



# Echoes of Emilie

Volume 45, No. 1 - May 2022

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## Emilie Tavernier Gamelin : A source of inspiration across the ages

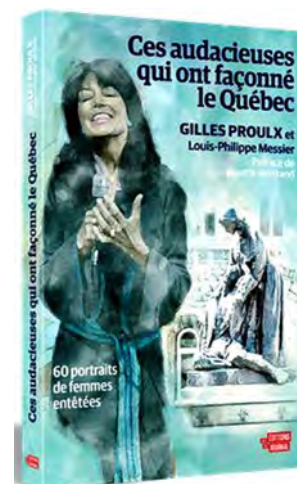
Although our lives have been disrupted over the past two years and we continue living in a state of adjustment, as we look back, we are able to recognize some positive effects of the pandemic. In addition to increasing our creativity, introducing us to new communication technologies, and strengthening our solidarity, this challenging time we have been facing together encouraged us to return to our roots. Knowing and understanding our deep history gives us a new perspective as we continue to evolve.

As we are just now returning to some kind of normalcy, I realize that I have been hoping for a world filled with more humanity, a place where we would take care of one another. Unfortunately, the large number of armed conflicts, inequalities, and social injustices bring us back to our old realities. Probably, the same hope and desire to collaborate in building a better world inspired Emilie Tavernier Gamelin to become the Providence of the Poor and to give particular attention to human misery.

Our Emilie is embedded in our roots and is part of the faces of our history, which we are called to share with others to make her better known and to keep her mission alive.

In recent years, many new persons from all over the world have come to know Emilie's life through articles, books, and the new means of media, which have paid tribute to the commitment of this great woman from another era. Mother Gamelin never suspected that her example would have such an influence on our time today. Her life

continues to be a source of inspiration for the many women and men who perpetuate her dream as they follow in her footsteps, giving attention to human misery by serving others.

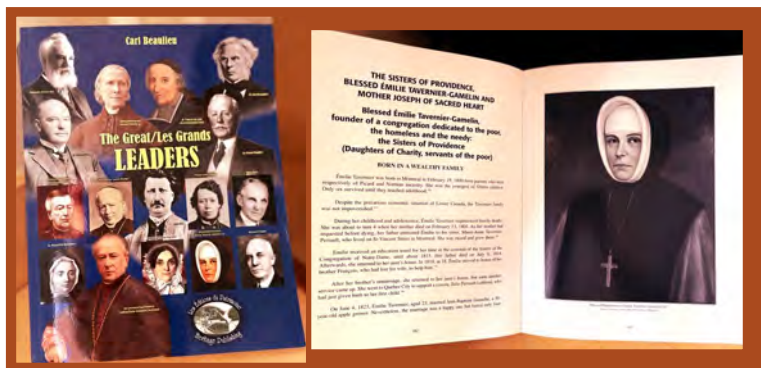


*"Some criminals, unable to restrain themselves, inevitably succumb to recidivism. With a woman like Emilie Gamelin, the same phenomenon occurs, but in a positive way. This large figure in our history continues to multiply her good deeds".*

This text is the beginning of the chapter "L'ivresse de la générosité" (the Drunkenness of generosity), dedicated to Emilie Gamelin in the book *Ces audacieuses qui ont façonné le Québec* (The audacious women who shaped Quebec), written by



Gilles Proulx and Louis-Philippe Messier (October 2020), in the midst of the pandemic. This book presents the portraits of 60 extraordinary women from different eras. The authors draw a portrait of Emilie, the woman and the religious. They also highlight the fact that Emilie practiced the most difficult virtue that Jesus ever preached: the love of our enemies... Nothing could be more real for today!



Mother Gamelin has also been featured in *The Great/Les Grands LEADERS* (in French and English only). In this 680-page book (September 2021), historian Carl Beaulieu presents a compilation of iconic figures from the past four centuries. Their remarkable contributions to Canada and the United States have had a major impact on their communities and on society. Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart is also listed among the major players in the social, political, and economic life of North America for her contribution to health care, education, and social services in the Pacific Northwest\*. The Emilie Gamelin Centre, the Bureau of the Cause, and the Providence Archives of Montreal and of Seattle collaborated with Mr. Beaulieu in writing the chapters dedicated to these two extraordinary women of our history.

Reaching beyond borders of her native Quebec, Blessed Emilie Tavernier Gamelin is an example of compassionate charity in a world that she unknowingly helped to build. The Sisters of Providence, inspired by the charism of Emilie Gamelin, their foundress, arrived in Chile in 1853. They subsequently traveled to Vermont in the United States in 1854, to Oregon in 1856, and to Western Canada in 1886. From these beginnings, the Providence Mission has continued to spread to different countries and continents. It continues to the present day with the same spirit of compassion that inspired Mother Gamelin and so many other women pioneers of the Providence Congregation.

The story of the exemplary life of Emilie, of her compassionate love and trust in Providence, continues to be shared in our world, in many unexpected places.

After a few months of collaboration with the Emilie Gamelin Center, the Spanish online magazine of *Católicos por tu Web*, Caris+ (in Spanish only), has dedicated the February 2022 issue to the life and work of Emilie Tavernier Gamelin. *Católicos por tu Web* is a communications agency with a multidisciplinary team in more than 15 countries. By information and communication technologies, their goal is to reach young persons to help them to know the message of God's love.



In the last two years, the world has come to a standstill, but human suffering has not. The Sisters of Providence continue to keep their strong roots alive with an attitude of openness and flexibility. Working hand in hand with their collaborators, they continue to respond to the emerging needs of today's societies and to act in the name of Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation.

**Nancy Prada**  
Coordinator, Emilie Gamelin Centre

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

### GILLES PROULX

A journalist and lecturer in communications at the University of Montreal from 1979 to 1991 and a conference speaker, Gilles Proulx has held various positions in the field of radio and television for a long period. He has earned a significant reputation in Quebec.

### LOUIS-PHILIPPE MESSIER

A reporter for *Le Journal de Montréal* and the daily 24H, Louis-Philippe Messier has written numerous travel articles and gastronomic essays. He has a flair for uncovering unusual facts and likes to explore the unusual aspects of his subjects.

### CARL BEAULIEU

An author and historian, Carl Beaulieu, MA, is a leading writer on the history of the business sector and its leading figures. To date, he is recognized for his 40 books on the contributions of the Aboriginal, French Canadian, Irish and Scottish peoples to the economic and social life of North America. He received an award from the *Conseil québécois du Chardon* in 2002 for two of his books on the contribution of the Scottish people to Quebec.

\* The Pacific Northwest: a region that includes the U.S. states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, Southeast Alaska, Northern California, part of Montana and a large part of British Columbia (a Canadian province), and a part of the Yukon Territory (Northern Canada).



The teams of the Emilie Gamelin Center and the Bureau of the Cause wish to thank you, dear readers, for your faithfulness.

We invite you to share your comments with us and tell us how you came to know Mother Emilie Gamelin. You can also share the importance she has in your life and any of the favors you have obtained through her intercession.

The *Echoes of Emilie* newsletter is distributed in more than 40 countries. In this edition, we would like to extend a special greeting to those who read us in **Quebec (Canada), Brazil, Poland, Egypt, and Hong Kong.**

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DE LA PROVIDENCE**  
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fb.com/musee.providence | www.providenceintl.org

Please note that the Museum is presently closed to the public due to COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you for your comprehension.





This year, we celebrate the  
**50<sup>th</sup> anniversary**  
 of an active and devoted presence of  
**Sister Yvette Demers, SP**

at the Bureau of the Cause  
 Emilie Tavernier Gamelin

April 5, 1972 - 2022



Sister Yvette Demers received a card and flowers from the members of the General Leadership Team and the General Administration personnel.



May God Providence  
 and Blessed Emilie  
 continue always to inspire  
 our Dear Sister Yvette!



Sr. Yvette Demers, SP (center), Sr. Karin Dufault, SP, Congregational Leader (left), and Sr. Rollande Malo, SP, Counsellor and General Treasurer (right).



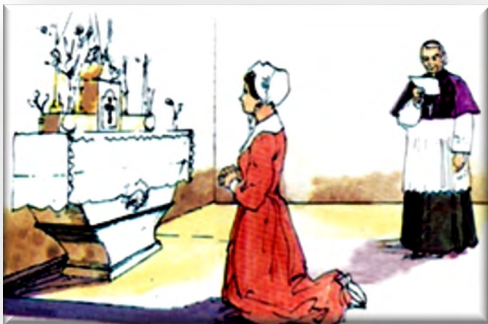


# Some Anniversaries for the Sisters of Providence

180th Anniversary - February 2, 1842 - 2022

Emilie Tavernier Gamelin,  
pronounced her vows to continue to  
**SERVE THE POOR...**

From an early age, Emilie was inspired by her mother to welcome beggars and all those who knocked at the door and asked for "charity for the sake of God". First, Emilie, always mindful of God's will, married, at 23 years old, Jean-Baptiste Gamelin, a 50 years old apple grower known for his love and generosity towards the poor.



Three boys were born from this union, but Providence had other plans for Emilie. Childhood diseases took these three little angels away from the grieving mother who also saw her husband pass away on October 1, 1827, after only four years of happiness.

What will Emilie become? Her spiritual director, Mr. Bréguier, known as St-Pierre, p.s.s., encouraged and inspired her to pray to Our Lady of Sorrows! After some reflection, Emilie pulled through her grief: she found her way... She decided to devote herself to human miseries and committed herself to the work of various charitable associations already well established in Montreal. So she began to visit the elderly, the sick, and the needy.

Then one day, she opened her own shelter for elderly, sick, and abandoned women. For fifteen years, from 1828 to 1843, she devoted herself to her these women whom she regarded as her *protégés*.

The bishop of Montreal, on a trip to Europe, was inspired to ask the Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul to direct the works of Madame Gamelin, since, if she were to die, what would become of her charities, which were so needed?

Upon his return, Bishop Bourget discussed his decision with Madame Gamelin, a faithful member of his diocese. Though she was not offended by his

decision, which seemed to be taking away from her that which she had founded with so much heart, she wondered about her own future. For her, religious life was not the path to which she was being called. She did wish, however, to continue to give her life to the service of others.

She met with Bishop Bourget and they prayed together...and Emilie discovered the path to which she believed she was being called and which was approved by her Bishop: to commit herself by making a vow of perpetual SERVICE...

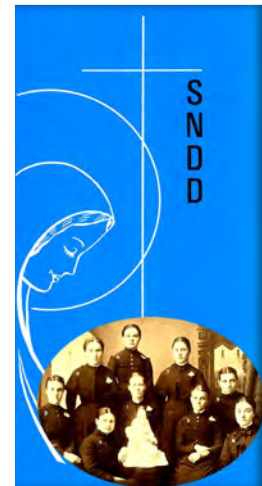
On February 2, 1842, when she was almost 42 years old, she made a private vow. In the presence of Bishop Bourget, she promised to "*continue to serve the poor as long as her strength would permit her*". What a beautiful example of generosity and self-giving!

135th Anniversary: April 1, 1887-2022  
Foundation of a new religious congregation:  
**The Sisters of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows**

The congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows (SNDD) would never have come into existence without the great and charitable heart of Emilie Tavernier Gamelin. Indeed, the ministry to deaf persons began under the guidance of the Blessed Foundress of the Sisters of Providence.

In Montreal, in the *Asile de la Providence*, then the Mother House of the Congregation, Mother Gamelin welcomed elderly and infirm women, who were often also deaf and blind.

However, was with Father Lagorce, in charge of the *Institut des Sourds-Muets* for young boys in Montreal, that Sister Marie de Bonsecours (Albine Gadbois), a Sister of Providence, learned the rudiments of sign



Canon  
François-Xavier (F.-X.)  
Trépanier  
(1835-1906)

language for the deaf. In 1849, she became the first teacher in the Congregation to work with girls who were deaf at the little Providence St. Isidore School. Mother Gamelin officially embraced this work of specialized education. February 19, 1851, Emilie Gamelin's birthday, was designated as the official founding date of this ministry.

To meet the spiritual needs of the sisters and of their students at the *Institution des Sourdes-Muettes de Montréal*, Father François-Xavier Trépanier was appointed as the first chaplain in 1871. He devoted himself with simplicity and zeal to the ministry of the deaf and the blind persons. During the 1880's, some of these young women expressed their desire for religious life. After further consideration and reflection, a decision was taken during the General Chapter of 1886 to found a Congregation distinct from the Sisters of Providence. The efforts of the Superior General and the Chaplain were crowned with success when, on April 1, 1887, on the feast of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows, nine women with deafness began their postulancy in the new Congregation, which was named after the patroness of that day.

The choice of the name had a triple meaning: Mother Gamelin's greatest devotion was to the Virgin of Sorrows; consequently, it became the principal devotion of the Institute of Providence and of the new diocesan congregation, The Sisters of Our Lady of Seven Dolors SNDD. In turn, the SNDD took this as its own principal devotion. In the beginnings of their foundation, the SNDD were essentially dedicated to minister to the girls and young women at the *Institution des Sourdes-Muettes de Montréal*.

*T*hanks be to God  
for these women of faith  
on whom God-Providence  
has bestowed so many gifts!

60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary: August 15, 1962  
Inauguration of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Mother House  
of the Sisters of Providence

In anticipation of the 1967 World's Fair, the City of Montreal had planned the construction of a subway, which would facilitate the mobility of the many visitors the city would host.

The main station, known as BERRI-UQAM, was to be built on the Berri quadrangle, which was formed

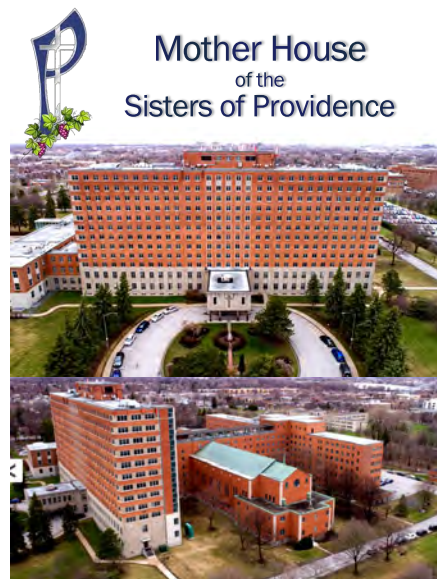
by the streets: Ste-Catherine, St-Hubert, De Maisonneuve and Berri. That very same place happened to be the location of the *Asile de la Providence*, our first Mother House, built in 1843.

Since the subway involved an underground construction, it was necessary to sacrifice this historic relic of a building. The cradle of our Institute had to be demolished. The elderly persons and other services housed there needed to be relocated.

Thus, the leaders of the Congregation decided to build a third Mother House. The second Motherhouse on Fullum Street, built in 1888, would welcome the elderly and other people of the *Asile de la Providence*. The new building was to be erected in the north of the city, in the Cartierville sector, on the grounds of the *Hôpital du Sacré-Cœur de Montréal* (Sacred Heart Hospital of Montreal).

The new construction, begun in 1957, welcomed the staff of the 1431 Fullum Street Motherhouse by the middle of August 1962. The first mass was solemnly celebrated on August 15, 1962. An impressive building, this third Motherhouse in our time, is considered a providential construction, as it has become a religious house for several religious congregations that can no longer -or that choose not to continue to- administer their own Mother houses.

« Providence of God,  
I Thank You  
For All! »



3<sup>rd</sup> Mother House of the Sisters of Providence



Chappell of the Mother House  
of the Sisters of Providence



Tomb of Blessed  
Emilie Tavernier Gamelin since 1962



60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary: October 16-18, 1962  
**1<sup>st</sup> Exhumation of Mother Emilie Tavernier Gamelin**

On June 20, 1960, with the demolition of the *Asile de la Providence*, an office was created to carry on the research work for the Cause of the Beatification and Canonization of our Foundress, Mother Emilie Gamelin. At this time, it was necessary to foresee the exhumation of the mortal remains of our beloved Foundress, and once exhumed, her remains would be placed in a new tomb located at the new Mother House in Cartierville.

Thus, October 17, 1962, became a day to remember forever.

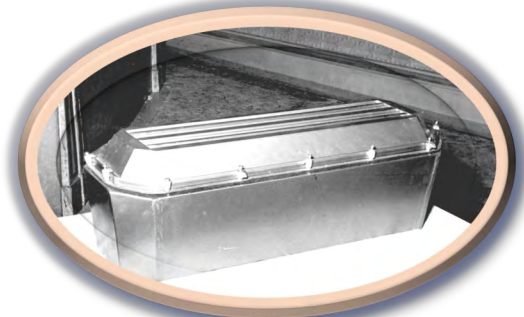
Once the authorizations required for the exhumation were obtained from the religious authorities of the Montreal diocese and the Health Care Service of the City of Montreal, and after the request was presented to the Superior Court, Cardinal Paul-Émile Léger authorized the composition of an ecclesiastical tribunal. At nine o'clock in the morning, the ceremony began in the Motherhouse chapel, while the members of the tribunal were reciting the required oaths of office.

Then the small and selected group descended to the vault of the *Asile de la Providence* where Mother Gamelin had lain in her tomb for 111 years. They proceeded to the opening of the tomb and the recognition of her mortal remains.

First tomb where the remains of Mother Gamelin had lain for 111 years (1851 to 1962). Crypt of the *Asile of Providence*, Montreal, October 17, 1962.



Doctors Frenette and Hébert clean and prepare the bones of the skeleton of Mother Gamelin. Crypt of the *Asile of Providence*, Montreal, October 17, 1962.



Metal box containing the precious remains of Mother Gamelin. Crypt of the *Asile of Providence*, Montreal, October 17, 1962.



1. Dr. Ulric Frenette returns to his seat after having recited the oaths of office for the exhumation of the mortal remains of Mother Emilie Gamelin. 2. Dr. Fernand Hébert and 3. Mother Philippe-de-Césarée they also recited the oaths of office. *Asile of Providence*, Montreal, October 17, 1962.

The medical experts were able to identify each of the bones of her skeleton. These were cleaned and prepared for transfer to a small metal box, which in turn was placed in a new coffin. Then, this was taken in procession to the community room, where the Sisters were able to go and pray near their mother.

The next day, on October 18, a funeral Mass was celebrated in the chapel of the *Asile de la Providence*. A procession involving 125 cars made its way through the streets of Montreal to the new Mother House, located at 5655 Salaberry Street



in Cartierville. There, the beautiful coffin was exposed in the Gamelin Room, so that all the daughters of this true "woman of compassion" could pay a final tribute of veneration and love to their Mother.



The day after, on October 19, Bishop Paul Grégoire, Auxiliary Bishop of Montreal, celebrated a pontifical Requiem Mass for Mother Gamelin, in the chapel of the brand new third Motherhouse. Several dignitaries and guests, including some members of the Tavernier Gamelin family, gathered in the chapel with the many daughters of Mother Gamelin. Before the absolution, Bishop Grégoire evoked the spiritual physiognomy of the woman we all wish to love and imitate. After leaving the chapel, it was time to place her remains in the marble tomb ready for her burial located in the hallway facing the Motherhouse chapel. The ceremony concluded close to one o'clock.



Since that day, we feel that Mother Gamelin's spirit resides in this place. Faith tells us that we will see her again, one day, in eternal life, in the very bosom of God. Today, after 60 years and with the Church proclaiming her "Blessed" more than 20 years ago, many people have confidence in her, place their intentions at her tomb and recommend themselves to her prayers.



*The Lord has done wonders for us,  
Hallelujah!*



Sister Yvette Demers, SP  
Vicepostulator, Cause of Emilie Gamelin







# Gratitude to Emilie



A litany of thank you's to Blessed Emilie... Thank you, Emilie!

Thank you Emilie for being a true Providence to all of us and to our family:

Much gratitude to Emilie for helping us through sickness and during these difficult times of Covid 19. Two family members are doing much better. Many thanks to Emilie.

B.J., Chandler, QC

After obtaining a great favor for one of my grandsons who had contracted Covid-19, I promised a Mass for the canonization of Mother Gamelin. In two weeks, he was back to work. Many thanks to Mother Gamelin.

A. L., Lachine, QC

Some readers have shared with us how they discovered Blessed Emilie Gamelin and the importance she has in their life:

I became devoted to Blessed Emilie when I was ill. A friend visited me and gave me a prayer card with a picture of her as a gift. I prayed to Mother Emilie and asked her for a quick recovery. Therefore, it happened, I got better. Since then, I have been devoted to her and now I am learning more about her life.

J. A. P., Jalisco, Mexico

I discovered Blessed Emilie through a friend from church who showed me a small prayer card

and told me a little about her. Then I began to do some research on Blessed Emilie. I was really touched by her life, her legacy and her commitment to God.

D.A., Nicaragua

Blessed Emilie Gamelin,  
intercede for those  
who are confident in you!

Sister Yvette Demers, SP  
Vicepostulator, Cause of Emilie Gamelin



Let us pray  
for PEACE  
in the World!

## Souvenirs

Providence



Emilie Tavernier Gamelin,  
The best friend of the poor



Postal Cards

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Biography  
Emilie Tavernier Gamelin

Pens  
With the image  
of Mother Gamelin



## Prayer To Providence



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.

### Gratitude to Emilie

Please address all favours obtained to:

Bureau of the Cause of Emilie Gamelin  
12 055, Grenet Street,  
Montreal, QC H4J 2J5 Canada

Sr. Yvette Demers, SP Vice-Postulator  
Phone: (514) 334-9090 (Ext. 208)  
[ydemers@providenceintl.org](mailto:ydemers@providenceintl.org)



To Blessed Emilie  
we confide  
all the intentions  
that you carry in your hearts,  
both spiritual and temporal;  
she will certainly know  
how to lend an attentive ear  
to all your needs.