

Echoes of Émilie

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In Memory of Pope Francis and in the Spirit of Émilie Tavernier Gamelin

As I write these lines, the world is mourning the passing of Pope Francis. This great man, weakened by illness but still firm in his appeal to tenderness and overflowing with humanity, leaves us all orphans of a man with a voice that knew how to whisper in the ear of the wounded of this world.

In these moments of deep emotion, a figure from the past appears as a silent and fraternal presence. Blessed Émilie Tavernier Gamelin, foundress of the Sisters of Providence, is one of those rare souls whose compassion silently changes the course of history. It is as if two souls, separated by centuries, had reached out their hands in the same mission:

to love to the end, without calculating the cost, restlessly and beyond any judgment.

In a world that continues being ravaged by war, bereavements, division and injustice, we cannot help but think that Mother Gamelin's passion is as relevant as ever. Her example is a vivid reminder that even in the most difficult times, we can love, face challenges and help build a more compassionate world, one action at a time. Such a spirituality of service resonates strongly with that of Pope Francis,

who said in one of his homilies: "It is not just about helping the poor, but about living among them, mourning with them,



extending a hand without expecting anything in return. This is where Christ dwells.”

These words could be used to summarize the biography of our dear Émilie. She did not only help the most disadvantaged: she became part of their lives, their sorrows, their silence. She believed, like Pope Francis, in a Church that touches the wounds of the world with tenderness and truth.

In the mid-19th century, Montreal was a city deeply struck by poverty and social upheaval, plagued by epidemics, afflicted by famine and transformed by massive immigration. In this context of economic instability and disparity, and after the death of her husband and children, Mrs. Gamelin could have remained withdrawn in her grief and ignore the situation. But she chose to lend a helping hand and transform her own pain into an active force to serve others.

While many saw a crisis, Émilie recognized a mission. While society closed its doors, she opened her home. Her commitment to the abandoned elderly, to the orphans, the immigrants and the lonely women showed that, like Pope Francis, Émilie believed that charity cannot be lived at a distance. Both, each in their own time, embodied an active compassion, concrete and sometimes disturbing.

Pope Francis said: “We cannot remain insensitive towards human suffering. We must build a just, fraternal society, where everyone has a place.”

Émilie, long before him, understood this without having heard it. She built a long-lasting work of social good,

proof that charity rooted in justice transcends the centuries. Since their foundation in 1843, the Sisters of Providence, inspired by the charism of their foundress, have continued to take simple actions that have changed so many lives: providing food, caring, accompanying those in need, without ever judging.

Today, in 2025, we are also living difficult times: growing inequalities, migration crises, growing hatred, abandonment of the elderly. And yet the legacy of Pope Francis and Blessed Émilie Tavernier Gamelin remains a source of hope. Both remind us that love is still possible amid chaos, and that holiness is lived through simple actions: listening, welcoming, caring, defending. During dark moments in history, but in different centuries and continents, both embodied the light that restores hope to all those who believed they had lost it.



Today, as the Church mourns the loss of a father, we can perhaps turn to Blessed Émilie Tavernier Gamelin, a spiritual mother who knew so well the pain of loss. She, who knew how to comfort without words, would surely invite us to continue to believe that service can be the source of change in the world, and would invite us to love one another, despite everything

Nancy Prada
Coordinator
Émilie Gamelin Center



“We desire to heed the plea of suffering humankind in order to feel called, together and as individuals, to break the bonds of injustice and to proclaim God’s justice”.

Pope Francis, message for the World Day of Peace, January 1st, 2025.

Sources of the images:

1. Mother Gamelin and her works. Museum of the Sisters of Providence, Montreal, QC Canada.
2. Pope Francis greets an elderly woman during a visit to residents of an underprivileged neighborhood in Asuncion, Paraguay, on July 12, 2015. CNS photo/Paul Haring
3. Painting of Blessed Émilie Tavernier Gamelin on display at the Basilica of Saint Anne-de-Beaupré since June 2019. A replica by the same artist, Quebec painter Pierre Lussier, is on display at the Mother House of the Sisters of Providence and can be admired during a visit to the museum. Sisters of Providence, Montreal, QC Canada.
4. Pope Francis blesses a child after celebrating a mass for migrants in St Peter's Basilica, Rome, on July 8, 2019. © Vatican Media/Reuters
5. Pope Francis offers comfort to an individual during a meeting with a group of the sick, people with disabilities, and the poor, supported by various charitable organizations, at the Indonesian bishops’ conference headquarters. Jakarta, Indonesia. Sept. 5, 2024. CNS photo/Lola Gomez
- 6-7. Paintings by Sister Marie-David, SP, 1893. Museum of the Sisters of Providence, Montreal, QC Canada.
8. Pope Francis releasing a white dove, December 2, 2023. © Vatican Media

We would like to extend a special greeting to our faithful readers, specially those who read our newsletter in **France, Togo, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Pakistan, Dominican Republic and Germany.**



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Musée des Soeurs de la Providence Museum

Extraordinary Month of May in Rome and at the Vatican

What an extraordinary month May has been! We have witnessed the 2025 Jubilee Year bringing us together as Pilgrims of Hope! We began the month mourning the death of our beloved Pope Francis who was called to his heavenly home on Easter Monday. He left us a rich legacy of how to live fully, until death, as a faithful loving servant of God's people, especially those who are least loved in society. His Easter Sunday blessing was a special gift to the world. His challenging words and actions throughout his papacy will continue to inspire and motivate us in our ministries. His memorable funeral on April 26 and the procession through the streets of Rome to his burial place were witnessed by the world through live stream.



Pope Francis, in 2014

Conclave Results: Pope Leo XIV



Pope Leo XIV as he appears
on the central balcony
of St. Peter's Basilica on May 8, 2025.

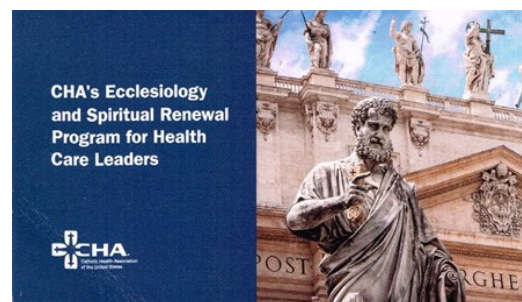
Eleven days after Pope Francis's funeral, on Wednesday, May 7, the Conclave gathered the 251 members of the College of Cardinals from around

the world. Of those members, 133 were eligible to vote in the election. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the cardinals began their discernment to determine whom God was calling to lead the Catholic Church during this troubled time globally.

The next day, Thursday, May 8, white smoke rose from the Sistine Chapel, proclaiming that the 266th successor of St. Peter had been elected. Thousands of people hastened from all parts of Rome to be present for the announcement. Many Jubilee Year pilgrims were already in Rome. A big surprise awaited them as Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost was introduced to the world as Pope Leo XIV: a native of the US, a citizen of Peru, a pastoral missionary, and a former leader of the Augustinian Congregation. He is also a canonist who is fluent in many languages and had been serving as Prefect in the Dicastery for Bishops. He brings tremendous background and vast experience in the universal Church and awareness of the diverse needs of her people.

His first words as he addressed the multitude from the balcony were the same as those of the risen Christ: "Peace be with you." Pope Leo called for "an unarmed and disarming peace." How fitting at this time in history when so many are suffering from the effects of war and violence of so many kinds!

Program of the Catholic Health Association



Providentially, I arrived in Rome on Sunday May 11 to attend the weeklong **Catholic Health Association (CHA) Ecclesiology and Spiritual Renewal Program for Health Care Leaders**, as a member of the

Providence St. Joseph Health System Board of Directors joining 50 health care leaders from throughout the United States. Rome and Vatican City were electric with Jubilee pilgrims, who were as astonished as we were to be present at sacred sites during this historical time.

The well-organized and expertly facilitated program was both didactic, as well as experiential. One of the highlights among the experiences lived with fellow Program attendees was the opportunity to visit the Papal Basilica of Saint Mary Major and pray before the simple tomb of Pope Francis.

Our beloved Pope Francis is buried near the little Pauline chapel with the icon of Mary Salus Populi Romani where he knelt in prayer before and after every trip. We felt the spirit of Pope Francis very near, especially his profound love for those who are poor and marginalized. This reinforced for me our own Providence mission and values and dear Blessed Émilie Gamelin's ministry.



Tomb of Pope Francis at the Sainte-Marie-Majeure Basilica, in Rome.

Pope Francis:
Rest in peace!



Another highlight was the private evening guided visit to the Vatican Museum and Sistine Chapel on May 8. We were provided with significant reflection time within the Sistine Chapel to soak in its beauty and ponder the many biblical stories gracing the ceiling and walls, so vividly portrayed there. The Conclave had completed its discernment one week before and we were prepared for a cancellation of the scheduled visit. Yet, Providence provided yet again!

Installation of Pope Leo XIV

As I knew I would be in Rome for the week, I was able to arrange, in advance, meetings related to the Causes of Blessed Émilie and Mother Bernarda Morin. These meetings took place following the CHA program. Once again, Providence provided! Staying in Rome

through Monday allowed me to be present in St. Peter Square for the remarkable installation liturgy of Pope Leo XIV on Sunday, May 18, 2025. It was such a privilege to be with the 200,000 pilgrims, world leaders, and dignitaries from around the globe. I was assisted by a lovely young Tanzanian woman who kindly offered me her chair, and then providentially another nearby chair became available for me. All the chairs were filled by 7:00 a.m.!

I had a profound experience of Church as I sat for three hours before the liturgy with strangers and fellow pilgrims whose languages I did not speak (Polish or German) communicating with smiles, gestures, and kindness. They shared their bread and crackers with me, and I shared a granola bar with them. We were in communion! After a while, one woman offered me a German holy card of Our Sorrowful Mother. Then, we all shared great joy when Pope Leo XIV passed close by us in the gleaming white Popemobile.



The ceremony in which Pope Leo received the fisherman's ring, and the Pallium was very moving. We witnessed what was happening inside St. Peter's Basilica on the large screen before Pope Leo emerged in St. Peter's Square for the Mass itself.



Pope Leo's powerful homily certainly reinforced our mission and values as followers of Blessed Émilie and St. Vincent de Paul. He spoke as "a brother who desires to be the servant of your faith and your joy, walking with you on the path of God's love for He

wants us all to be united in one family: Love and unity are two dimensions of the mission entrusted to Peter by Jesus.” He said that “our great desire should be for a united Church, a sign of unity and communion which becomes a leaven for a reconciled world” and to “build a new world where peace reigns.”

Pope Leo insisted: "This is the hour to love! We are called to offer God’s love to everyone... The heart of the Gospel is the love of God that makes us brothers and sisters. How urgently our world and its leaders need this message today! As a religious congregation on our Journey to Oneness, how can we, too, take Pope Leo’s message to heart? I could not help but ponder: Was this not also the message that Blessed Émilie and St. Vincent, steeped as they were in the Gospel and so active in addressing the needs of the suffering in their time?

Dicastery for Canonization of Saints

Before leaving Rome, I met with Brother Luigi Guarneri, FSC, the postulator for the Cause of Émilie Tavernier Gamelin, at the Christian Brothers school where he resides. On Monday, he accompanied me on my informative visit with Father Boguslaw Turek, CSMA, undersecretary at the Dicastery for the Canonization of Saints. Father Boguslaw Turek kindly answered questions about the upcoming diocesan processes related to the Cause of Blessed Émilie. No date has yet been set for the diocesan tribunal to convene.



At the left Brother Luigi Guarneri, FSC, the postulator for the Cause of Émilie Tavernier Gamelin
At the right, Father Boguslaw Turek, CSMA, undersecretary at the Dicastery for the Canonization of Saints
In the middle, Sister Karin Dufault, SP, Vice-Postulator of the Cause of Émilie Tavernier Gamelin.

I also met with Fr. Giuseppe Guerra, CM, the Postulator for the Cause of Bernarda Morin. Let us continue to

pray for the work of our postulators and the members of the Dicastery that our two Causes advance.

Once again, we ask you to encourage others to seek the intercession of Blessed Émilie Gamelin, and to share with us at the Office of the Cause any favors received through her intercession.



Father David McCallum, director of the Discerning Leadership Program, and Sister Karin Dufault, SP, Vice-Postulator of the Cause of Émilie Tavernier Gamelin

I also visited the Jesuit Curia, where Father David McCallum, the director of the Discerning Leadership Program, showed me their beautiful chapels and the extraordinary view of the Vatican from the rooftop. Another memorable visit was to the International Center of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, a congregation with sisters living at our Mother House. Sister Janine welcomed me and showed me special places, including the tomb of their foundress, Mother Mary of the Passion (Helene de Chappotin), before whom we prayed.

Conclusion

As I experienced each of these very full days in Rome and the Vatican with all its many encounters and pondered the exceptional privilege granted to me at this time in the history of our universal Church, I am filled with hope and gratitude at how Providence is working in and through so many wonderful faith-filled people. These *Pilgrims of Hope* seek to contribute to unity and peace, making God’s love for all known in our world. I believe we can expect Pope Leo XIV to continue, in his own way, the Spirit-led synodal path begun by Pope Francis, paying special attention to those who are poor and marginalized.



All signs point to Pope Leo XIV being a capable leader who will guide us well as a humble servant, a man of peace, and a bridge builder who proclaims the gospel message of God's love for all.

I encourage you to read or listen to both the homily at Pope Francis's funeral and the homily of Pope Leo XIV at the installation liturgy. Both are available online:

- Homily - Funeral Mass of the Roman Pontiff Francis (26 April 2025)

<https://www.vatican.va/content/vatican/en/special/sede-vacante/sede-vacante-2025/20250426-messa-esequiale-francesco.html>

- Homily - Holy Mass for the Beginning of the Pontificate of Pope Leo XIV (18 May 2025)

<https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/homilies/2025/documents/20250518-inizio-pontificato.html>

Let us continue to give thanks for all that Providence has provided, especially the gift of Pope Francis to our Church. We can imagine that Blessed Émilie was there to welcome him to Heaven with a warm embrace.

We also give thanks for Pope Leo XIV and pray for him each day that his vision of unity within and service by the Church be realized for the good of all God's people.

Peace be with you!

Sister Karin Dufault, SP

Vice-Postulator
Bureau of the Cause
Émilie Tavernier Gamelin



Prayer to Blessed Émilie Gamelin

Foundress of the Congregation
of the Sisters of Providence

O merciful Heart of Jesus who, in your infinite tenderness for suffering humanity, have filled Blessed Émilie Gamelin with a tender compassion for human miseries, and have raised her for the accomplishment of the designs of your Providence on the community of which she became the foundress, deign to grant us the grace we solicit through her prayers that she may be glorified on earth and that, in imitating her virtues, we may glorify you in heaven. Our Mother of Sorrows, whom Blessed Émilie Gamelin so faithfully honoured and served on earth, glorify your servant. Amen.

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Please inform of any favour obtained

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This prayer is said daily at 11:45 a.m. during the weekdays by sisters and colleagues who wish, in the little chapel of the Providence International Center, for all the intentions recommended for the intercession of Blessed Émilie Tavernier Gamelin. Many sisters, Providence Associates and friends throughout the congregation say this prayer, individually or communally.

Mother Gamelin

Fresco, by Pierre Lussier

Available in the following formats:
Foam board printing and greeting cards.



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<https://providenceintl.org/centre-emilie-gamelin-et-musee/souvenirs/>



Gratitude to Émilie



Émilie, you lend an attentive ear to all our needs... Thank you!

I am sending you this small donation asking you at the same time to pray for my family. From this very moment I thank God because I am confident in His love.

L.H., Victoriaville, QC

Please receive a donation to the Cause Émilie Gamelin for a favor received. My son found a job that better suits his physical health. We continue to pray to Mother Gamelin for all our needs.

J.P., Princeville, QC

Thank you once again to Mother Gamelin, who granted my request in only one week. My daughter found a place to live. Thank you again!

C.B., Montreal, QC

Thank you, Mother Gamelin, for helping me find a good long-term care facility (CHSLD) for my 99-year-old mother. The location is optimal, and the accommodation is excellent. May Mother Gamelin also help my friend F. find suitable accommodation for her and her family.

F.G., Saint-Hubert, QC

Here is a donation for a favor received, that is the sale of a house. Thank you for your prayers!

M. L., Moncton, NB

I would like to thank Émilie for her presence in my life. Thanks for all her kindness! Please accept this donation for her Cause of Canonization.

S. F., Longueuil, QC

Please accept my donation as a recognition to Mother Émilie for all favors received. In June 2023, my husband suffered a ruptured aneurysm, and he is recovering well. He will be able to drive again soon. We could also sell our house. My husband and I pray to Mother Gamelin very often.

F.B., St-Paulin, QC

Here is an offering for a Mass to express our gratitude to Émilie Gamelin for a favor granted.

G.C., Lachine, QC

Thank you, Mother Gamelin! I am always faithful to the novenas I pray to Mother Émilie Gamelin. The novenas allow my prayers to always be answered through my faith. I also thank Émilie for the miracles she has granted to my family, my daughter, and my friends until today. Your prayers are of great comfort to me, very much appreciated! Despite the housing shortage and rising rental costs, I could find affordable housing. I knew my prayers would be answered! Thank you, Mother Gamelin!

L.T., Trois-Rivières, QC

Thank you, Mother Gamelin, for helping my granddaughter A.A. succeed in her assistant nursing course. Now, she has a job and is very happy. I also had knee surgery, and I thank Émilie for her support. Thank you, Mother Gamelin, for granting a small favor to my mother and for helping her.

J.L., Paspébiac, QC

Here is a floral donation for the tomb of Blessed Émilie Gamelin who has always watched over me and my family.

M.R.G., Montreal, QC

Thank you, dear Blessed Émilie, for favors obtained. Thank you for the successful knee surgery and for recovering so quickly. I prayed to you, Émilie, for family unity and for protecting my niece R. while traveling in Alberta to settle down. Émilie, thank you for your intercession!

M.C., Edmonton, AB

Here are some mass contributions. My great-grandson was ill, and he is much better now. I am doing better too. I thank God, the Sacred Heart of Jesus,

Our Lady of Sorrows and Blessed Émilie with my deepest love and gratitude for all their help.

A.L., Lachine, QC

I would like to thank Émilie for curing L., my 5-year-old great-grandson of cancer. He's now 7 and doing well. Many thanks, Émilie!

J.P., Ville-Marie, QC

Other expression of gratitude to Mother Émilie Gamelin for favors received.

- A., Rivière-du-Loup, QC
- N.R. and G.T., Beloeil, QC
- D.D. and M.R., Terrebonne, QC
- L.B., Québec, QC
- G.C., Hearst, ON
- L.P.C., St-Antoine Sud, NB
- L.B.V., Shawinigan, QC
- M.P., Trois-Rivières, QC
- P.B., Montreal, QC
- N.B.M., Ste-Marthe-sur-le-Lac, QC
- M.R. and D.D., Terrebonne
- S. and C.D., Forestville, QC
- J.P., Laval, QC
- C.G., Cornwall, ON
- H.D-S., Vancouver, BC

Blessed Émilie Gamelin,
Pray for Us!

Sister Karin Dufault, SP

Vice-Postulator
Bureau of the Cause Émilie Tavernier Gamelin



Let us pray
for PEACE
in the World!

Resources and inspiration

<https://providenceintl.org/en/resources-and-inspiration/>

Gratitude to Émilie

Please address all favors received and prayer requests, as well as any donation or contributions for a Mass or prayer candles to:

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Sister Karin Dufault, SP

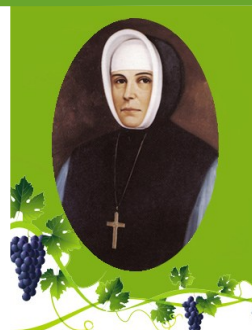
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To Blessed Émilie
we confide
all the intentions
that you carry in your hearts,
both spiritual and temporal;
she will certainly know
how to lend an attentive ear
to all your needs.