Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart

Mother Joseph was born Joseph Pariseau, daughter of a coachmaker and his wife, in 1823 in a village near Montreal, Quebec. In 1843, she followed her heart and joined the newly founded community of the Sisters of Providence.

When Esther's father presented her to Mother Emilie Gamelin, he described her remarkable range of skills. "She has learned carpentry from me and can handle tools as well as I can," he said. "Moreover, she can plan and supervise the work of others, and I assure you, Madame, she will someday make a very good superior."

This devoted young woman became Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, builder, architect extraordinaire and visionary foundress of the Sisters of Providence in the West. Shortly before she died, Mother Joseph told her sister companions, "Whatever concerns the poor is always our affair."

Mother Joseph's superior general eulogized her: "She had the characteristics of genius: incessant works, immense sacrifices, great undertakings; and she never counted the cost to self."

For her contributions, Mother Joseph was chosen in 1980 to represent the state of Washington in National Statuary Hall in Washington, D.C. Her life continues to inspire others to carry on the Providence Mission.

The living legacy of the people of Providence

Beginning with Mother Emilie Gamelin, the Sisters of Providence have always collaborated with others to further the Providence ministry of health care, education and social services. In establishing the Northwest's first hospital, for example, Mother Joseph worked with the Vancouver Ladies of Charity, a philanthropic organization that included Catholics, Protestants and Jews.

The tradition of collaboration continues today with the thousands of employees, physicians, volunteers and benefactors who are the "people of Providence." In their document titled "Hopes and Aspirations for Providence Ministries," the Sisters of Providence offer inspiration and encouragement for carrying on the Providence Mission.

"In your own time," the sisters write, "celebrate the living legacy of Providence as lived among your colleagues. In this way, Providence lives faithfully."

Taryn Stephens, RN, tucks in a resident at the Center for Medically Fragile Children. She is among the thousands of staff who continue the Providence Mission through their compassionate service.

Cover photo:
These five Sisters of Providence made the journey from Montreal to Fort Vancouver in 1856. Front row, from left: Sister Praxedes of Providence, Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, Sister Mary of the Precious Blood. Back row, from left: Sister Vincent de Paul, Sister Blandine of the Holy Angels.

Our Providence Tradition

Our Mission
As people of Providence, we reveal God's love for all, especially the poor and vulnerable, through our compassionate service.

Our Core Values
Respect, Compassion, Justice, Excellence, Stewardship

www.providence.org
Our Providence Heritage

Providence Health & Services continues the leading ministry that the Sisters of Providence began in 1843. Two pioneering sisters, Mother Emilie Gamelin and Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, devoted their lives to bringing hope to those who hurt and to leading others in this timeless call.

Mother Emilie Gamelin, Foundress of the Sisters of Providence

Emilie found solace and strength in contemplating Mary, Mother of Sorrows, who became a model of compassionate charity for her. She dedicated her life to the poor and vulnerable. In 1843, Emilie and the bishop of Montreal established the religious community of the Sisters of Providence, and Emilie was appointed as its first superior. The religious community grew rapidly under Mother Gamelin, serving the poor, sick, mentally ill, elderly, orphans, prisoners, and disabled.

While caring for people in need, Mother Gamelin died of cholera in 1851. “Humility, simplicity, charity” were her last words to the sisters. These words guide all who continue the Mission of Providence today.

“Providence Health & Services continues the leading ministry that the Sisters of Providence began in 1843.”

— Mother Emilie Gamelin

Journey to the Northwest Frontier

In 1852, the year after Mother Emilie’s death, Bishop A.M.A. Blanchet of Fort Vancouver, Oregon Territory, visited the Sisters of Providence in Montreal. Knowing of their service to the poor in Montreal, the bishop begged their assistance for the Nesqually diocese in the Pacific Northwest frontier.

Two days after they left San Francisco, the sisters sailed on to Panama and crossed the isthmus to reach the Pacific Ocean. Two days later, the sisters safely reached Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River. A one-room attic in the bishop’s house became their first living quarters. A few months later, the sisters moved into a small wooden house that would serve as their first convent in this pioneer country.

The Little Mission Grows

Under the leadership of Mother Joseph, the sisters settled into the new ministries of Fort Vancouver, and their little mission began to grow. The first request they received was one that no sister companion of Mother Emilie Gamelin could deny: 2-year old Emily Lake, who showed signs of mental disorders, was brought to the sisters and happily welcomed into their care. Over the years many children would be served by schools and orphanages founded by the Sisters of Providence, including Providence Academy, the first permanent school in the Northwest.

St. Joseph Hospital, Vancouver, Wash., 1900s

A.M.A. Blanchet, Bishop of Nesqually, 1843, and Mother Bernard Morin, S.P., c. 1846.

A one-room attic in the bishop’s house became their first living quarters. A few months later, the sisters moved into a small wooden house that would serve as their first convent in this pioneer country.

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St. Joseph Hospital, Vancouver, Wash., 1900s

A.M.A. Blanchet, Bishop of Nesqually, 1843, and Mother Bernard Morin, S.P., c. 1846.

As part of their ministry, the sisters accepted his petition, and Sister Bernard Morin and her companions began their westward journey. They landed at the wrong location and had to wait several months to reach the city of Fort Vancouver. On the return trip to Montreal, they providentially landed in Valparaiso, Chile, where they stayed to serve orphans and others in need. In gratitude, the bishop gave them a small coin as the “first donation to the hospital,” the sisters shared the name of their foundress, was brought to the sisters and happily welcomed into their care. Over the years many children would be served by schools and orphanages founded by the Sisters of Providence, including Providence Academy, the first permanent school in the Northwest.

St. Joseph Hospital, Vancouver, Wash., 1900s

A.M.A. Blanchet, Bishop of Nesqually, 1843, and Mother Bernard Morin, S.P., c. 1846.

The mission is making strides, moving rapidly than we had hoped. The care of the sick, including those suffering from mental illness, provides a healing and comforting environment.

— Providence of the West

Their dedication and their labors laid the foundation for today’s Providence Health & Services, which spans five states: Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Montana and California.

St. Joseph Hospital, Vancouver, Wash., 1900s

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St. Joseph Hospital, Vancouver, Wash., 1900s

A.M.A. Blanchet, Bishop of Nesqually, 1843, and Mother Bernard Morin, S.P., c. 1846.
Emilie’s love for God and humanity led her to dedicate her life to serving the poor and vulnerable. In 1843, Emilie and the bishop of Montreal established the religious community of the Sisters of Providence, and Emilie was appointed as its first superior. The religious community grew rapidly under Mother Gamelin, serving the poor, sick, mentally ill, elderly, orphans, prisoners and disabled. While caring for people in need, Mother Gamelin died of cholera in 1851. “Humility, simplicity, charity” were her last words to the sisters. These words guide all who continue the Mission of Providence today.

Emilie’s example of kindness and charity inspired others in this timeless call. Mother Emilie Gamelin and Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, like many others, were broken by tragedy. Mother Gamelin’s death, shattered as, one after another, her three small sons and her husband died. Her heart was broken as, one after another, her three small sons and her husband died. By age 28, however, Emilie’s happy and stable world was shattered as, one after another, her three small sons and her husband died. Emilie was left with a broken heart and a new vocation.

When watching beloved landmarks of Montreal fade away in the early-1900s, Emilie Tavernier showed exhibits of suffering and pain, and put food into sacks clutched by people who came needing sustenance. When she was 8 years old, Emilie suffered the death of her mother, and she was brought up under the care of an aunt and uncle. As she grew, so did her acts of kindness and charity. Emilie's happy and stable world was shattered as, one after another, her three small sons and her husband died. Emilie was left with a broken heart and a new vocation.

Emilie’s love for God and humanity led her to dedicate her life to serving the poor and vulnerable. In 1843, Emilie and the bishop of Montreal established the religious community of the Sisters of Providence, and Emilie was appointed as its first superior. The religious community grew rapidly under Mother Gamelin, serving the poor, sick, mentally ill, elderly, orphans, prisoners and disabled. While caring for people in need, Mother Gamelin died of cholera in 1851. “Humility, simplicity, charity” were her last words to the sisters. These words guide all who continue the Mission of Providence today.

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Emilie was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 2001, receiving the title of Blessed Emilie Gamelin.beatification is a major milestone in the process of declaring a person a saint. “Humility, simplicity, charity” were the words given to the sisters by their foundress, Emilie Gamelin, on her death. As part of their ministry, the Sisters of Providence had established more than 30 institutions in the West, including hospitals, schools and orphanages. Their dedication and their labors laid the foundation for today’s Providence Health & Services, which spans five states: Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Montana and California.

With encouragement from a priest of the diocese who gave Mother Joseph a small coin as the “first donation to the hospital,” the sisters responded to citizens’ requests for a hospital, and in 1858 opened St. Joseph Hospital in Fort Vancouver. It was the first permanent hospital in the Northwest.

The little mission grows

Under the leadership of Mother Joseph, the sisters settled into the sprawling Fort Vancouver, and their little mission began to grow. The first request they received was one that no other companion of Mother Emilie Gamelin could deny: 2-year old Emily Lake, who showed signs of being mentally ill, was brought to the sisters and happily welcomed into their care. Over the years many children would be served by schools and orphanages founded by the Sisters of Providence, and Emilie was appointed as its first superior. Providence Academy, the first permanent school in the Northwest, was founded by the sisters. With encouragement from a priest of the diocese who gave Mother Joseph a small coin as the “first donation to the hospital,” the sisters were happy to recall their dedication and their labors laid the foundation for today’s Providence Health & Services, which spans five states: Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Montana and California.

The mission is making deeper roots than we had hoped, but once we give our patients … generally we impress them.

– Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart

In 1852, the year after Mother Emilie’s death, Bishop A.M.A. Blanchet of Fort Vancouver, Oregon Territory, visited the Sisters of Providence in Montreal. Knowing of their service to the poor in Montreal, the bishop begged their assistance for the newly formed community in the Pacific Northwest. The sisters accepted his petition, and Sister Bernard Moin and her companions began their westward journey. They landed at the wrong locations and directions, but continued north to New York and boarded a steamer that would take them to their first port of call, Kingston, Jamaica. They sailed on to Panama and crossed the isthmus to reach the Pacific Ocean. Two days later, off San Francisco, a terrifying storm arose during the night, and the sisters realized they were “sadder than wild beasts howling at night.”

The storm abated, and on Dec. 8, 1856, the sisters safely reached Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River. A one-room attic in the bishop’s house became their first convent. A few months later, the sisters moved into a small wooden house that would serve as their first convent in this pioneer country.

A.M.A. Blanchet, Bishop of Nesqually, 1883 and Mother Bernard Moin, S.P., ca. 1846.

Emilie’s happy and stable world of kindness and charity turned to one of loneliness and hardship as, one after another, her three small sons and her husband died. By age 28, however, Emilie’s happy and stable world had shattered, and with no one to receive them they turned back toward home. On the return trip to Montreal, they providentially landed in Valparaiso, Chile, where they stayed to serve orphans and others in need. Two days after they left San Francisco, a terrifying storm arose during the night, and the sisters realized they were “sadder than wild beasts howling at night.”

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Mother Gamelin was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 2001, receiving the title of Blessed Emilie Gamelin. Beatification is Catholicism’s second step in the process of proclaiming a person a saint. Emilie was elevated to the title of Blessed Emilie Gamelin. Beatiﬁcation is Catholicism’s second step in the process of proclaiming a person a saint. Emilie was elevated to the title of Blessed Emilie Gamelin. Beatiﬁcation is Catholicism’s second step in the process of proclaiming a person a saint. Emilie was elevated to the title of Blessed Emilie Gamelin. Beatiﬁcation is Catholicism’s second step in the process of proclaiming a person a saint.

"I pray that you always love the poor and that peace and unity be always with you."

– Mother Emilie Gamelin

**Our Providence Heritage**

Providence Health & Services continues the healing ministry that the Sisters of Providence began in 1843. Two pioneering sisters, Mother Emilie Gamelin and Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, devoted their lives to bringing hope to those who hurt and to leading others in this timeless call.

**Mother Emilie Gamelin, foundress of the Sisters of Providence**

Born in Montreal, Quebec, in 1800, Emilie Tavernier showed a generous spirit toward the poor from the time she could walk and talk. She loved to answer the door and feed food to those in need. She shared the name of her foundress, was brought to the sisters and happily welcomed into their care. Over the years many children would be served by schools and orphanages founded by the Sisters of Providence, including Providence Academy, the first permanent school in the Northwest. The mission is making headway more impressively than wild beasts howling at night.”

The storm abated and, on Dec. 8, 1856, the sisters safely reached Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River. A one-room attic in the bishop's house became their first convent. A few months later, the sisters moved into a small wooden house that would serve as their first convent in this pioneer country.

**Journey to the Northwest frontier**

In 1852, the year after Mother Emilie, Father, Bishop A.M.A. Blanchet of Fort Vancouver, Oregon Territory, visited the Sisters of Providence in Montreal. Knowing of their service to the poor in Montreal, the bishop begged their assistance for the Nesqually diocese in the Pacific Northwest frontier. Knowing of their service to the poor in Montreal, the bishop begged their assistance for the Nesqually diocese in the Pacific Northwest frontier. Knowing of their service to the poor in Montreal, the bishop begged their assistance for the Nesqually diocese in the Pacific Northwest frontier. Knowing of their service to the poor in Montreal, the bishop begged their assistance for the Nesqually diocese in the Pacific Northwest frontier.

The sisters accepted his petition, and Sister Bernard Morin and her companions began their westward journey. They landed at the wrong port, Fort Vancouver, of Providence in Montreal. The sisters were their first living quarters. A few years later these small beginnings. "Their dedication and their labors laid the foundation for today's Providence Health & Services, which spans five states: Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Montana, and California.

**The little mission grows**

Under the leadership of Mother Joseph, the sisters settled into the surroundings of Fort Vancouver, and their little mission began to grow. The first request they received was one that no sister companion of Mother Emilie Gamelin could deny: 2-year-old Emily Lake, who showed marks of many of their foundress, was brought to the sisters and happily welcomed into their care. Over the years many children would be served by schools and orphanages founded by the Sisters of Providence, including Providence Academy, the first permanent school in the Northwest. The mission is making headway more impressively than wild beasts howling at night.”

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**A.M.A. Blanchet, Bishop of Nesqually, 1843 and Mother Bernard Morin, S.P., ca. 1848.**

**Sisters depart the Nome mission, 1918.**

**Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart**

Watching beloved landmarks of Montreal fade away in the early November fog, the sisters traveled to New York and boarded the steamer that would take them to their first port of call, Kingston, Jamaica. They sailed on to Panama and crossed the isthmus to reach the Pacific Ocean. Two days later they left San Francisco, a terrifying storm arose during the night, and the sisters made home safe from the ocean. "It seems to me we give our patients … favorably."

On the return trip to Montreal, they providentially landed in New York. “The mission is making headway more impressively than wild beasts howling at night.”

With encouragement from a priest of the diocese who gave Mother Joseph a small coin as the “first donation to the hospital,” the sisters responded to citizens’ request for a hospital and in 1858 opened St. Joseph’s in Fort Vancouver. It was the first permanent hospital in the Northwest. The sisters were besieged with requests from clergy and civic leaders to bring their works to towns throughout the West. To help support the new ministries, the sisters were their first living quarters. A few years later these small beginnings. "Their dedication and their labors laid the foundation for today's Providence Health & Services, which spans five states: Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Montana, and California.

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Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart

Mother Joseph was born Joseph Pierre Pariseau, daughter of a coachmaker and his wife, in 1823 in a village near Montreal, Quebec. In 1843 she followed her heart and joined the newly founded community of the Sisters of Providence.

When Esther's father presented her to Mother Emilie Gamelin, he described her remarkable range of skills. "She has learned carpentry from me and can handle tools as well as I can," he said. "Moreover, she can plan and supervise the work of others, and I assure you, Madame, she will someday make a very good superior."

This devoted young woman became Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, builder, architect extraordinaire and visionary foundress of the Sisters of Providence in the West. Shortly before she died, Mother Joseph told her sister companions, "Whatever concerns the poor is always our affair."

Mother Joseph's superior general eulogized her: "She had the characteristics of genius: incessant works, immense sacrifices, great undertakings; and she never counted the cost to self."

For her contributions, Mother Joseph was chosen in 1980 to represent the state of Washington in National Statuary Hall in Washington, D.C. Her life continues to inspire others to carry on the Providence Mission.

The living legacy of the people of Providence

Beginning with Mother Emilie Gamelin, the Sisters of Providence have always collaborated with others to further the Providence ministry of health care, education and social services. In establishing the Northwest's first hospital, for example, Mother Joseph worked with the Vancouver Ladies of Charity, a philanthropic organization that included Catholics, Protestants and Jews.

The tradition of collaboration continues today with the thousands of employees, physicians, volunteers and benefactors who are the "people of Providence." In their document titled "Hopes and Aspirations for Providence Ministries," the Sisters of Providence offer inspiration and encouragement for carrying on the Providence Mission.

"In your own time," the sisters write, "celebrate the living legacy of Providence as lived among your colleagues. In this way, Providence lives faithfully."

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"In your own time," the sisters write, "celebrate the living legacy of Providence as lived among your colleagues. In this way, Providence lives faithfully."

Cover photo: Those five Sisters of Providence made the journey from Montreal to Fort Vancouver in 1856. Front row, from left: Sister Praxedes of Providence, Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, Sister Mary of the Precious Blood. Back row, from left: Sister Vincent de Paul, Sister Blandine of the Holy Angels

Taryn Stephens, RN, tucks in a resident at the Center for Medically Fragile Children. She is among the thousands of staff who continue the Providence Mission through their compassionate service.

OUR MISSION
As people of Providence, we reveal God's love for all, especially the poor and vulnerable, through our compassionate service.

OUR CORE VALUES
Respect, Compassion, Justice, Excellence, Stewardship

www.providence.org
Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart

Mother Joseph was born
other Joseph was born
Esther Pariseau, daughter
of a coachmaker and his wife, in
1823 in a village near Montreal,
Quebec. In 1843 she followed
her heart and joined the newly
founded community of the
Sisters of Providence.
When Esther’s father
presented her to Mother Emilie
Gamelin, he described her
remarkable range of skills.
“She has learned carpentry
from me and can handle
tools as well as I can,” he said.
“Moreover, she can plan and
supervise the work of others,
and I assure you, Madame,
she will someday make a
very good superior.”

'Throughout her life, she was a
devoted young woman
became Mother Joseph of
the Sacred Heart, builder,
architect extraordinaire and
visionary foundress of the
Sisters of Providence in
the West. Shortly before she died, Mother Joseph told her sister
companions, “Whatever concerns the poor is always our aff  air.”

Mother Joseph’s superior general eulogized her: “She had the
characteristics of genius: incessant works, immense sacri/fi  ces,
great undertakings; and she never counted the cost to self.”

For her contributions, Mother Joseph was chosen in 1980 to
represent the state of Washington in National Statuary Hall in
Washington, D.C. Her life continues to inspire others to carry
on the Providence Mission.

The living legacy of the people
of Providence

Beginning with Mother Emilie Gamelin, the Sisters of Providence
have always collaborated with others to further the Providence
ministry of health care, education and social services. In establishing
the Northwest’s fi  rst hospital, for example, Mother Joseph worked
with the Vancouver Ladies of Charity, a philanthropic organization
that included Catholics, Protestants and Jews.
The tradition of collaboration continues today with the thousands
of employees, physicians, volunteers and benefactors who are the
“people of Providence.” In their document titled “Hopes and
Aspirations for Providence Ministries,” the Sisters of Providence
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Our Providence Tradition

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Our Core Values
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