



*Le 30 octobre 1853, on inaugure la première maison de la Providence en Chili.*

*October 30, 1853 the first House of Providence in Chile opened.*

*30 de Octubre de 1853 se inaugura la primera casa de la Providencia en Chile.*

**170** anniversary  
of the presence in Chile

Sisters of Providence  
1853 - 2023

*S. Bernard*

*Providence Missive*

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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Front cover: Sylvie Lavoie

Back cover: Valparaíso circa 1850

# Dear Providence Family



Mgr Alberto Ortega Martin, Apostolic Nuncio to Chile, and Sister Alba Letelier at the 170<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorative event.

## 170<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Presence of the - Sisters of Providence in Chile

*Without roots we cannot flourish*

(Peruvian proverb)

The year 2023 has been one full of grace for the Providence Family. During this year, we have reached back into our congregational roots, both to show our gratitude and to find the strength and the motivation to continue our path towards the future. And even to receive today the vision that will allow us to see into how we will live when our dreams turn into reality, welcoming that new reality with a tranquil and flexible mindset.

We have been invited to celebrate the 170th anniversary of our presence in Chile

in the middle of this historical moment for our Community while we transition towards a different model of governance, a model whose actual implementation is yet to be discovered.

The gathering revolved around the first five Providence Women sent to mission abroad, out of their comfort zone, who for that matter conducted themselves boldly, remaining true to the existing needs of the most vulnerable people from a society that welcomed them at that time. This event inspires and invites us to review our life today in the light of our identity and



## Editorial

the relationship we have with our own reality, specific to each society in which each of us is now living. What if, as we contemplate the reality in which we live, we ask ourselves the following questions?

- \* What is the purpose of my presence here?
- \* What is the value that my presence as Sister of Providence adds to my environment?
- \* What is that unique richness that distinguishes me from other supportive and charitable agents, which is part of my contribution?

By reevaluating the meaning and purpose of our presence in those places where we have settled and remained for decades, we are able to appreciate, ponder, and assess the opportunities we have in our journey to become one canonical structure. For our dreams to come true, we must believe in them and take the necessary steps to move forward and get closer to them, in the same way as we are now doing as we pursue our common dream.

Facing today's reality, we are challenged and called to go beyond our borders, together with the Church, to go beyond what is familiar to us, despite our uncertainties, questions and reservations.

In the original call dating back 170 years, there was a determination and fidelity to respond diligently and with immense confidence to the proposal made by our Provident God through those circumstances of life which allowed our pioneering mothers to be aware of the urgent needs of their time. I believe that today, 170 years after that first invitation to live outside of our borders, the Sisters of Providence, both in Chile and in the entire Community, continue to nourish that passion, desire and fidelity to the call of being messengers of the Good News and to bring with us new life, wherever we are.

We Sisters of Providence took root in Chile, and in a short time, the Congregation flourished first as the first province established by the Canadian Congregation, that later became the first Chilean congregation sanctioned by



Canon Law. The sisters' only desire was to do what they felt and believed was God's will. And there was only one reason that led them to that transition: to serve the neediest of people.

Thanks to the historical documentation and the stories of our elder sisters, we are aware of the history of our foundation and of the reshaping of our Congregation, even if we have lived firsthand some of those changes in the different places where our Congregation is still active.

In our times, and to put it in modern terms, we are experiencing a "happy coincidence": the cosmic movement of the universe is converging with due synchronicity, so that the journey that started more than 180 years ago in Montreal is taking a new direction, leading us into unknown ventures.

By committing to a synodal process, the Church again confirms to us, as a Congregation, that our discernment, our quests, and responses to the reality around us are the result of our conscience expanding into the realm of universal interdependence.

Finally, I want to share and invite you to reflect upon the following excerpt from: "Women of the dawn: the daring hope at sunrise", that appears in the document "Inspiring Horizon 2022-2025" published by the Latin American Confederation of Religious (CLAR):

The fullness of discipleship consists in us becoming pro-existent beings in the likeness of Jesus, that bears a profound freedom that falls like seeds, that become an explosion of life from within, that transform from the inside, that give witness to the smallest things and call forth without words, thus leaving our own lives behind every time and in every action. Let us therefore return to the Gospel, which is capable of healing and re-signifying our humanity, and let us act in haste, urgently, without rushing but without hesitating, just like the Women of the Dawn did when they dared to pass through the night. It is the moment to embrace the power of the Resurrection. (p. 28)

With warm regards in Providence,

*Alba Letelier, SP*  
Congregational Leader



# 170 years

*of presence in Chile*

**Sisters of Providence**

1853-2023

# Special Report

Experiences, reflections



Last June, with guests from several "Providence" countries, and members of the Congregational Leadership Team, the Sisters of Providence in Chile celebrated the anniversary of the arrival of five young women who, following God's call, started an uncertain journey which finally lead them to that side of the world where they settled. They were convinced that helping the orphans and homeless of the young nation was their manifest duty as Daughters of Charity, Servants of the Poor. Here we present some testimonies from those who took part in the celebrations in Chile organized by the ad hoc Committee, which has planned other events throughout the year.

## Here are the highlights of the celebration

### *Historical Tour*

June 12 – The Provincial House premises.

It was organized by the Bureau of the Cause for the Beatification of Mother Bernarda Morin



## *Mateada (Drinking Mate)*

June 12 - To share the tradition still preserved to our days by many works and communities to mark the providential arrival of the Sisters of Providence in Chile, the sisters gathered around a cup of mate. On this occasion, sisters guests joined their host companions at the Salón Providencia (Providence Hall) to try this common drink, following a tradition that dates back to Mother Bernarda's days.



## *Celebration evening at Teatro Oriente*

June 13 - "An evening full of dance, music and huge gratitude, in the Providencia district of Santiago  
(...) The event was a public manifestation of gratitude to God and to the  
Sisters of Providence in Chile." BMP Special Bulletin





## *Visit to Colegio Providencia, Linares*

June 14 - In an enthusiastic environment full of gratitude for the 170th year of SP's presence in Chile, guests visited a number of works in the Bernarda Morin Province.

Here they are in Linares.



# *Commemorative mass and other activities in Valparaíso*

June 15 - A celebration featuring the history of the Sisters of Providence in Chile. The Providence Family was invited to take part amidst the festive and grateful atmosphere.



## *Visit to the Sanctuary of Santa Teresa de Los Andes*

June 16



## *A tribute evening to Dr. Rodney Hochman*

June 16

Sister Barbara Schamber, Provincial Leader of Mother Joseph Province and members of the Mother Joseph Province Mission Team hosted a reception honouring Dr. Rodney (Rod) Hochman, President and CEO of Providence-St. Joseph Health Care as he received the Sister Carol Keehan Award for his work for boldly championing society's most vulnerable presented by the Catholic Health Association of the United States. The reception was attended by Sisters of Providence present for the celebrations of the 170th Anniversary of the arrival of the Sisters of Providence in Chile.

By : Steve Pehanich - <https://sistersofprovidence.net>



# *Celebration at Santiago's Metropolitan Cathedral*

June 17 - Thanksgiving mass for the 170<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the presence of the Sisters of Providence on the Chilean country



# Reflections on the Anniversary Celebration

*Susanne Hartung, SP*

It was truly a blessing to participate in the weeklong celebration with our Chilean Sisters. A highlight, for sure, was the mass at the Cathedral marking the actual day that Mother Bernarda arrived in Valparaiso. The friends and students of the sisters filled the massive space. You could feel the love and gratitude that the Chilean community have for the Sisters of Providence and their dedication to education, orphans and elderly persons. We visitors were also given that same response. The excellent educators provided the students with the opportunity to participate in the Liturgy from the eleven Providence Schools. Their music was a gift to all of us.

For me personally, to reconnect with the Chilean Sisters was very special. My friend for over 35 years, Sister Marta Alvear, has afforded me the interactions with the

many sisters during my several visits to Chile. It felt like such a lovely reunion to be with the sisters once again. And since I had been to two of the sites that were offered, I chose to serve the homeless in the Emilie Gamelin kitchen with students and associates. They serve with such compassion everyday serving over 70 persons who are marginalized. It will be a memory experience of my visit.

Listening to the historical narrative given many times during the week, I am once again in awe of Mother Bernarda's

selflessness. Her decision to remain in Chile and be separated from Montreal, her home and her community, was a heroic decision. Thankfully we are once again a united congregation. I am so grateful to have been in Chile for the 170th.



Sister Susanne (2<sup>nd</sup> from right) at the Comedor Emilia Gamelin in Santiago

## *Christina Wong, SP*



Mother Bernarda was a woman of determination and of fortitude. What she believed in, she strived to make it happen by constantly reminding her sisters about unity. Though it might not happen in her lifetime, her spirit was forever in the sisters, in their hearts and minds.

The sisters here are the same as sisters from other provinces. We face the same reality of becoming smaller, but we have hope for the future.

And the activities and celebrations were so well organized by a small team.

My highlight of the trip was the opportunity to visit the sisters there. Though I cannot speak Spanish, sign language helps to understand. I am thankful for their hospitality and generosity.

Sister Christina (first from right to left) and Sister Maggie (first from left to right) in front of the Colegio Providencia de Linares.

## *Maggie Pastro, SP*

This time I experienced a great joy in the hospitality and excitement at our visit.

The sisters are so joyful and welcoming. Their ministries are many and they touch the lives of so many who are the most vulnerable in Chilean society. You can tell how deeply the people, the students, the elderly, and the parents as well as the staff love the Sisters of Providence.

Everywhere we went, we experienced celebrations-- singing and dancing and other

performances where so much planning had gone into making the occasion of this beautiful 170<sup>th</sup> anniversary so special. The liturgies were beautiful.

To see again all the sisters that I have been with at past General Chapters in Montreal, and to spend time with them is a joy. To visit the Sisters in Bernarda Morin Province and their many ministries was a wonderful opportunity.

## *Natacha Gracia, SP*



Sister Natacha - 3<sup>th</sup> from the left to right, at Linares

It has been a privilege to live this wonderful and memorable experience. As the different activities unfolded, I discovered that the sisters have expressed their mission by adapting it to the cultural environment in which they had lived, respecting the same goal of reflecting the face of Provident God. I can see that the sisters are very involved in their mission. The different presentations of the children and young people from the schools and in collaboration of lay people made this clear. I realized that the work that Mother Bernarda started carries on until today. May Blessed Emilie Gamelin, Bernarda Morin, and Joseph of the Sacred Heart watch over you and bring up other sisters to collaborate with you in the Providence Mission.

## *Barbara Savage*

A new discovery about Mother Bernarda Morin for me was her vision – a vision of unity – that the triangle encompassing Montreal, Vancouver (Washington) and Chile would be restored, and hearts and souls and works be reunited. With the current reorganization, it seems like a timely vision.

It's very surprising to see the number of ministries they sponsor while so few sisters to care for them. The schools are amazing (11) with an average enrollment of 1000 each. The Sisters of Providence legacy and especially that of Mother Bernarda is strong and evident in the children. Each ministry emanates love, love of God, of each other and for those who are so vulnerable, children and the elderly.



Barbara, first from left to right, visiting Colegio de Linares

The amazing, loving and energetic support of the community for the Sisters of Providence and their works was evident by the theatre attendance and at the Mass on Saturday!

## Orietta Coopman, SP

Every day I discover the faithful and continued memory of Mother Bernarda's presence in our country, of her great love for Christ and her dedication. Until this day you can identify the deep impression that the sisters have left on the people with whom they have worked.

To witness the fondness shown by the people who accompanied us at the celebrations has been another pleasant surprise. It was such a good thing to receive their affection, while we were united. Let us always keep in mind that as Sisters of Providence we must serve everyone without distinction of any kind.

I am very grateful for the love and assistance of the people who value the work of the sisters; for the kind efforts of those who work with us. May God continually give us the strength needed to give witness to our foundress and continue her mission. Let us keep her legacy as sisters of Providence.



Sister Orietta, first from left, attends at the tribute evening to Dr. Rodney Hochman



Sister Myriame, first from right, attends a kindergarten class in Linares

I am Myriame Colin, sister of temporary vows, on mission in Torbeck since October 2022.

After a draw marking the 170th anniversary of the Congregation in Chile, one of my greatest dreams had just come true: to visit the mission land of Mother Bernarda Morin, where she spent

## Myriame Colin, SP

her entire religious life. Mother Bernarda's story touched me to the core. Since I first read the series of publications devoted to little Venerance, I felt the desire to walk on the same land on which this woman had worked for so long.

I was able to contemplate the Providence roots which have been transformed in boughs of charity, simplicity, dedication, courage and Compassion through a loving and compassionate presence, boughs that have been grafted to the three of Faith. Today it all represents the fruit of testimony, that tells of a heart that fully abandons itself.

I lived this magnificent experience in this state of mind. Even if the trip was at times somewhat difficult, I did enjoy my stay in Santiago.



## *A pilgrimage journey by Rezebeth Noceja, SP*



Setting foot for the first time on South American soil, I was amazed at the magnificence of the Andes cordillera towering over us wherever we went. My apprehensions of coming there with very little Spanish was overcome by the warmth of the Chilean people, especially of our Sisters.

### FIRST DAY

As we were travelling to go to the Casa Provincial in Santiago from the airport, I was pleasantly surprised when Maria Fernanda announced, "Bienvenida a Providencia!". Did she actually mean that a big portion of Santiago is called Providencia? I did not know that! It was even more impressive knowing that the name wasn't just a coincidence but that the district was named after the Sisters of Providence. It spoke of the magnitude of the work of charity and influence that Madre Bernarda and her companions had in Chile. It caused me to be in awe, once again, of the roots of the Sisters of Providence. Just the same feeling I had when I first went to

Montreal and did the Footsteps of Emillie, and in Washington when I did the footsteps of Mother Joseph.



The very first event we attended after landing in Santiago was the Mateada. Held in Sala Providencia at the Casa Provincial, we were seated in a big circle, which to me symbolizes infinite togetherness. It was as if our Chilean Sisters were telling us, "Welcome! You are part of our circle and together let us experience our country's tradition through which Madre Bernarda welcomed those she ministered to." It was a gathering of prayer, storytelling, music, food, and of course, maté. I had the privilege of meeting and conversing with some of our Chilean Sisters who were so gracious, patient, and encouraging as I stumbled through my conversational Spanish. Indeed, I felt welcomed.

### SECOND DAY

On our second day, some of us went to Cerro San Cristobal. Just when we were purchasing our tickets, an alarm blasted through the facility and I could hear the



word “terremoto”. If we have mandatory fire drills in Canada, Chile has earthquake drills because apparently Chile is prone to earthquakes. As we ascended to the top of the cerro, a beautiful aerial view of Santiago de Chile bordered by the cordillera, was revealed. The most fun though was just having an easy and fun time with our Sisters as we walked up to the summit to be greeted by a beautiful, large statue of our Mother Mary.

Following our tour of Cerro San Cristobal, we capped the night with culture and sophistication through music and art at Teatro Oriente where



students and collaborators showcased excellent presentations on the life and history of the Sisters in Chile. As a lover of performing arts and music, I definitely enjoyed the show. Most notable

though during the night at the theatre was the recognition of the staff members who have been working with the Sisters for many many years – a testament to values and authentic relationships that our Sisters built with our collaborators.

### THIRD DAY

I'd say that one of the most interesting and heartwarming experiences I had during the



170th anniversary in Chile was our visit to Colegio Providencia in Linares. Linares is a small town outside of Santiago where many of the students at the Colegio come from farming families. Though they may be rich in farming land; not so when it comes to liquid assets. As we were told, many of the families work hard to send their children to school and keep them dressed well. Something I can resonate well with, growing up in the countryside with simple means and getting educated as a precious achievement. Though many were lacking in material wealth, they were rich in hospitality and sincerity of the heart. In a world where many people, young and old, do not know or appreciate Religious men and women, it was refreshing to have the experience I had at Linares. I felt the simplicity and sincerity

of their warm hospitality, especially of the students. My impression is that the school did not spare any efforts to make us all feel special and welcomed. Something that is generally similar to my own Filipino culture.

As I walked through the corridors of the school, I had the privilege of chatting and taking pictures with some of the girls; a group of them even interviewed me. One of them said to me, "take me to Canada!". I responded encouragingly that if they strive hard to complete their studies and persevere in building a career afterwards, that there will be endless possibilities for them, something I took from personal experience. There was something very touching there and I thought to myself, how can anyone not heed the call of Providence to minister to these children? I am very glad that Colegio Providencia in Linares is the recipient of a substantial gift from the community.



#### FOURTH DAY

On our fourth day, we travelled to Valparaiso where we had the Eucharistic celebration at Parroquia Corazón de María, followed by a tour at the port where Madre Bernarda and her companions landed 170 years ago. In the afternoon, we had lunch at Hogar de

Ancianos, a ministry of the community to the elderly, and before going back to Santiago, we visited the Jardín Infantil, a ministry to babies and very young children. Hermanas Margarita, Vilma, Claudia, Nancy, and Maria Fernanda told me that they stayed at the Jardín during their early formation years and they worked with the children. During a theatre performance depicting a reporter's interview with Madre Bernarda, she was reported as saying that part of the reason she stayed in Chile was because of the strong call of Providence to minister to the children. The community continues to respond to this call through Jardín Infantil that caters to many children of diverse ethnic backgrounds and different needs.

#### FIFTH DAY

We visited Santuario Santa Teresa de Los Andes on our fiftieth day where the remains of Santa Teresa de los Andes is buried. Santa Teresa de los Andes is the first Chilean saint who died shortly before taking



Fotografía de recuerdo de Teresa de Jesús, antes de entrar al Carmelo  
Remembrance photograph of Teresa of Jesus before joining the Carmel

her first vows as a Discalced Carmelite Sister. When we reached the santuario, I joined Sisters Nancy, Claudia, Maria Fernanda, and Providence Associate Rosa Maria in going inside the monastery of the Discalced Carmelites, without even knowing it. I just realized that we were separated from the big group that

remained in the Chapel grounds. I felt very blessed to have the experience of going inside the monastery and briefly speaking with one of the Carmelite Sisters, without seeing her face, and receiving a second class relict of Santa Teresa de los Andes. The Carmelite Sister wished me and Maria Fernanda every blessing on our discernment and prayed that Santa Teresa be present with us in our journey, most concretely through her relic.

#### SIXTH DAY

Finally, on our last day before our departure, we had a grand celebration at Catedral Metropolitana de Santiago de Chile that was attended by hundreds of people. The cathedral was packed with people who have close ties to the Sisters in Chile and many of them were students from different providence schools. The liturgy was beautifully and symbolically integrated with Providence spirituality; and the music...the harmonies and pieces used were just pure joy, one would say angels were singing. Thanks to Pancho, the musical director and pianist, and the students at La Serena.



The Eucharist was followed by a banquet at the provincial house where we feasted over delicious meal and of course, tasteful Chilean wines. I truly enjoyed my time in Chile and I am also very humbled by the acceptance and hospitality shown by the Sisters and new acquaintances I met. It was also a privilege to meet some of the faithful Providence Associates from Chile and Argentina who continue to foster the charism wherever they are.

The richness of those 170 years in Chile is evident in the relationships the Sisters have with their collaborators and the people they minister to, aside from the district and places named after Providence. Who knew that the fateful journey of the ship "Elena", carrying onboard five Sisters of Providence from United States will bear fruit to 170 years of mission and Providence spirituality in Chile. I'm sure Madre Emilia, Bernarda, and Joseph are all smiling from above.



## Reflection about Creation and Providence Mission

By *Marcia Gática, SP*



Our Providence spirituality calls us by reminding us of the importance of our encounters, connections, and relationships that we sow and develop throughout our lives. These encounters are unique in the sense that they engage our lives, triggering in us the urge to serve, and to practice reciprocal love, which are both precious jewels that make life worth living. Without them, we lack that fertile predisposition of honest abandonment and total acceptance

of any task with grateful and humble hearts.

According to my experience, our journey is enriched by a humble approach, but it asks us to take a decision which must be direct and compelling: "God has a love of predilection: [for] persons and groups whose basic needs are not met, and victims of injustice, especially the rejected, the marginalized, the voiceless" (R9), but also, and paraphrasing our C9, We are called





to be brave and share courageously our human and community fragility and be open to others. This openness is an unexpected gift, and through it, we are evangelized during our encounters with these "others" with whom we are interdependent, and with whom we are able to share the experience of God's love.



those who eagerly build peace in shared and local spaces. For this reason, we work and take paths where we have been called to build new and rich encounters.

Living in the Providence Mission in El Salvador, sisters, Associates, staff, and friends, seek to honor this knowledge

Our motivation comes from our love for those who are in pain and experiencing injustice; for those who are silenced by the force of power, a power that has been misunderstood and, therefore, wrongly exerted; for those who are hungry and thirsty for a dignified life and for compassion; for

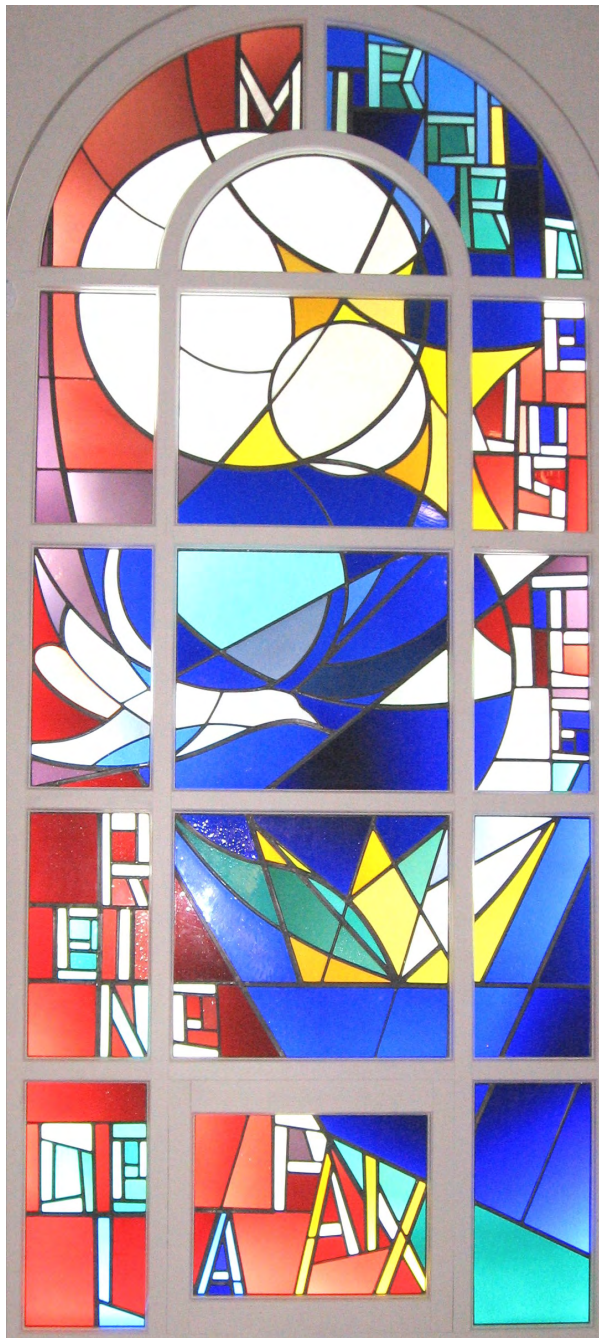
and experience. Despite our setbacks and frustrations, ups and downs, gifts and weakness, we live fully convinced that Providence, which we proclaim as the living and loving presence of God, active in us and through us, watches over the created universe, attentive to the needs of all, exactly as it is stated in our C7.


"We need the talent and engagement of everyone" (Laudato Si', 14).



***Donation of the stained-glass windows of the DOMINICAN  
 Nuns of Shawinigan to the Sisters of Providence,  
 Mother House - 2023***

By *Madeleine Coutu, SP*



 In a certain day in 2023, Sister Claire Houde, provincial superior, accepted the offer made by the Dominican Nuns to donate eight stained glass windows created by the artist Olivier Ferland. These works were originally commissioned in 1993 for their monastery in Berthierville where they lived at that time. Later, the stained-glass windows were installed at their monastery in Shawinigan. The story of this remarkable gift of great spiritual depth follows.

At the beginning of this year, the Dominican Nuns were in negotiations to live at the Mother House of the Sisters of Providence (Carrefour Providence). On February 13, 2023, Sister Claire Houde asked me to go see these works of art in Shawinigan and make a report to share with the members of the Provincial Leadership Team. I went to the monastery on February 18 and admired the stained-glass windows, but wondered if there was an adequate place for them at our Mother House, which was built 61 years ago, and seemed to be sufficiently decorated. But it was not my decision; I had only to prepare a report.

At Shawinigan, the stained-glass windows were placed in prominent areas suitable for their purpose, i.e., the premises had been built as a place for the nuns to live. The conditions were quite different now because our Mother House was already richly decorated.

This was, in short, the account of my visit to Shawinigan, which I shared with the Sisters of the community who gathered around. I did not want to give any false hope: I had only visited and so I gave my impressions.



The chapel of the Dominican Nuns housed another three stained-glass windows representing the Mysteries of the Rosary, but these were not for donation since the new owner of the chapel wanted them to remain operational.

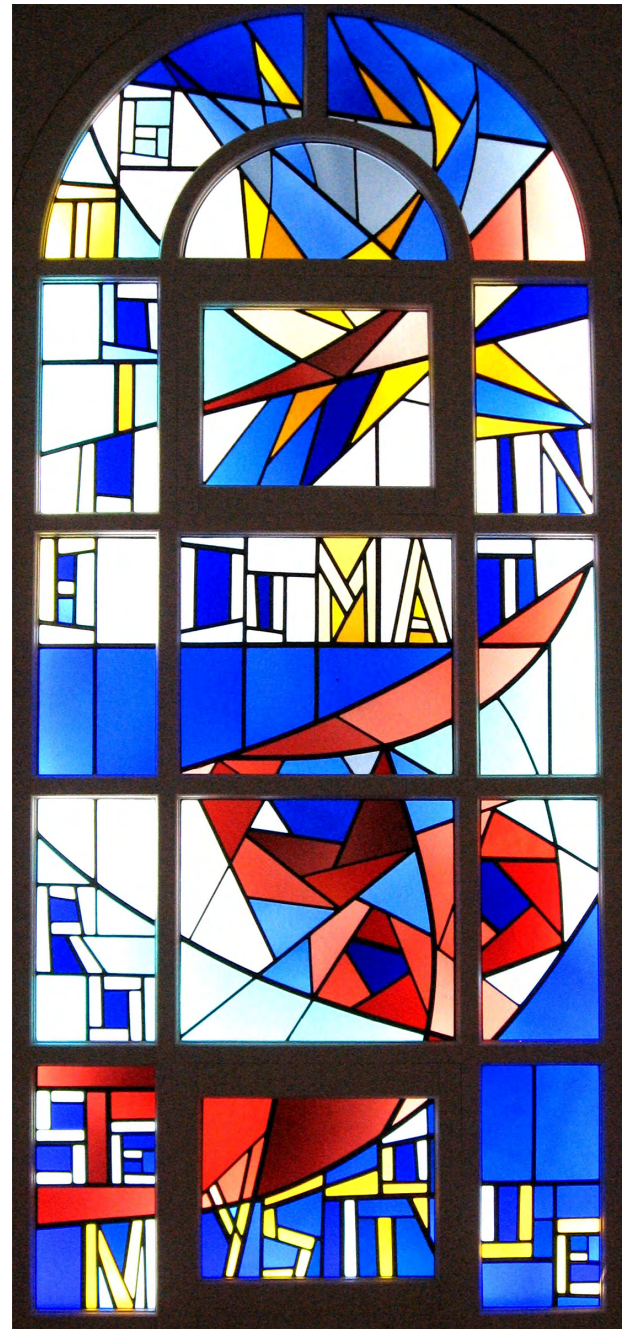
On February 21, I met with the provincial superior and the members of the provincial team to deliver my report which I supported with pictures. Their decision was to accept the gift of the eight stained glass windows as well as a crucifix by the artist Médard Bourgault, carved on wood and measuring 8 feet and 4 inches (overall dimensions: 57" x 50"x 8").

On March 8, Sister Claire Houde and I welcomed Mr. Richard Hamel, a cabinetmaker, and Father Jacques Houle, a sacred-art designer, who visited the Mother House to help us to find the right location for Olivier Ferland's stained- glass windows.

After some discussion, it was decided that the four largest works would be installed at the entrance of the chapel, in front of the tomb of Mother Gamelin, and the other four smaller works (two of them entitled, "Norwegian Spruce",) in the corridor surrounding the main staircase on the 2nd floor of the Mother House.

The works were transported under the supervision of Richard Hamel and Guy Bellemare and arrived at their destination on August 15, 2023. Mr. Hamel and Mr. Bellemare's work during the installation of the stained-glass windows was professional and meticulous. The electrical work was entrusted to the employees of the Mother House. On August 15th, the four large stained-glass windows were installed at the entrance of our chapel. The smallest windows had already been placed around the staircase, properly illuminated. The installation of the stained-glass windows was completed on the 17th of August 2023. The lighting was completed on August 31st, with some delay due to technical issues.

Some phrases from the litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary are inscribed on six of the eight stained-glass windows. The richness of the colors of the glass invites contemplation.



The words on the six stained glass-windows read as follows:

The four windows in the chapel:

- GATE OF HEAVEN, GOLDEN HOUSE,
- THRONE OF WISDOM, ARK OF THE COVENANT,
- MIRROR OF JUSTICE, QUEEN OF PEACE,
- MORNING STAR, MYSTICAL ROSE





The two windows around the stairs:

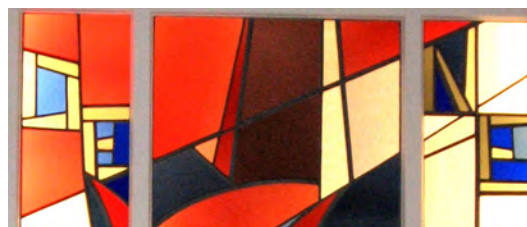
- IVORY TOWER
- TOWER OF DAVID

Here are a few comments offered on the meaning of the stained-glass windows and what they represent to us:

- "Let us be charmed, moved and transported by these works of art ..."
- "The stained-glass windows give life to the space."
- "The stained-glass windows make the entrance alive and deeply spiritual."
- "... They create a certain spiritual effect."
- "The stained-glass windows give a monastic and celestial look to the entrance to the chapel."
- "They are very beautiful. They light up the space."
- "Superb, so beautiful."
- "So lovely, nice entrance. So ornate."
- "Inspiring, it's a beautiful gift."
- "Beautiful artistic approach, it makes us step into the mystery. "
- "The words of the litanies are not easy to read but we can let ourselves be guided."
- "... It invites us to enter into mystery, full of light."
- "... Beautiful and welcoming artistic works for the chapel."



Thank you! THANK YOU!





# Short *SP* News

Our Community

Bernarda Morin Province



Chile, Argentina

## Webinar on the historical heritage of the Congregation celebrating the 170<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Chile

*Text and photos: Communication Office of BMP*



As part of the activities commemorating the anniversary of the arrival of the Sisters of Providence in Chile, the webinar "Historical memory of the Congregation in the context of 170 years of the Sisters of Providence in Chile" was held at the Bernarda Morin Province at the end of July and the beginning of August. Organized by the special committee appointed for that purpose, in collaboration with the Bernarda Morin Center and the Providence Spirituality Center, it was attended by a great number of people.

Divided into three sessions, on July 19 and 26, and August 2, on the day of its closure, the webinar was streamed via Zoom. All Sisters of

Providence from Chile and around the world, Providence Associates from all the provinces, members of the education centers and people from the works devoted to social causes by the Bernarda Morin province were specially invited. Through websites and social networks, those among the general public interested in learning more about the history of the Congregation also received an invitation.

The first session was conducted by Nadia Bertolucci, Providence Associate and Communications agent at the Providence International Centre in Montreal, who explained the historical and social context of Canada, at the time and place where the Sisters of Providence were founded as a congregation.

The second session, hosted by Alexandrine De La Taille, PhD in history and professor at the Universidad de Los Andes, was focused on the historical, social and Church context surrounding the Servant of God, Bernarda Morin, who being Canadian by birth, was called to stay and found the Congregation in Chile.

During the final event, Loreto Fernández, executive secretary of the Office of the Cause for the Beatification of the Servant of God Bernarda

Morin, shared on the historical context, some outstanding persons and the great milestones of the birth of the Congregation in Chile.

The Bernarda Morin Province acknowledges the participation of our three speakers and remains grateful for the participation of the audience

which, through Zoom, was able to share their questions and comments.

For those who could not participate, the three sessions of the webinar are available on the Bernarda Morin Province YouTube channel, on the following link (in Spanish) <https://www.youtube.com/@HermanasdeLaProvidencia/videos>

## Thanksgiving Event for our 117<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



On August 9, the Colegio La Providencia commemorated one more year of existence, accounting for 117 years devoted to the education and loving care of young adolescents from the district of Ovalle and its surroundings.

The celebration started with a historical narrative of the Colegio that was accompanied by a video presentation. A meaningful moment was the reading from Scriptures, followed by the artistic performance in music and dances by the students.

Local authorities, directors, Sisters of Providence, Sr. Antonieta Trimpay and Sr. Elvira Letelier, teachers, assistants, and students were in attendance. Sr. Suzette Bautista and Hélène Mamert Nga, Sisters of Providence who are members of the Congregational

Leadership Team based in Montreal, Canada also attended the event.

It was also an opportunity to recognize teachers and staff for their dedication and contribution to the development of the school. Among those

honored were Silvia Hauyon and Iván Ramírez and Education Assistants Rosa Gallardo and Fabiola Araya for their 25 years of service and Karen Araya for 20 years of service. They are part of the school's history and identity. Thanks to their efforts, the school keeps moving forward.

Likewise, the school acknowledged the commitment and dedication of Camila Villavicencio, an alumna who was part of the dance academy and continues to represent the school in different events and celebrations.

During the activity, the Parents and Students Center as well as those representing the teachers, assistants and Providence Associates greeted and showed their appreciation for the director, M. Cecilia Martínez Salas.

After the ceremony, the participants attended a reception prepared by the teachers and students of the Gastronomy School .

From : [Acto de Acción de Gracias por aniversario 117° - Colegio La Providencia \(laprovidenciaovalle.cl\)](#)

## Mother Joseph Province



United States, El Salvador, Philippines

## Experience the Sisters of Providence Mission El Salvador

Visit our YouTube Channel for these videos and more:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/SOPMotherJosephProv> (in English)

Textes: Steve Pehanich  
Communications Director MJP



The people of Arcatao, in the mountains of El Salvador, are building a thriving parish community with an impressive catechism program, joy-filled liturgies and a nursing program helping with basic medical needs including transportation to hospitals three hours away. Sister Vilma Franco is walking with parishioners, organizing ministries and leading liturgies.

Staying in school while facing economic challenges is a daunting task for many but the Beca (scholarship) program makes a difference in students' lives. Sisters Marita Capili and Marcia Gatica manage the program which requires students to maintain good grades, design and complete community service programs and attend formation classes. The Beca program gives students the confidence to become active in their communities by helping themselves and others.





Members of San Marcos Evangelista Church organize sacramental prep and catechism classes, run a group to help young mothers and celebrate with festivals and other gatherings. They'd like a pastor for their church but first they must have a place for the priest to live – so they are building a house, too! The workers are the winners of the 2023 Mother Joseph Award. Follow their story on the video examining their wonderful work.



Please click on the QR code or on any other picture to have access to MJP Youtube page.

Holy Angels Province



Western Canada

### Community Exposure in Yakima (excerpts )

Azenette Trongco, novice and Rezebeth Noceja, SP

Two Sisters in initial formation went on a community exposure to Yakima, Washington, USA, from Western Canada from April 28 to May 13, 2023. Sister Rezebeth Noceja, a temporary vowed Sister, and Azenette Trongco, a Candidate, both from Holy Angels Province, began learning the Spanish language with Sister Josie Ramac from Mother Joseph Province in early 2022. The city

of Yakima has a big community of people from Mexico and other Spanish speaking countries so it was decided that to culminate their classes in Spanish, Sister Rezebeth and Azenette will go to Yakima, where Sister Josie is missioned, for an immersion. Read on to learn about their experience.



## THE TRAVEL

The Sisters began their journey from Calgary, AB, to Yakima, WA, on April 28, 2023 at 6AM and it was a day's worth of travel. The two crossed the border between Canada and USA by car and spent 16 hours on the road.

## ATTENDING THE CONGRESS AND HELPING WITH THE VOCATION PROMOTION

*Every year, the Spanish Catholic community in Yakima holds a charismatic congress that serves to enliven the faith of the members of the Catholic community in Yakima and in nearby towns. Many families and individuals come to participate and everything is in Spanish. The Vocation committee of Mother Joseph Province participated in this event to promote vocations to the Sisters of Providence.*

"I could not say I helped much with the promotion because I just stood there and helped organize the table display. I could not interact verbally with people, mainly because of my limited Spanish vocabulary. Most of the time, Sisters Josie and Marisol did the talking", said Sister Azenette.



Sister Rezebeth adds that: "it would be good for us to support vocation promotion, led by my novice companion, Marie Thérèse Gnamazo, and Hermana Marisol Avila. It was lovely to see some Sisters and Associates at the booth promoting vocation to religious life and in particular, to our community."



## THE ENCOUNTER WITH FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS IN YAKIMA

Part of the schedule for Sister Rezebeth and Azenette was to meet with individuals and a family who are all Spanish-speaking in order to truly immerse the two in the language.



They had the pleasure of meeting with the Hernandez family; Señora Marta and her son, Hector; Señora Obdulia; Padre Ricardo Villareal; and some fellow Filipinos: Loretta, Emma, and Lani and her husband.



MEETING THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN YAKIMA AND SEATTLE

There were opportunities for the Sisters to visit and have dinner with some of the local communities in Seattle and Yakima. They visited the twin houses in Yakima where Sisters Marisol, Roberta, and Donna live; in Seattle, St. Joseph Residence; one of the apartments at Caritas Court where Sisters Celia Jo and Joanne live; another local house where Sisters Judith, Beverly, Beatrice, Karin, and Marie Thérèse live; and the local house where Sisters Felma and Jacqueline live.



A FEEL OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN YAKIMA

During the immersion, the Sisters attended a funeral mass at St. Joseph's Parish and went for weekday masses at Holy Redeemer parish.

## PERSPECTIVE OF THE MINISTRY TO THOSE EXPERIENCING POVERTY IN YAKIMA

The Sisters had a chance to stay with Sister Marisol whose residence is located in an area where there is homelessness, illegal drugs, violence, etc.



*Sister Rezebeth explains:* "Our main temporary residence in Yakima was at Sister Josie's place but we also had the privilege of staying at the house where Sister Marisol lives, in a part of the town where the unhoused population gather. I thought my experience living at the Novitiate house in Edmonton was colourful enough but the two houses in Yakima proved to be much more in the center of poverty, homelessness, illegal drugs, death and violence, and food insecurity. It is a sad sight to see, and sometimes a scary one. The complicated combination of the issues I mentioned above makes for a vicious cycle of pain and hardship without wrap-around services and support from the government and from other citizens."

### PERSONAL TAKE-AWAY FROM THE EXPERIENCE

"During my time in Yakima, and with the knowledge that our Congregation is getting closer to losing its frontiers, I entertained the thought of possibly ministering there. There is a good small community vibe there that I can see myself getting comfortable with. I realized the great importance of learning a third language through this immersion." Concludes Sister Rezebeth.

To read the full text: <https://providenceintl.org/>

*Initial Formation* **SP** Entrances, vows

*Perpetual Vows*



*More on initial formation, becoming a Pre Novice and renewal vows - Providence Missive December 2023*

Nagwa Gameel  
August 10, 2023  
Alexandria, Egypt

*Temporary Vows*

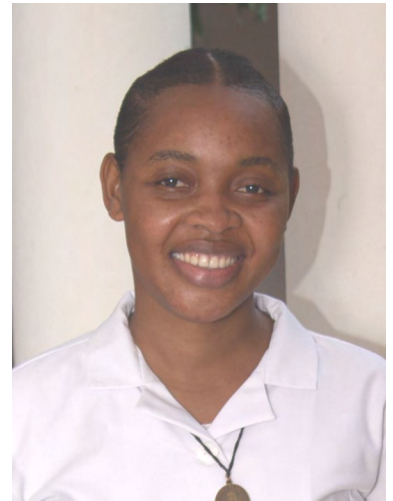
*Entrance to the Noviciate*



Natacha Gracia  
August 27, 2023  
Torbeck, Haiti



Filienne Vilsaint  
August 25, 2023  
Torbeck, Haiti



Odline Colas  
August 25, 2023  
Torbeck, Haiti

