedom to leave the limited courtyard area for a neighborhood walk," explains Sister Mary Kaye.

All the sisters are anticipating the day when visitors are once again permitted at SJR, Mass is held in the chapel, and mealtime draws a crowd. Yet still they carry on with gratitude for what they have right now – especially the COVID vaccine.

The day of the second vaccine at SJR was particularly celebratory, with a blessing from the sisters for caregivers administering the shots and festive party accessories provided by the caregivers for the sisters afterwards.

With trust in God's care and peace in their hearts, the Sisters of Providence at SJR look forward to a brand-new day.



Sisters Josie Ramac and Helen Brennan

### Some quotes from Sisters of Providence while receiving the vaccine

⇒ God gifted us with limitless creativity and imagination. Wherever we are, God is, and where God is, all will be well, and all manner of things will be well. God, protect and guide those who strive to find a cure, that we may conquer the disease and restore communities to wholeness and health. - Josie Ramac, SP

⇒ We "blessed" the team who came with the vaccine. The woman who administered my shot said how happy she was to

receive the "blessing." They were fantastic! They provided crowns, stickers and balloons to recipients. - Helen Brennan, SP

⇒ In gratitude to God, I deeply appreciate all those involved in making these vaccines available for us to be safe and be peacefully confident. Thanks a million. - Ann Mary Vu, SP

⇒ I thank God that I belong to a Community that believes in blessing us with good





health, and vaccinations are one of those blessings. - Lucy Villanova, SP

⇒ I am grateful to receive the vaccination ... thankful to our Creator for the gifts given to our scientists and healthcare people to administer it. - Fidela Adriano, SP

⇒ Receiving the first vaccine on Christmas Eve morning was a wonderful Christmas present. Now, receiving the second one in January makes me even more grateful, especially to the Providence leaders and caregivers who made this possible. May everyone be protected soon! - Mary Kaye Nealen, SP

## Émilie-Gamelin Province



Eastern Canada and United States,  
Haiti, Cameroon and Egypt



## Gratitude and Community

*Sister Patricia (Pat) McKittrick lives and works in the United States, more precisely, in the state of Vermont. She is very involved in community and parish life in Winooski and here she shares with us about one of the community activities in which she participates.*

### What is gratitude?

According to the dictionary, it is the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.

It seems that 2020 and the beginning of 2021 have been filled with challenges for everyone. Are there opportunities or blessings found within these same challenges? I believe there are. As I look back over the past year, I am

aware of the difficulties that the pandemic brought for everyone. Hard to believe a year ago we were desperate to find toilet paper and hand sanitizer. We were isolated and missing our families, friends, co-workers.

### What have I seen and what am I grateful for?

As time went on, I saw people pulling together to help each other. A new group





started in Winooski, *Neighbors Helping Neighbors*. Their motto is: "Solidarity Not Charity, Zero-Barriers and No Questions Asked." Find out more about this amazing group of volunteers. Everyone has gifts. What are your gifts? How do you contribute to the community? On the other hand, do you have unmet needs? Learn more about WMA (Winooski Mutual Aid) <https://www.winooskimutualaid.org/> Look for them on Facebook/Instagram.

Many studies show that gratitude affects our lives. It is not a one-and-done activity.

It is a regular practice. How can we nurture gratitude in our lives? As I searched the Internet, I found simple ways to help us practice gratitude:

- ⇒ Start a gratitude journal. Each day, jot down three things for which you are grateful.
- ⇒ Take a gratitude break at work or school.
- ⇒ Name people that you are grateful for and why. Just a few minutes will brighten someone's day and will make you feel better.
- ⇒ Volunteer in your community, in or out of school.
- ⇒ Write little "Thank You Notes". Everyone needs to feel appreciated.

- ⇒ Buy local. Let our local businesses know how much you appreciate them.
- ⇒ We have such a variety in Winooski—flowers, restaurants, diverse markets and so much more.
- ⇒ Let those who serve us regularly know we appreciate them. People who often work behind the scenes: Librarians, Firefighters, Police officers, Crossing guards, etc.
- ⇒ A thank you to Anne Linton for putting together an interesting monthly newsletter.

Mostly, I am grateful for a diverse and active community. I am looking forward to a time when we can reconnect, have coffee hours and community suppers, and share our stories. Stay strong, healthy, and safe!





# *Initial SIP* Entrances, vows *Formation*

## Temporary Profession of Vows

On January 30<sup>th</sup>, our Sisters Manise Augustin and Milineda Brice made their Temporary Profession of Vows in Emilie-Gamelin Province. In this article they share

with us their joy and gratitude for being called to walk in the footsteps of Blessed Emilie.

"For you drew me forth from the womb, made me safe at my mother's breast. Upon you I was thrust from the womb; since my mother bore me you are my God" Ps. 22:10-11. This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice in it and be glad, says the psalmist in Psalm 118: 24. God, in infinite tenderness, has leaned towards us; God calls us to collaborate in the Mission.

It is with our hearts filled with joy and gratitude that we have responded to this call. We said yes to the Lord by our solemn commitment to live the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience in



First Profession of Manise Augustin and Milineda Brice, January 30, 2021, at the Parish of Saint-Louis Roi de France, Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

the great Providence Family, following the example of Blessed Emilie Gamelin, our foundress.

This is an unforgettable

day for us as it marks our official entry as full members of the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence.

We are very happy to collaborate in the Providence Mission, to respond to the needs of our brothers and sisters with whom we are called to minister by revealing the mystery of Providence and the compassion of Our Mother of Sorrows.

We thank God Providence, who in God's merciful love never ceases to journey with us, from the beginning of our entry into the Community until today. God has taken care of us, watched over us and given us the strength





and patience to move forward in trust and total surrender.

Heartfelt thanks to all our Sisters who, from far and near, have given their time and energy to make this day memorable for us. We are fortunate to have you on our path; may God bless each one of you.

We humbly ask the Lord to continue to shape us, so that we may fulfill the mission God has entrusted to us with the people of our society.

May God accompany us, guide us in all our tasks, give us wisdom and availability so that we fulfill our responsibilities in the best way."

*Providence of God, I believe in you.*

*Providence of God, I hope in you.*

*Providence of God, I love you with all my heart.*

*Providence of God, I thank you for all.*

*Amen*



Sisters of Providence present in Haiti, accompanied by the concelebrants of the ceremony.



## *Temporary Vows*



Manise Augustin  
Port-au-Prince, Haiti  
January 30, 2021

Milineda Brice  
Port-au-Prince, Haiti  
January 30, 2021

