

# *Providence Missive*

*A publication of the Sisters of Providence*

**COMPUTER GRAPHICS, PRINTING AND DISTRIBUTION:** Nadia Bertoluci

To communicate & send an article or comments:

[nbertoluci@providenceintl.org](mailto:nbertoluci@providenceintl.org)

Online copy :

<http://www.providenceintl.org/fr/missiveprovidence.php>

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.

**OFFICE:**

Providence International Centre

12055, Grenet Street

MONTREAL QC H4J 2J5

Tel.: 514 334-9090

FAX: 514 334-1620

<http://www.providenceintl.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/providenceintl1843/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgwyhZJL5r0owWh32XJr1w>

**EDITING AND GRAPHIC DESIGN:**

The Communication Office of the General Administration:

Nancy Arévalo, SP, General Councillor, Nadia Bertoluci, Communication and Information Agent, Perla Moore, Assistant and Guy Richard, IT informatic., Malka Irina Acosta Padilla, Translator

**REDACTION :**

In collaboration with the General Leadership Team and provincial contributors.

**PROOFREADING :**

Kathryn Rutan, SP, Gloria Keylor, SP, Karin Dufault, SP, Isabel Cid, SP, Alba Letelier, SP, Madeleine Coutu, SP, Berthe-Alice Collette, SP and Mónica Ruscitti

**TRANSLATION :**

Malka Irina Acosta Padilla and Mónica Ruscitti

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*Dear Sisters,*

Sister Karin Dufault  
during the Christmas  
celebration at the  
Providence  
International Center  
with Lawrence D.-  
Houle



## Harvesting the fruits of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Emilie's Beatification and its influence to this day

Entering into the Christmas Season and approaching the end of 2021, I greet you with peace, hope and gratitude for all the blessings we have received during this year. Yes, blessings are present even as we continue to live with the reality that the Covid-19 pandemic still affects our world and us. Let us share with each other the blessings that we do see and experience and let us give thanks.

2021 marked the 20th Anniversary of the beatification of our beloved foundress, Mother Emilie Tavernier-Gamelin. Celebrating that special event in many different ways throughout the year brought us many blessings. We learned so much about our history through the articles provided in Providence Life, Missive, Providence Associate Bulletin and Echoes of Emilie including the ministry responses of Mother Gamelin and Sisters of Providence through the ages. These stories inspire us with strength, courage and trust in Providence as we serve the many persons who are in need during our current

pandemic. We are especially grateful to Sister Yvette Demers for all the historical research she has shared with us this year.

What joy we experienced when we gathered as a congregation on Zoom on September 24, 2021, to celebrate the Anniversary of the Beatification of Emilie Gamelin and relive that precious October 7, 2001 day. Sister Yvette provided us with background information before we viewed the interesting video on the Cause of Blessed Emilie produced by the talented colleagues of the Providence International Centre. We were delighted to hear from sisters in each of the provinces about their experiences of Blessed Emilie and the celebration of her Beatification.

In this edition of Missive, we will share some additional fruits of our times, harvested from our 20th Anniversary celebration and shared by some of our sisters, Providence Associates and ministry colleagues. May what you read motivate you to share the fruits that you have experienced in your own life and the life of our Congregation. →

## Editorial

For me personally, celebrating the anniversary fanned the flame of my love for Blessed Emilie and her legacy of the Providence Mission and Charism that is so relevant for our times. We have been reminded of the joys and sorrows that Emilie and her daughters, Mother Bernarda and Mother Joseph, experienced as well as the love they shared among themselves. So many of the joys and sorrows they experienced are the same that we experience today. They have bequeathed to us their trust in Providence and their love and care for persons who are poor. It is comforting to know that they continue to be with us and to guide us.

Like many of you, I have experienced disappointment that the Covid-19 pandemic and its related complications have significantly slowed progress on the advancement of the Cause of Blessed Emilie, both at the diocesan and the Vatican levels. However, this year of celebration has reinforced for me how active Blessed Emilie continues to be in the lives of our sisters, Associates, colleagues and people throughout the world as evidenced by the many letters of gratitude sent to the Office of the Cause for favors obtained. We pray and trust that in God's good time, Emilie will be canonized so that her life story can inspire God's people to care, with the love of Christ, for those who are poor and suffering in our world. In the meantime, we seek to model Christ's love in our words and actions.

Thank you for your part in making Blessed Emilie Gamelin known and, most of all, for walking in her footsteps by your living of the Providence Mission.

The anniversary of Emilie's beatification reminds us of our deep connection with the universal church. We can imagine how Blessed Emilie would have responded to Pope Francis' October, 2021, launching of the two-year global consultation process leading to the 2023 Synod on Synodality. The theme of the Synod is: "For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission". Pope Francis encourages us to participate in the synodal path by striving to "become experts in the art of encounter." We are invited to enter into this process, not only within our congregations, but in our parishes and ministries where we "encounter, listen, and discern" with the people of God and especially with those persons who are most in need. (Pope Francis homily, Oct 19, 2021).

Let our participation be in the spirit of Blessed Emilie, our model for encountering those who are poor and vulnerable. Doing this is an excellent way of preparing for our 2022 General Chapter.

I close with the prayer that Sister Yvette Demers, SP, shared with us during our congregational Zoom gathering on September 24, 2021, as we celebrated together the 20th



Anniversary of the Beatification of our beloved foundress.

“All these caregivers, volunteers and people with such generous hearts need models. For this reason, we continue to implore heaven that we may obtain from the Church the prompt Canonization of Blessed Emilie

Tavernier-Gamelin and be able to present her as a model for all Christians who are committed to the service of their brothers and sisters throughout the world.”

Affectionately with Christmas Blessings,

*Karin Dufault SP*  
Congregational Leader



Let us pray together for this grand intention:



*God Providence, hear the prayer we present to you through the intercession of Our Mother of Sorrows and Saint Vincent de Paul.*

*You know that our 21st century world is suffering difficult times due to the pandemic, war, instability....*

*We entrust all these sufferings to the one who desired to be attentive to all human misery:*

*Emilie Tavernier-Gamelin.*

*On this the 20th anniversary of her beatification, grant that she may, through the proclamation of her holiness, be given as a model to all caregivers and believers throughout the world.*

*Acknowledging our unworthiness, we humbly ask this favor for your greater glory and the salvation of the whole world. Amen.*



*Merry Christmas*

*Happy New Year!*

By Carmel of Reno - Sister Sa Ra, OCD -

*M*ay we, on our journey to birthing new life in Christ, embrace our broken world with Peace, Joy, Love and Hope.

*Karin, sp.*

*Rellander, s.p.*

*Joan L., sp.*

*Hortense, s.p.*

*Nancy A., sp.*

*Annette, s.p.*



# Special *SP* Report

*Experiences, reflections*



20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beatification of Emilie Gamelin  
Gathering the fruits of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beatification of Emilie  
Gamelin and its influence to this day.

Here are testimonies from Sisters of Providence and Providence  
Associates, who have accepted to share the impact of the beatification of  
Emilie Gamelin in their lives.

REMEMBERING THE BEATIFICATION OF EMILIE GAMELIN AND HER INFLUENCE ON MY LIFE

by Susanne Hartung, SP



Joyful anticipation filled us as we prepared for our travels to Rome in October 2001. Our Emilie would be recognized around the world as a model for the sacred life. My two sisters, Elaine and Mary Claire joined me on this journey of Beatification.

That joy quickly turned to fear. The unforgettable 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States took place just weeks before our travels. Although initially hesitant, my sisters and I continued our plans to join the pilgrimage, relying on our Provident God.

The Beatification was overwhelming with crowds and excitement. I was thrilled to reconnect once again with Sister Marta from Chile and the other Chileans whom I knew from my travels there. I remember so well the blessing the Pope bestowed on Carolyn Koreski, SP, as he passed her in his popemobile as well as the presentation of Sister Thérèse Frigon to the Holy Father. I remember thinking what a thrill and satisfaction it was to see her many years of dedication to the cause of Emilie finally realized.



I recall looking up into the crystal blue sky that day, seated among thousands. My thoughts turned to worry. Would there be an attack on this crowd, larger than any stadium event?

Days following the Beatification, the United States did a preemptive strike on Afghanistan leading us to war. Being away from family during this turbulent time was foremost on the minds of my two sisters. We had planned to visit our relatives in Austria after Rome but decided it best to return home. Despite the worries, our memories of these days were filled with experiences of community and inspiration.

What I did not know at the time was the influence Emilie Gamelin would have on my life in the following 20 years. I read Emilie Tavernier-Gamelin authored by Denise Robillard and The Table of the King by Katherine Burton several times. I wanted to know every detail of Emilie's

life. These readings enriched my understanding of this amazing and courageous woman and filled me with great insights that I have shared with 20 Providence leadership teams during Montreal pilgrimages.

Emilie's life is such a testament to a relationship with God that one can only envy. Her faith provided her the ability to meet every challenge with reliance on that relationship and the strength that was given through her own spirituality. I continue to tell her story many times a year and continue to be inspired by her depth of suffering, her abundant love for the poor, and her steadfast dedication to serving every person with dignity and compassion.

Finally, I attribute my own miracle, surviving life-threatening cancer six years ago to Emilie's intervention and grace. She motivates me daily to serve others with an abundance of love.

## REFLECTING ON THE LIFE OF BLESSED EMILIE TAVERNIER GAMELIN

by Mary Anne Sladich-Lantz



*"I do not seek to follow in the footsteps of those of old. I seek the things they sought."*

– Wandering Japanese poet, Basho

I first came to know about the life of Emilie Gamelin in the early '80s. I was immediately struck by all the ways in which she was compelled to bring God's healing love into a world wounded by poverty, loneliness,





disease, division, sorrow, and unrest. My curiosity about what made this woman tick only increased over time. To this day, she has challenged me with her words and has inspired me with her actions. She has called me, throughout my life, to “seek the things she sought.”

The first time I visited the museum at the Sisters of Providence Motherhouse in Montreal, I was shown the display which included Emilie's wedding ring and the leather pouch that held locks of her children's hair. Apparently, she wore her wedding ring underneath the ring of her religious profession, and she secretly carried that small leather pouch with her throughout her life. At that moment, Emilie became real. It dawned on me that this woman, who was a wife and a mother and a Daughter of Charity, Servant of the Poor knew what it meant to feel love so deeply that it couldn't be contained or felt only inside of her. She had no choice but to let that love flow out from her in bold, simple service.

I can recall countless stories shared over time that have given me, and many others, an insight into what it was that Emilie Gamelin sought. From a very early age, it was evident that she had a profound concern for those who were poor. While some of that was

modeled for her by her parents, Emilie was able to see each person in need as the presence of God in her midst. To serve another is to serve God. Every encounter with another person, no matter their circumstance, is always sacred and is always a way to share God's love.

The name “Providence” says it all. For Emilie, there was always a sense that Providence, God, would be with her to guide her work and to give her strength. Trusting Providence allowed Emilie to take on the work at hand, as challenging as it might be, with faith, tenacity, and flexibility. “Fear nothing. Providence will provide.” Providence was active in and through Emilie so much so that she became Providence for those around her. With all humility, she sought to be the human hands and the human face of God in the world.

Whenever I am in Montreal, I make a pilgrimage to the statue of Emilie Gamelin standing in the Berri-UQAM metro station adjacent to Place Emilie-Gamelin. There I place my hand in hers as a ritual praying that I have the grace and strength to seek what she sought.





## BEATIFICATION OF MOTHER GAMELIN

by Gloria Keylor, SP



L. to R.: Sister Gloria Keylor, Sister Fernande Thibault, SNDD, Father James M. FitzPatrick, O.M.I., Bishop Jean-Claude Turcotte with Pope Saint John Paul II

It was a beautiful, warm autumn day in early October when many Sisters of Providence and friends of Providence gathered in the morning in St. Peter’s Square in Rome in anticipation of the beatification ceremony of Mother Emilie Gamelin.

What an honour to be part of the group wearing bright yellow scarves that distinguished us in the crowd. Emilie was among six others being beatified that day but for all of us watching she was the most beautiful as her banner was unfurled and she was there on the facade of St. Peter’s Basilica. Like the disciples on the way to Emmaus “our hearts were burning within us” at the joy of the moment.

When Pope John Paul II came out, he was wearing the green chasuble that the Sisters of Providence and another community had ordered, made especially for the occasion and given to him as a gift. The Holy Father was an elderly man then but still his kindly eyes received each person with care and compassion.

The deaf Sisters of Our Lady of Seven Dolours, were fully participants in the celebration; the ministry to deaf persons was one of the last works that Mother Gamelin instituted. Her humility, simplicity and charity were evident in all aspects of the celebration.

Emilie Gamelin was a woman loved by her community; many Sisters, Associates and other friends shared their gifts and talents to make this celebration possible. It was so moving to think that this was the culmination of over 40 years of perseverance on the part of Sister Therese Frigon and that she was there to witness the moment.

The following day when Cardinal Jean-Claude Turcotte of Montreal celebrated the Eucharist especially for us in St. Peter’s Basilica on the altar before the magnificent Glory of Bernini, with our own Sisters making up the choir, it was truly a final tribute to now Blessed Emilie Gamelin.

## THE SEED PLANTED BY EMILIE GAMELIN

by German Vidal, PA

The beatification of Emilie Gamelin holds a significant and important meaning for me because the life of a holy woman like her, a life of dedication and service to others, asking for nothing in return, reminds me of my own mother's life.

I was born into a middle-class professional family. My father was a mathematics teacher and my mother was dedicated to raising her 12 children. Life went along normally until my father passed away suddenly at the age of 48. My mother faced then the very difficult reality of raising and supporting her 12 children without any income or government assistance. From the comfortable and spacious house we lived in, we had to move to a small three-room apartment in a poor neighborhood full of simple and supportive people, but whose customs and habits were different from ours. It was a hard and sometimes cruel change. Food became scarce but, thank God, it was never lacking. The older siblings had to abandon their studies and go out to work.

How was my mother able to keep going in this new and terrible scenario? With a lot of



My mother's name is Laura Pérez Leyton (1907–1981). This is a picture of my mother's card from the Sociedad Protectora de Animales de Valparaíso, Chile.

faith, discipline, tenacity, and immense love for her daughters and sons. My mother, whose mother was an orphan (my maternal grandmother had died during childbirth), was raised by the Sisters of Providence of Valparaíso until she was 17 years old when she left home to continue her studies and then get married. The formation she received for almost 17 years with the Sisters of Providence left a deep impression on her: an enormous faith, a love of solidarity towards the poorest and neediest, perseverance in the face of adversity, and a foolproof honesty. In the neighborhood, she was known for giving food (from the little we had) to homeless children or adults and for



giving water to the gypsies (who camped in uninhabited places close to our home every summer), etc.

Once 10 her children had married and started their families, my mother dedicated her “free” time to community projects. She was one of the founders of the Sociedad Protectora de Animales de Valparaiso (Valparaiso Animal Protection Society), and later became Secretary of the Asociación Provincial de Jubilados y Montepiadas de Valparaiso (Valparaiso Provincial Association of Retirees and Government Pension Beneficiaries). Her experience in managing groups (her own family of 12 children) aided only by her

enthusiasm, faith, and perseverance was a great contribution to these two community organizations in which she participated until her death, in 1981.

As a former teacher, I often wonder if all my teachings for nearly 31 years (in Canada) left something positive in my former students. When I learned the story of Emilie Gamelin and my mother’s formation with the Sisters of Providence in Valparaiso, I could easily conclude that the seed of Emilie Gamelin was not blown away by the wind; on the contrary, it found fertile soil in many places and countries of the planet. I can bear witness to this miracle.

REAPING THE BENEFITS OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE BEATIFICATION OF EMILIE GAMELIN  
by Annette Aspirot, SP and Pierrette Drapeau, SP



This Quebec woman has impressed many generations. More than ever, she attracts crowds, families, young women. She has given the confidence, the joy of living, and renewed faith to so many brothers and sisters. It is a page of history

that continues to be written in the hearts of some and others. Is this not the most beautiful heritage from which we are reaping the most beautiful fruits today?

What strikes the imagination is beyond comprehension. Is it not a phenomenon that is more and more present: the response of the young recruits of our Congregation, these dynamic women, eager for an ever more promising development? At all times and in all places, these young people are committed to making God’s dream ever-present. Blessed are those who move heaven and earth and who spread the fruits of their convictions in every



direction, leading others to the best realities inspired by an impulse of love.

Mother Gamelin is becoming more and more present! People ask us: "What community are you from? Sisters of Providence. Ah ... the daughters of Mother Gamelin! My mother trusted her completely and often prayed to her." Since her beatification, when she was given to the Church, she is more and more known. Many visitors have registered in the book near the chapel of the Mother House, affirming their great trust in this woman who transcends ages and borders. She was always close to the humble and the little ones. Her beatification means an awakening of fervor

and trust for our contemporaries. Many have asked for the honor of naming places of worship, meeting rooms, and charities after Emilie Gamelin or have given her name to their children.

*Yes, Emilie, you still speak to our hearts!*

People here and everywhere are making you known and loved. This is undoubtedly the best way to continue to follow in your footsteps by witnessing through prayer, unity, welcome, and love of the poor. May people everywhere be able to say:

*See how they love each other!*

## 20 YEARS ALREADY!

by Jeannine Laurin, PA

On October 7, 2001, as a Providence Associate, I had the immense joy of attending the beatification of Emilie Tavernier Gamelin of which I have a moving memory. For me, Emilie was a friend, a sister. We were from the same neighborhood, 100 years apart: she was born in the Plateau-Mont-Royal\* and raised in Old Montreal\* while I was born in Old Montreal and raised in the Plateau.

I cannot express how proud I was to see Emilie's giant portrait on the facade of St. Peter's Square in Rome. Just imagine, a little girl from my neighborhood in Montreal, being declared blessed by Pope John Paul III! I had a great deal of devotion and admiration for Emilie before that moment, but from that day

forward, I felt connected to H e a v e n directly. It was as if I had s u d d e n l y deepened my understanding of h e r m e s s a g e : H U M I L I T Y , S I M P L I C I T Y ,

A N D C H A R I T Y . I remembered that she used to say she saw the Lord in every person, since he was in the depths of every heart. I then connected her words with the answer in the catechism: God is everywhere. I realized that



when I speak to someone, whether they are good or bad, I am speaking to God, so I must be careful how I am speaking. Since then, I have not forgotten this principle: every person who speaks to me has God in them. Emilie is a

saint for me, a humane woman, and a great lady. She accompanies me every day and helps me to grow old serenely.

\* Neighborhoods of Montreal

EMILIE ENCOURAGES US TO BE CARRIERS OF LIGHT AND HOPE

by Gloria Garcia, SP



To celebrate 20 years since the beatification of our beloved foundress Emilie Tavernier Gamelin is to continue to value and give new life to the loving presence of Providence

God and the compassion of Mary, Mother of Sorrows. Emilie so sweetly welcomed these gifts in her heart and she knew how to transmit them with charity, humility and simplicity to each of her daughters, we Sisters of Providence. Today we can make them present in the Church of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Emilie opened her shelter of love, widening her gaze to welcome poor people and treated them like kings at her table; she shared her basket of charity so that everyone could satisfy their hunger for God. Mother Emilie, your long walks leave traces in the streets of Montreal

and today they have reached the different countries where we, your daughters, are with the Providence Associates who share our charism and spirituality.

A house of Providence, born of your compassionate and faithful heart, is a house of charity that gives the bread of wheat but also the bread of love, the bread of culture, the bread of health, the bread of welcome, the bread of Life.

Emilie, initiator of this work of love, please invigorate our hopes and our desire to serve, opening our hearts each day to the inspirations of your heart that was born in the heart of God's Providence and of Mary, Mother of Sorrows. Strengthen our energies so that there may be many Tables of the King in the world, many schools for children thirsting for God's love, social works and spiritual accompaniment, health centers and support for women, the elderly, immigrants, the vulnerable, and also for the protection of creation.

As we approach the birth of Jesus, the purest and sweetest love, please redouble our yearnings for compassionate charity and



encourage us to be bearers of light and hope for the most disadvantaged people of society in these times of cruel pandemic, which has marked so many homes in the world with deep sorrow. We are bearers of the Providence flame together with the Associates and collaborators. May our hearts burn with love

and generous dedication with as much passion as you had together with Bernarda and Joseph in the beginnings of our institute and that today keeps our charism and mission alive.

Thank you very much, Mother Emilie, for so much love!

THE VEIL IS LIFTED, HER PEACEFUL FACE IS SHOWN TO THE WORLD AND  
SHE IS DECLARED BLESSED

by Juanita Tapia, PA

It is with joy and concern that I received the invitation to reflect on the 20th anniversary of the beatification of Emilie Gamelin and her influence until today. I keep asking myself why me as I recall that beautiful October 7, and I hear the voice of the Holy Father: Emilie Tavernier Gamelin. The veil is lifted, her peaceful face is shown to the world and she is declared Blessed. It brought, and still does to this day, such emotion and joy, shared by the sisters and lay people who were there. As pilgrims of Emilie, despite our different birthplaces and languages, we were in communion. For me, the emotion was even greater, not only did I share that moment with sisters and laypeople from all the provinces, I was there with my daughter Patricia, who for me will always be a Sister of Providence.

Time has passed and Emilie has never stopped walking with me. I can assure you that many graces and favors have been granted through



Patricia Tapia, s.p. (deceased) with her mother Juanita and Gloria Keylor, s.p.

her intercession to those who come to her after knowing her life and work; I have never stopped talking about her.



When I first learned of Mother Emilie's life, I wept for her, but then I thought that her pain did not bring her down. She had the strength and courage to undertake the great mission of founding the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence and to transmit to her sisters the love, fidelity and charity towards the neighbor according to the different needs of that time.

Today everything has changed; technology allows us to communicate easily worldwide and to see the needs, not only of the people around us. Pain, abandonment, hunger, and poverty, especially today, seem closer to us. What would Mother Emilie do today? Her courage becomes present, her way of looking at her suffering brothers and sisters as she had suffered ... my way and answer are to be truthful and transparent like her.

I had the joy of knowing the places where Emilie began her great work: the Yellow House, the work of the Soup kitchen, etc. It is too long to enumerate all that she did! That is why my commitment and that of the Chilean PA

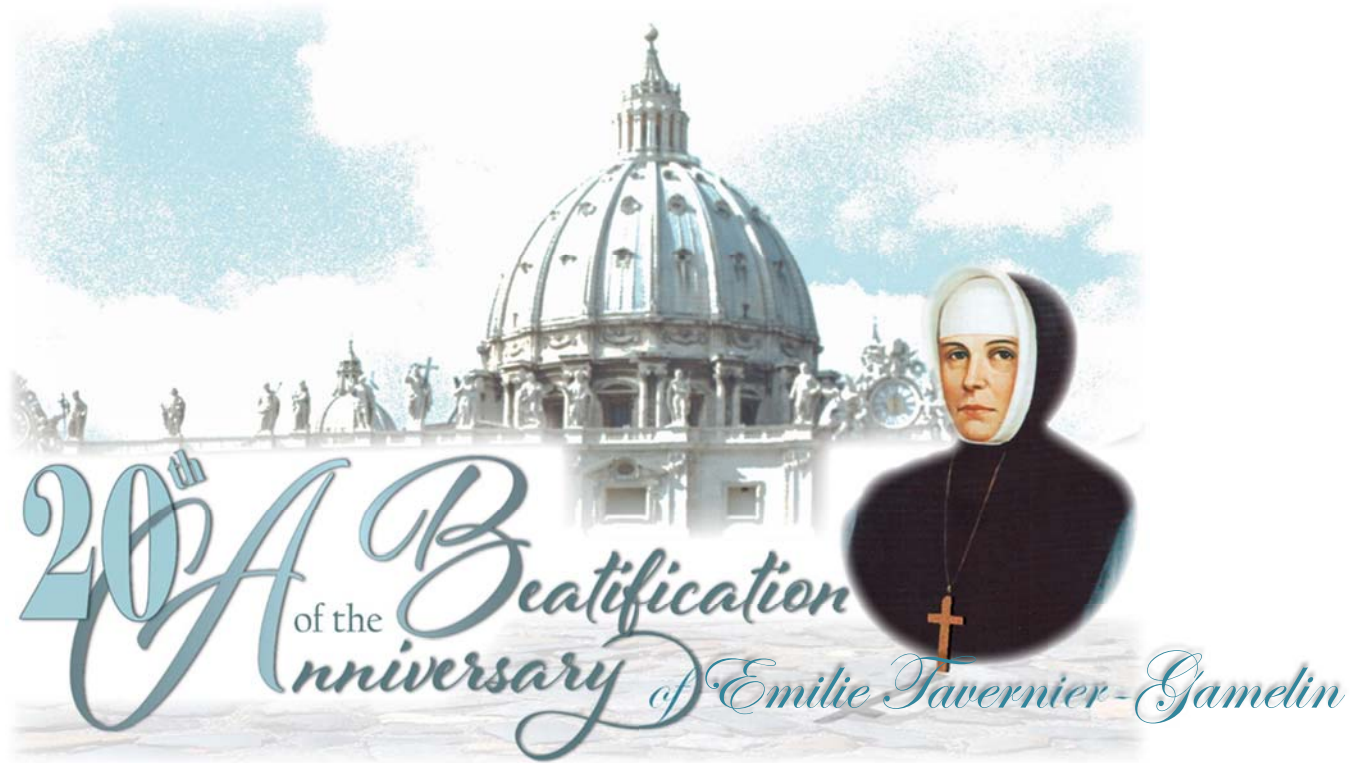
community to which I belong, Emilie Gamelin, is always to be attentive to serve with joy and be welcoming, in the light of our own lives. It is difficult for me to speak in the first person if I speak of Emilie. I am part of the PA community that bears her name and we are a community that is continually being shaped in the light of her life.

I trust Emilie and like her, I also trust our Mother of Sorrows. Two women pierced by pain in whom love for humanity was stronger and who today are present in my life to help me walk in pursuit of the good of others.

I can say that Emilie is my friend, she always accompanies me; like her, I have suffered painful losses and I go on. Why? I go on because there is always someone who needs a word of hope or encouragement, affection, attention, or comfort. To let others know that I care about them, to look at them with the eyes of God as my daughter Patricia told me many times to do, which I do not doubt that she learned from our Blessed Emilie.







## Thanksgiving for these years of blessings!

The practice of jubilees has its origin in the Old Testament and has continued throughout the history of the Church. Jesus of Nazareth, having gone one day to the synagogue of his city, stood up to read (cf. Lk 4:16–30). He was given the scroll of the prophet Isaiah, from which he read the following passage: “The spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord has anointed me; He has sent me to bring good news to the afflicted, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, release to the prisoners, to announce a year of favor from the Lord” (61:1–2).

Canonizations and beatifications have multiplied in recent years. They show the vitality of the local Churches, which today are much more numerous than in the first centuries and the first millennium. They show the omnipotent presence of the Redeemer through the fruits of

faith, hope, and charity in people of so many languages and races who have followed Christ in the various forms of Christian vocation.

The jubilee is always a time of special graces, “a day blessed by the Lord”: as such, it has a joyful character and our songs of thanksgiving flow forth in remembrance of the blessings that God-Providence has poured out upon us on during these special anniversaries.





Twenty years ago, on October 7, 2001, many of us had the great joy of attending the beatification ceremony of our foundress, Emilie Tavernier Gamelin, in Rome. It was a day of joy, filled with blessings, which have continued over the years.

We recall here, some of them among many others that have been granted to us:

### **2001-2021. New vocations**

One of the promising fruits for our Congregation, following the beatification, is without doubt, the blossoming of new vocations. More than 85 young women have asked to join the Congregation and have made their profession of vows between 2001 and today. They are mainly from Haiti, the Philippines, Chile, Egypt, Cameroon, Vietnam, Western Canada, and the United States.



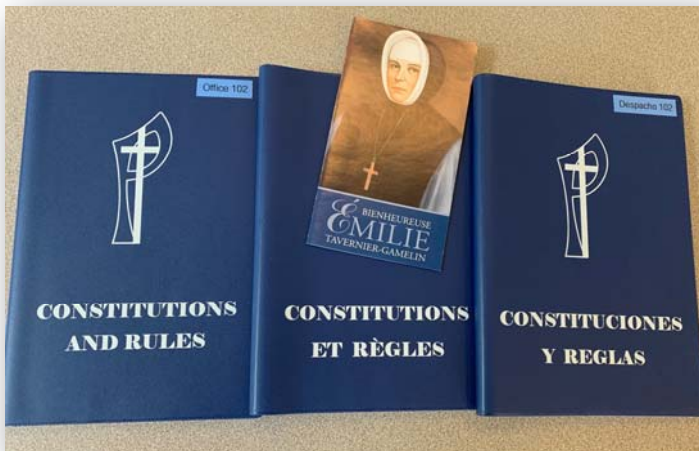
### **2002 to the present. Evolution of the Providence Associates Movement**



The Providence Associates Movement, a work of the Spirit, actually began before the Congregation itself, at the time of the lay life of Emilie Tavernier. Since that time and until today, men and women have continued her work, and during the decade of the '60s and '70s, they wished to become part of the Providence family. Thus, the 1982 General Chapter adopted five resolutions concerning lay people who, having known and lived the founding charism, and motivated by the witness of the Sisters, wished to respond to the invitation of the Spirit. The first of these resolutions states: That our community accept people with the title of LAY ASSOCIATE MEMBERS. At the 2002 General Chapter, it was realized that the flame that ignited the hearts of the Providence Associates when they began their journey in the movement was still burning brightly. Judging

from the echoes that come to us today, and the new groups that are being formed in Cameroon, Egypt, and Haiti, we can see another blessing from Providence.

### **2003-October.** Study of the Constitutions



The General Leadership Team encouraged us to take ownership of our 1985 Constitutions and Rules through study and prayer and to submit our suggestions for modification or clarification of the text so that it better reflects the current spirit. Subsequently, a revision committee was formed and benefited from the rich experience in Canon Law of the late Father Francis Morrissey, O.M.I. This was a long and serious work in which the Sisters had the opportunity to participate, which led to the drafting of a new text that was presented to the General Chapter of 2017, it was accepted and sent for approval to the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. It was submitted to the Holy Father who approved it, and the Decree was signed on July 2, 2018, by the Prefect of the said Congregation .

### **2003 – Causes of Beatification and Canonization**

The beatification of our foundress, Emilie Tavernier-Gamelin, opens the door to her possible Canonization. However, a second cure, inexplicable by science, and obtained after the beatification had to be recognized. We were invited to pray for this great intention. And so, in 2003, a case came to our attention. It was studied at the medical level, and in the diocese of Montreal, before being sent to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome. Since then, we continue to hope that certain steps can be conclusive, despite the delays caused by the change in postulator and by the pandemic that has disrupted all activities, in all sectors and on a worldwide scale, for almost two years. However, faith tells us that Providence is watching over.

As for the Servant of God, Mother Bernard Morin, whose Cause was reopened in 1995, first of all, there had to be a compilation of the writings of





the Servant of God. The members of the committee charged with taking up this work went through twelve years of hard work; Mother Bernard left indeed many writings. We had to count her 4194 letters, of which 3074 were addressed to different Sisters. Mother Bernard also wrote circulars, three volumes on the history of the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence in Chile, and other texts.

Then the Diocesan Process, which ended on April 27, 2010, led to the phase of writing the *Positio*. This involved the digitization of the 9840 pages of the 27 volumes of the Public Copy, which are the documents that had been sent to Rome. It took months of work, with the collaboration of the postulator in Rome, to digitize and send all this documentation to the Office of the Cause in Santiago, Chile, with a copy to the General Administration.

In March 2020, Father Giuseppe Guerra, CM, was appointed as the new postulator of the Bernarda Morin Cause, and Maurizio Cancelli was chosen as the writer of the "*Positio super virtutibus*".

Thanks to the great work of collaboration with the Office of the Cause in Chile, they were able to complete the part of the "*Testimonies*" (Volume II of the public copy) and write the "*Summarium Testium*". Currently, they are working on the "*Summarium Documentorum*".

### **2005-November.** International formation meeting

"Encountering Providence in a multicultural community, in history and spirituality and

charism and mission." With this theme, in November 2005, thirty-nine participants: novices, Sisters in temporary vows, and representatives of formation teams held a five-day meeting at the International Centre in Montreal. This international meeting provided an opportunity for the newer members to revitalize their sense of belonging to an intercultural and international community and to share their challenges, hopes, and commitments as Sisters of Providence.

### **2009-2010.** Congregational retreat. Community contemplation and dialogue

In August 2008, members from the General Leadership Team met with Sister Nancy Sylvester, IHM, founder of the "Institute for Contemplation and Dialogue" and explained to her that they were looking for a way to deepen our congregational understanding of the 2007 General Chapter Orientations and how best to apply them throughout the congregation. Subsequently, an international committee was established and with the expertise of Sister Nancy Sylvester as facilitator, a process of community contemplation and dialogue was adopted to achieve these goals. In 2009 and 2010, under the title of Congregational Retreat, Sister Nancy, along with members of the committee, facilitated the full week of the Congregational Retreat in the provinces of the Congregation.

**2015 – June 25 to July 8.** Meeting on initial formation in Montreal



Thirty-four participants including Sisters in initial formation, members of the formation team, provincial superiors, and three members of the General Leadership Team gathered to delve into the hopes for religious life today. During this meeting, various activities and experiences enhanced community religious life. Leadership skills were deepened. Most of the Sisters in initial formation and members of the formation team had opportunities to facilitate the flow of discussions, lead prayers, or group activity. The presence of the Provincial Superiors throughout the meeting was a testimony of fraternal support and deep listening.

**2021-** Renown for the holiness of Blessed Emilie Tavernier-Gamelin

Since the beatification of our foundress (October 7, 2001), we have noticed that her

reputation for holiness is growing day by day. The requests for intercession and the accounts of favors obtained are clear proof of this. These testimonies come from various places: Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Germany, Haiti, Hong Kong, Reunion Island, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand, Taiwan, Togo, United States, etc.

In addition, between the years 2001 and 2021, the number of requests for favors that arrived at the Office of the Cause amounted to 27,922 notes deposited in the container near the Tomb, in addition to 2209 letters of requests





for favors. Yes, Mother Gamelin is more and more known and prayed to... The latest means of mass communication, such as the Internet, allows people to find the desired information and the contact details to reach us; this is a blessing of the new technology!

I am aware that this list of "blessings" received over the years is incomplete. Each one of us could add the "graces" and the attentions that Providence has granted us, even sometimes, without our realizing it... Let us enjoy the end of this jubilee year to give thanks, to bless heaven, and to redouble our fervor in the service of such a good Master!

*The Lord has done great things for us and holy is his name!*

*Yvette Demers, SP*

Vice-postulator - Emilie Gamelin Cause

**Sources :**

The Jubilee of the Year 2000 - Apostolic Letter Tertio Millennio Adveniente of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II - 1994.

Report of the Superior General and the members of the General Leadership Team. 2002-2007; 2007-2012 ; 2012-2017.

Circular Letters of the Congregational Leader: 2017-2021.



Bernarda Morin Province



Chile, Argentina

## Bernarda Morin Community: Sharing life in union and joy

*By the Communication Office of the Province*



During the recent months, the older sisters of our Province who are part of the Bernarda Morin Community have lived an active life with the Providence of God, despite the restrictions that still exist due to COVID-19.

For several days in September, our country celebrated its independence, and the Providence Community wanted to extend a gesture of appreciation and welcome to the staff who have emigrated from other countries of the Americas, such as Haiti, Colombia, and Venezuela. For this reason, we invited these

staff persons to present dances and some dishes typical of their countries. Sisters, staff, and guests were happy to sample these international delights. The Chilean staff also performed some traditional Chilean dances and served some traditional dishes. Through this activity, we experienced joyful intercultural sharing, which was evident in the happy faces of all participants and sisters.

It has always been a primary focus for the Community to take care of the mental and physical health of our older sisters. For this



reason, the sisters are often invited to take part in different types of therapies. One of these has been the cultivation of vegetables and flowers. Daniel Mella, an occupational therapist, together with sisters Pabla Vargas and Hortensia Tapia, planted a variety of vegetables including onions, garlic, pumpkins, chard, spinach and others vegetables.

In addition, the sisters of the Community were able to share with the sisters of the Province the important moments of their consecration, such as the annual vow renewal, which takes place every year on September 15, the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows. During November,

the older sisters were also able to begin the celebrations of the “Month of Mary” (November) a time in Chile when prayers, praises, and supplications are made to the Virgin Mary. Throughout the year, the prayers and supplications of the sisters are a very important component the life of the community.

On November 23, we also organized a quiz with questions about Mother Bernarda Morin and the Congregation. The activity, attended by the sisters and all the staff, was designed to help



our staff learn more about the history of the Sisters of Providence. First place in the competition went to Rosibelly Rojas, from Colombia, who gratefully pointed out that initiatives such as these “help to increase the spirit of belonging to the place where one is working.”

For the near future, the Bernarda Morin Community is planning to have a bingo game and another knowledge contest, this time focusing on the life of the foundress of our Congregation in Canada, Blessed Emilie Gamelin.







## Office of the Cause of Beatification of Mother Bernarda Morin organized a moving tribute

*By the Communication Office of the Province*



Looking to thank and pay tribute to the many collaborators that the Cause of Beatification of the Servant of God, Bernarda Morin, has had over the years, the office that carries out this process in our Province organized a videoconference on October 7, to mark the 20th anniversary of the beatification of Mother Emilie Gamelin.

The meeting was open to anyone who wished to attend; especially the sisters of the Province Bernarda Morin Province, sisters of the Congregation, Providence Associates and the staff of the Providence Works in Chile were invited. Particularly those who have worked with the Cause were invited, such as Father Juan Rovegno, O.F.M., and our dear Sister

Yvette Demers, vice-postulator of the Cause of Blessed Emilie Tavernier-Gamelin.

The meeting was facilitated by Loreto Fernandez and Claudia Mardones, current staff members of the Office of the Cause. Sister Gloria Garcia, the Provincial Leadership Team's liaison to the Office at that time, gave a heartfelt word of welcome and thanks. Two videos were also presented: a brief historical review and another video with thanks to specific individuals and sisters who have given their service to the process of the Cause of Mother Bernarda Morin.

We also lived a special moment, thanks to the testimonies of three people who, from different roles and tasks, were present and who are





committed to the Cause: Sister Maria Fernanda Apablaza, whose vocation has matured as she has been a member of the Committee of the Laity Pro Beatification; Mrs. Juana Tapia, Providence Associate and one of the first members of the same Committee, and Father Juan Rovegno, vice-postulator of the Cause between 2002 and 2010, who had the

responsibility for the closing of the diocesan process.

From our Province, we thank all the sisters and other persons who were present. We also thank the Office of the Cause for Beatification of the Servant of God, Bernarda Morin, for organizing this significant moment for the Providence Family.

## Holy Angels Province



Western Canada

### Long-Term Service Awards, Edmonton

*by Kevin Capowski, Executive Director of Providence Centre, Edmonton*

It is with great pleasure as one community of Sisters and staff who share in the Mission of Providence Centre, Providence Renewal Centre, and



Sr. Christina Wong, Ms. Charmayne Kehoe (25 years), Mrs. Teresa Scott (10 years), and Mr. Kevin Capowski.

Provincial Administration, we recognize our employees who have reached various milestones of service. Providence Centre, with the support of Provincial Administration, are extremely proud to host the 2021 Long-Term Service Awards. This

gesture of recognition is to thank employees for working with our community, and to say congratulations on your service anniversary.

This year the Awards Ceremony allowed us to celebrate and to say thank you to those who have completed 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 years of service in November 10, 2021. Each individual was recognized with a few special words by their supervisor, and presented with a certificate, a



gift, and a rose to show our appreciation for their continued commitment shown to our Sisters, staff, and guests.

On behalf of Provincial Administration, we

thank all our staff for being such valuable members of our team.

We wish you the best for continued success for many years to come.

## Sister Rezebeth Esperanza Noceja Renews Vows

*by Margarete St. John, SP*



L. to R.: Sisters Magdalena Chan, Rezebeth Noceja, Anne Hemstock, Provincial Leader, Betty Kaczmarczyk, Temporary Vows Director, Margarete St. John, Provincial Secretary, and Gloria Keylor.

It was with joy on November 9, 2021, Sister Rezebeth Noceja renewed her vows for two years surrounded by the Sisters of Holy Angels Province. The ceremony took place at Providence Centre chapel with Father Gracjan Burkiciak, chaplain and friend of the community, officiating at the Mass. Sister Anne Hemstock, Provincial Leader, received Sister Rezebeth's vows. This was a simple ceremony using the readings of the day. The opening hymn

was The Summons by Kelvin Grove, and the closing hymn was the short version of the Providence hymn sung in English and in French.

*Providence of God we thank you for  
your many blessings.*

We wish Sister Rezebeth many graces as she continues her studies and works towards a Bachelor of Social Work degree.





## Mother Joseph Province



United States, El Salvador, Philippines

### Devotion of the Infant Jesus

*Text and Photo: Mother Joseph Province Archives  
Caritas - Winter 2021-2022*



In these times when we are all waiting for the arrival of the Jesus Child, it is good to remember an art work done by some Sisters of Providence: the little Jesus of wax. Here is a brief overview of the history of one of these artists, Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart.

Mother Joseph was not only highly skilled in carpentry, administration, and finance; she also made fine wax figurines. Among the most beautiful examples of her work are the wax sculptures of the Infant Jesus. These delicate, life-like figures were an integral part of the sisters' Christmas celebrations, forming the centerpiece of the Nativity creche. The Sisters of Providence Archives in West Seattle, Washington, have several of Mother Joseph's

"wax babies" as well as some made by other Sisters of Providence.

Mother Joseph began by making candles at the Mother House in Montreal. In March 1848, she was assigned to assist with the molding of wax infants, which were sold to support the sisters' ministries in Montreal. Mother Joseph continued to make wax infants throughout her life. Her creations became very popular and were requested by churches and families throughout the Pacific Northwest. Her molds, wax samples, and tools--as well as one of the infants—are part of the archive collection. Other wax infants are still used by the sisters and in the institutions at Christmas. In 1894, a year before her death at age 28, Sister Claire of Jesus wrote to her mother from Vancouver: "Our good Mother Joseph is making the most beautiful wax Infant Jesus. When she has them finished, she brings them to my bedside for me to see. They are really lovely. I wish the children could see one. And at her age, seventy-four, she embroiders the little dresses for them; the finest kind of work. It is really wonderful."



## Return to the Pandemic in 2021

*Text: Donna Burkhart, SP  
Caritas - winter 2021-2022*

The Coronavirus pandemic has certainly disrupted all our lives. Before the pandemic, we walked around with a sense of security and peace. Then when the virus began spreading around the world, we lost this sense of security and peace. People were afraid to go anywhere. They stayed in their homes and didn't socialize. Children weren't allowed to go to school. And if people did venture out, they made sure that they and everyone else were wearing face masks. We suffered much because we couldn't interact with others and we couldn't see facial expressions, like a smile, telling us that we were glad to see each other. Even so, there are lessons that I learned from this pandemic.

1. A sense of gratitude. This past year will be remembered as a time that we were forced to slow down from the rapid pace of our daily lives and be more aware of all our blessings. We had time to reflect on and show appreciation for all of God's providential care. We couldn't take life for granted. Every morning, I wake up with the ability to see, to feel, to smell, to hear, to taste, and to think. Before I get out of bed, I thank God for giving me another day of life and for His loving relationship with me. I ask for His help to live

life fully with hope, trust, and love. God blesses each one of us every day. Let us show appreciation for all.

2. God has a plan. God is all powerful, all knowing, and all good. When COVID hit, many of us

asked, why is this pandemic happening? Doesn't God know that we have many important things to do, jobs to go to, children to send to school, shopping that needs to be done, and friends to visit? God runs the world, so everything that happens to us – the good, the challenges, even this pandemic – is in God's plan. Where we are is where we are meant to be! This means that we are limited to seeing only a few people in a socially distanced manner, wearing masks, and in a time of lockdown. Recognizing that I can't control what happens to me, I realize that I can only control how I respond to what happens to me. I want to respond with trust in God. I want to respond with optimism. I want to respond with "this too is for the good."





3. We are in this together. When the pandemic first hit, many people were only thinking about themselves. We panicked and began stockpiling our homes with groceries and other essentials. We had, and still have, empty shelves in our grocery stores and shopping centers. I remember going to Costco and seeing shopping carts loaded with Lysol wipes, toilet paper, and non-perishable food products. In our Scriptures, we are told that we are responsible for one another. “What does God require of you, but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with God.” (Micah 6:8) We have a collective responsibility to help each other. We saw this in

our dedicated front-line workers who were willing to sacrifice their lives. We saw it when people reached out to their neighbors to see if they needed anything.

During this pandemic, I have been given the blessed time to reflect on my life. I can say that I am more appreciative of each day that God has given me, of the support of my Providence community, and even of the modern technology that gives me many opportunities to communicate with others. And so, I say, “Providence of God, I thank you for all!”

## Émilie-Gamelin Province



Eastern Canada and United States,  
Haiti, Cameroon and Egypt

### Transfer of the Emile Tavernier Gamelin Monument

*by Claire Houde, SP*





On November 19, the monument of our beloved foundress Emilie Tavernier-Gamelin, which was located in front of the former offices of the Leadership Team of the Emilie-Gamelin Province at 12227 Grenet Street in Montreal, was transferred and reinstalled in front of the Salaberry Residence in Montreal by a specialized firm.

This monument, erected in 2005 on the occasion of the unification of the provinces then known as

the East\*, marks the beginnings of the Émilie-Gamelin Province and is the work of the artist sculptor Jules Lasalle.

Another page of history is being written and we continue to live it in a dimension of faith and trust in Providence that watches over us!

\*Unification of the provinces of Elizabeth, Emilie, Notre-Dame and the Providence Infirmary Sector on June 1, 2005.



# INITIAL *SP* FORMATION

Entrances, vows

## *Renewal of Temporary Vows*



Eugena Nogaüs  
Torbeck, Haiti  
September 15, 2021



Nagwa Gameel  
Port-au-Prince, Haiti  
September 15, 2021



Juedie Elismat  
Port-au-Prince, Haiti  
September 15, 2021



Guerla Alexis  
Torbeck, Haiti  
September 15, 2021



Jude Merline Bernard  
Port-au-Prince, Haiti  
September 15, 2021





# INITIAL <sup>SP</sup> FORMATION

Entrances, vows

## *Renewal of Temporary Vows*



Francine Blanc  
Port-au-Prince, Haiti  
September 15, 2021



Daveline Livert  
Torbeck, Haiti  
September 15, 2021



Nathalie Jean-Philippe  
Torbeck, Haiti  
September 15, 2021



Snyrve Valencia Pierre  
Torbeck, Haiti  
September 15, 2021



Maria Nagui  
Montreal, Canada  
September 15, 2021



Marie Eméline E. Atangana  
Montreal, Canada  
Septembre 15, 2021



Rezebeth Noceja  
Edmonton, Canada  
November 9, 2021



Marie-Thérèse Gnamazo  
Seattle, USA  
November 13, 2021

