Providence Reflections

A Journey of Courage and Grace

Celebrating Providence Medical Group 2008-2018
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COVER PHOTO: Providence Medical Group, West Olympia Clinic
In 2008, after two years of strategic development work, leaders answered the needs of Southwest Washington communities and established Providence Physician Network (PPN) – now known as Providence Medical Group (PMG). Providence moved beyond hospital walls and into communities, empowering people with greater access to Providence providers who had a vision for our future.

“There was a lack of access to primary, specialty and subspecialty care. In keeping with the rich tradition of Providence, we sought ways to provide for the community,” said Providence Southwest Chief Executive Medrice Coluccio.

“More than 160 years ago the Sisters of Providence began our Mission of serving all, and the creation of Providence Medical Group is just one way we remain steadfast in our Providence Mission, and our vision of health for a better world.

“I am very proud of our SW Providence Medical Group, who provides compassionate and excellent service to those entrusted in their care,” Coluccio said.

“Panorama Clinic: One small step to improving access and care.”

“It seems to me we shall be happy to recall, in later years, these small beginnings.”

Mother Joseph – December 21, 1856
Kevin Haughton, M.D., was named the Providence Physician Network Primary Care Section Chief. Haughton was responsible for the clinical oversight of physicians and Advanced Practice Professionals in the primary care practices and building the primary care core of PPN.

“This is a chance to evolve and improve the delivery model for primary care, but most importantly, it’s a chance to help people take control of their health, championing prevention and better management of their chronic diseases,” Haughton said.

In 2008, caregivers reported they were fatigued under the model of care, citing time pressure during office visits and the chaotic work pace as the biggest struggles. A new model of care was needed for patients, but also for their caregivers.

“We’re committed to finding a way to make primary care more effective while also making the career more sustainable,” Haughton said.

“We know that better access to primary care means better quality care and lower costs. But our supply of primary care physicians is not adequate to meet the needs as baby boomers age and need more health care,” Haughton said.

The goal: build off the strength of the family medicine residency program and existing primary care clinics to continue adding and providing primary care resources. A new model would reach out to Providence Southwest Washington’s rapidly growing five-county area and extend the concept of “medical home” to all Providence primary care clinics.

With Rik Emaus, D.O., as the first chief executive of the network, employed physicians and mid-level providers established 11 clinic sites throughout Thurston, Lewis, Pacific, Grays Harbor and Mason counties. A small beginning.

Today, the dream and commitment launched in 2008 is realized with more than 250 physicians and providers with 19 different specialties serving Southwest Washington.
Emilie Gamelin met the poor in the streets of Montreal and Mother Joseph traveled the logging camps in the Pacific Northwest caring for people. In 2018, Providence continues to meet people’s needs by reaching out beyond the hospital walls and clinic communities using cyberspace, technology and innovative medical practices.

Eve Cunningham, M.D. chief medical officer for PMG, explains the challenges facing providers and patients.

There is significant disruption in health care due to unconventional mergers among health care providers and the rising costs mixed with the expected decline in reimbursement among payors. Consumers are changing their expectations, too, in a world where people rely on digital technology to communicate, explains Cunningham.

“A sound strategy is needed to continue the 160-year legacy of our Sisters of Providence,” Cunningham says.

The road map for the future outlined in the vision Health for a Better World has three areas of focus: seeking to strengthen our core by optimizing patient access; be our community’s health partner as the population seeks whole-person care, we must provide high-quality care at an affordable cost. And, we must transform our future by leveraging digital innovation, health care intelligence and clinical research, Cunningham says.

Providence Medical Group has established practices and programs in 35 locations and employs 500 people. In 2017, PMG recorded 345,510 patient visits. In November 2018, a third immediate care clinic opened in Hawks Prairie joining East Lacey and West Olympia immediate care clinics.

We hold sacred the legacy of Emilie Gamelin and Mother Joseph, advancing our Mission. Providence anticipates and meets people’s complex and changing needs using integrated models of care, technological creativity, realistic revenue sources and medical advances.

Just like our founding Providence Sisters, dedicated lay people and generous communities of the past, we make difficult decisions rooted in the Providence Mission; as an evolving health care community, we adapt to society’s limitations and challenges.

We continue to struggle and succeed along the path of being an expression of God’s healing love, witnessed through the ministry of Jesus, steadfast in serving all, especially those who are poor and vulnerable.

Acknowledge that the journey will be uncomfortable at times, and not without bumps, but that if we stay grounded in the Mission and understand how the needs of our community will change, the Mission will sustain.

— Health for a Better World
Emilie Tavernier was born in Montreal in 1800; soon she showed great compassion for the poor people in Montreal. When she was 3, Emilie gave her personal box of cherished possessions to a poor man who came begging at their front door. The next year her mother died, and Emilie lived with her aunt who gave her the best possible education. At 18, Emilie went to manage the household of her recently widowed brother where she used the dining room to feed the poor. She considered religious life.

Emilie, 23, married John Baptiste Gamelin, who was 50 years old. Mr. Gamelin was wealthy and Emilie, with John, continued her charitable activities. They had three sons. But by the time Emilie was 27, all three of her sons as well as her husband had died.

Emilie consoled her grief with her continued charitable activities with Montreal’s Ladies of Charity. She cared for widows and neglected women. She bought a refuge for these women. Her first guest was a woman who was 102 years old, and soon others arrived.

She purchased two houses and cared for 30 people. Her resources were depleted. Emilie went to the market to beg. En route, she met a man who gave her 23 louis ($100) for the poor. Her life was filled with such acts of “Providence.” Emilie’s wealthy friends helped with her charitable activities.

In 1837, insurrection left political prisoners exiled, however, Emilie obtained permission to visit them.

Emilie cared for Dodais, a mentally ill boy. He never spoke, until he was near death, when he spoke words of thanks

“Give me the courage to accomplish thy designs upon me.”

Emilie Gamelin
“I can do nothing of myself, but trust in Divine Providence, who will inspire me with what should I do to relieve the suffering ones of our Lord.”

Emilie Gamelin

Emilie’s life tells us the remarkable story of the early days of the Sisters of Providence.

to Emilie. Later, many institutions for people with mental health conditions opened in Montreal.

The community grew rapidly under Emilie Gamelin. Before she died, the community had 49 sisters and nine houses. The community’s early works included ministry to the poor, mentally ill, aged, orphans, deaf-mutes, prisoners, the handicapped and all oppressed by suffering.

Emile became known as the “Mother of the Poor,” and each shelter was called “House of Providence.”

By 1843, Emilie Gamelin became the foundress of a new religious congregation within the Catholic Church called The Daughters of Charity. Later the religious community was called The Sisters of Providence.

Reflections... on humble beginnings

- Emilie Gamelin’s life began with difficult circumstances – the death of her mother. What other circumstances of her life do you think are remarkable? Why?

- The community’s early works included ministry to the poor, mentally ill, aged, orphans, deaf-mutes, prisoners, the handicapped and all oppressed by suffering. Where do you see Providence caring for these populations today?

- If you could speak with Emilie, what do you wish you could ask her?

Creator God, inspire us to live with courage and compassion as we seek to care for the poor and vulnerable around us. Open our eyes and hearts to see who is in our path so that we may respond, as Emilie responded, with a commitment to alleviate physical, emotional and spiritual suffering. Amen.
Esther Pariseau was born on April 16, 1823, the third of 12 children born to Joseph and Françoise Pariseau on their farm in St. Elzear, Quebec, Canada. Esther excelled at household tasks such as sewing, weaving and carding wool. Yet, her talents were far more diverse. Esther’s father was a respected coach maker, and young Esther spent much time with him in his shop, learning the carpentry and design skills that she later applied to constructing some of the Northwest’s first hospitals and schools.

In 1843, as Esther Pariseau turned 20 years of age, a new religious community of Catholic women known as the Sisters of Providence was founded in Montreal. The young community was led by Emilie Gamelin, who had devoted her life to meeting the needs of the city’s poorest residents. Esther began to think about life as a woman religious.

On December 26, 1843, Joseph Pariseau presented his daughter to Emilie Gamelin. He said, “I bring you my daughter Esther, who wishes to dedicate herself to the religious life ... She can read and write and figure accurately. She can cook and sew and spin and do all manner of housework well. She has learned carpentry from me and can handle tools as well as I can. Moreover, she can plan and supervise the work of others, and I assure you, Madame, she will someday make a very good superior.” His words were providential.

In 1856, Esther, now Sister Joseph, would call upon all of her gifts and skills, and her deep faith, as she led four Sisters of Providence from Montreal to the Washington Territory. Their mandate and their desire: to care for the poor and the sick, to educate the children.

On December 8, after a month of arduous travel, the sisters stepped off a steamer onto the banks of the Columbia River at Fort Vancouver. Their arrival was eagerly awaited.

“We must not expect great achievements in the near future, but we must be able to do what needs to be done ... to do what others do not want to do.”

Written to Father A. F. Truteau, Vicar General (Montreal), April 19, 1857
anticipated, yet no preparations had been made to house them. A one-room attic in the bishop’s home became the first “convent” for the Sisters in this pioneer country.

Mother Joseph and her companions faced daunting challenges, including primitive living conditions, treacherous travel and scarce financial resources. But the pioneer Sisters quickly demonstrated their tenacity and determination, as well as their adaptability. Taking their cue from the interests of the people of Vancouver, the Sisters opened a boarding school, later known as Providence Academy.

Mother Joseph responded also to the citizens’ request for a hospital, converting a small building that she had planned to use as a laundry and bakery. In exchange, the women of the town promised to support the care of poor patients, and on June 7, 1858, the Sisters opened St. Joseph Hospital, the first permanent hospital in the Northwest.

Mother Joseph died on January 19, 1902, at Vancouver, Washington. At the time of her death, she and the Sisters had established 17 hospitals and eight schools in Washington, Oregon, Montana, Idaho, California and Alaska, with several additional missions in western Canada.

Creator God, we look for what needs to be done and often what needs to be done is difficult and complex. Help us find paths that lead to great achievements. Direct us to do what needs to be done, with willing and compassionate hearts. Amen.
Compassion

Jesus taught and healed with compassion for all – Matthew 4:24

A Providence Story

W

hen Eddie moved to Southwest Washington, he wanted to find a doctor who would listen to the stories about his childhood trauma.

“I was afraid because I had been sexually abused as a child and my depression was getting bad,” Eddie explains.

I finally told my Providence doctor my stories that were extremely personal and painful; for many years I felt what happened to me was my fault. As an adult those childhood experiences influenced my relationships with others and my sense of personal goodness, Eddie says.

Eddie’s caregiver listened to his stories and took time to explain that children are never responsible for being victimized. He referred Eddie to a compassionate mental health professional for follow-up care. He explained how emotional trauma can manifest itself in physical symptoms. They discussed how medication and counseling can work together toward wellness. The doctor encouraged Eddie to make a follow-up appointment with him.

Providence caregivers showed compassion to an anxious young man. Compassion alleviated Eddie’s fear and anxiety and inspired him to pursue a career as a social worker in a health care practice.

“I want to help people find relief from their suffering – all kinds of suffering, especially emotional pain,” Eddie says.

We reach out to those in need and offer comfort as Jesus did. We nurture the spiritual, emotional and physical well-being of one another and those we serve. Through our healing presence, we accompany those who suffer.
Providing a healing presence

Reflections...

Compassion

- Eddie shared the childhood trauma with the provider and worried about the response. How do you have difficult conversations in a kind manner, like Eddie’s doctor, when caring for others?
- How do you accompany those who suffer? What have you learned from these experiences—about suffering, about yourself?
- When is it difficult to show compassion? Why?
- Describe the personal and professional qualities that contribute to a “healing presence.”

“Compelled by God’s providential love, you will be invited to do more than you ever believed possible because of God’s goodness and love of all.”
— Hopes and Aspirations for Providence

Creator God, we care for people who need healing—physical, emotional and spiritual healing. Guide our hearts as we offer compassion; inspire us with wisdom to accompany all whom are entrusted to our care. Amen.
Dignity

All people have been created in the image of God. ~ Genesis 1:27

A Providence Story

Marilyn, a nurse at a Providence Regional Cancer System clinic, was getting Mrs. Zee, a new patient, ready to see her provider. Mrs. Zee appeared extremely distressed. She told Marilyn about her relationship or lack of relationship with her mother. Mrs. Zee’s mother rejected her. When Mrs. Zee found out she had breast cancer, her mother’s reaction was disbelief and that her daughter had “caused it herself,” because she had poor eating habits.

Greg, another Providence caregiver overheard this conversation. He stopped and stared at Mrs. Zee for a moment, then said, “We believe you and we want to care for you.”

These words left Mrs. Zee speechless; she looked at Greg, then at the ground and back up at him, unable to say anything.

This expression of dignity to another human being is what our Mission is – being there for the communities we serve and meeting individuals where they are in their lives.

This is how we express the Providence Mission: “We want to care for you.”

We value, encourage and celebrate the gifts in one another. We respect the inherent dignity and worth of every individual. We recognize each interaction as a sacred encounter.
Creator God, we are created in your image and likeness. Help us to see dignity in all people we care for. When people arrive with medical needs, let us also see their broken hearts, their fear and anxiety. May we greet all people with our welcoming hearts. Let our actions offer hope to the hopeless, honoring the unique gifts and the dignity inherent in each of us. Amen.

“I pray that you always love the poor and that peace and unity be always with you.”
– Emilie Gamelin

Reflections...

Dignity

• “We want to care for you.” The unexpected words to Mrs. Zee sent a powerful message. Complete the sentence expressing our Mission: “We want you because…”

• Catholic Social Teaching is predicated on the principle of the inherent dignity of each person. How do you encourage that sense of dignity in persons who may not see themselves as having value or worth?

• What are the unique gifts among your colleagues that you admire and rely on?

• Often small gestures offer great kindness. What do you and your colleagues do routinely to show kindness to patients, families, visitors, each other?
A Providence Story

When an elderly patient called a Providence clinic in Centralia at closing time, caregivers responded. Mrs. Elle called the office saying she was next door at the hospital emergency department waiting room. A nurse went to the hospital and brought her back to the clinic. Mrs. Elle did not have an appointment and the office was closing, but caregivers were eager to help.

Mrs. Elle was lying on the exam table, covered in feces and was extremely malnourished. Her long blond hair was matted and her skin appeared raw. Caregivers took time and cleaned Mrs. Elle’s body and her hair. She was given a clean pair of scrubs and her filthy clothes were thrown away. Mrs. Elle told caregivers she did not have electricity at home, there was no food left in her home and her toilet was not working. The nurse told Mrs. Elle she could not live in those conditions and encouraged her to contact her family, but Mrs. Elle said contacting her family was not an option.

A caregiver went to the hospital and returned with Mrs. Elle’s favorite meal, vegetarian lasagna, even though it was not on the menu. She ate heartily. While she was eating, the staff discussed options with her. Mrs. Elle agreed to return to the emergency department where the staff took gentle care of her; she was hospitalized briefly and upon discharge she was admitted to a local long-term care facility. Mrs. Elle is now at a nursing home and is no longer trying to fend for herself. She calls the clinic from time to time to check in.

We foster a culture that promotes unity and reconciliation. We strive to care wisely for our people, our resources and our Earth. We stand in solidarity with the most vulnerable, working to remove the causes of oppression and promoting justice for all.
Creator God, we seek to be champions of justice, entrusted with our Earth and each other. Inspire us to act with courage when we see abuse or mistreatment of others, when our practices need to be informed by justice. Guide us to use our resources wisely. Amen.

“We have accepted all that Divine Providence has sent us [and] try to remember that you have called us to be Servants of the Poor.”
—Mother Joseph to Bishop Bourget, December 27, 1858

Reflections...

Justice

• How are the actions of the clinic staff toward Mrs. Elle acts of justice?

• How have you advocated for justice on behalf of a person, a practice or a policy in your work with Providence? What change occurred as a result of your advocacy?

• Who is your role model for promoting justice in our society? Why?

• What do you wish the community knew about your work?
When Mrs. Jay missed her appointment at Hawks Prairie Family Medicine, Providence caregiver Cheri sensed something was wrong. A clinic nurse called Mrs. Jay who answered her cell phone. She said she had been walking in her garden, lost control of her walker and had been lying on the ground. She did not want emergency services sent. She was able to talk to the nurse while she made her way inside the house and into her bed.

Mrs. Jay was rescheduled for a follow-up appointment. Again, she did not show up at the clinic. When Mrs. Jay did not answer her phone, a nurse from the clinic called Mrs. Jay’s sister. Soon, a friend was alerted and was able to get into Mrs. Jay’s house. The friend found Mrs. Jay on the family room floor, unable to get up; she hadn’t moved for half the day. Mrs. Jay was transported to the hospital where she was diagnosed with bone cancer. She was admitted to a care facility.

While it would have been easy to ignore the missed appointments, the caregivers at Hawks Prairie Family Medicine took time to find Mrs. Jay and learn why she did not show up. If they had failed to verify why Mrs. Jay missed her appointments, she may have had a very different outcome.
Creator God, as we move through rapid and transformative change in pursuit of excellence, help us maintain our focus on each moment, each person. May we recognize the path that brings healing and hope to our communities, while we balance the demands and expectations of others and ourselves. May we seek joy in all that we do. Amen.

“We expect you will be open to the call of those who suffer by addressing emerging needs with wise and discerning responses, so the poor and vulnerable may be served in new and more effective ways.”

– Hopes and Aspirations for Providence

Reflections...

Excellence

• How does this story demonstrate excellence? Can you tell a story of Providence excellence?

• The story addresses an emerging need with wise and discerning responses. Tell a story of a wise and discerning response at Providence.

• Mother Joseph took big risks and achieved success; she had great vision for how to travel the path to success. Whom do you look to as a visionary for health care’s future? Why?

• How do you sustain your commitment to working with all your heart? What activities – fun, hobbies, adventures – give you perspective and renew your spirit?
Integrity

Let us love not merely with words or speech but with actions in truth. ~ 1 John 3:18

A Providence Story

A patient, Ms. Bea, had made several visits to the immediate care clinic when she showed up again. She was advised to establish a primary care provider, but she kept returning to the clinic – citing the same symptoms; one ailment required a prescription narcotic pain reliever. She had appeared to ignore the caregiver’s recommendations and was possibly seeking drugs.

“What brings you in today?” she was asked. Ms. Bea recited her usual list of complaints – and added she also had tremendous stomach pain. She was told again she needed to find a primary care provider and her narcotic prescription would not be filled this time.

When the provider saw Ms. Bea, an ultrasound was ordered – which showed an abdominal mass. Ms. Bea was sent home with instructions to find a primary care provider to guide her in her care, but she returned to the clinic a few days later with her family, who were sobbing. They had tried to find a primary care provider, but were told no one could see Ms. Bea for several weeks.

Caregivers worked with a Providence family medicine clinic; Ms. Bea was established with a Providence provider within a few days. She has not returned to the clinic since that day.

As health care professionals, we can easily make assumptions about our patients. Instead, we must hold ourselves accountable to do the right thing – listen without judgment – with every patient, every time.

We hold ourselves accountable to do the right things for the right reasons. We speak the truth with courage and respect. We pursue authenticity with humility and simplicity.
Creator God, instill in us confidence to pursue the right action. Inspire us to speak the truth, revealing your healing love for all. Amen.

“I do not think that we should wait ... before we act to respond to the needs. It seems to me that we should be glad to feel the pinch, in order to do good.”
– Mother Joseph to Bishop Bourget, December 27, 1858

Reflections...

Integrity

• What is your reaction to the story? What does loving with “actions in truth” mean to you?
• How do you know when you are doing the right things for the right reasons? Whom do you consult?
• Who is your role model for the virtue of personal integrity? Tell a story.
• What do you do when you experience dissonance between the Providence Mission and Providence decisions? How do you reconcile or explain these conflicts?
While many changes have happened in Southwest Washington throughout the last decade, our Mission remains: to serve our communities, especially the poor and vulnerable. Sister Barbara has been a supportive leader and friend to our Providence communities. She continues to advocate as an official Sponsor. As a Providence Sister, she has thrived through decades of change.

Sister Barbara entered the religious community in 1961, one year before The Second Vatican Council opened and brought historical changes for Catholics. Mass, once in Latin, was now celebrated in the vernacular; the Church, once described in hierarchical terms, became known as The People of God.

The Sisters of Providence understood community in new ways. The women participated in mutual discernment, determining where they lived and how they ministered to others. The women transitioned to modified habits or secular dress.

Sister Barbara, a teacher and later a school administrator, kept pace with the changes; she, with the members of the province, led the religious community and the health care system through decades of transformation, responding to the changing needs of Providence Sisters and meeting the challenging demands of health care delivery.

Sister Barbara served as Provincial Superior for the Sacred Heart Province, a responsibility that included presiding as Chair of the Board. In 2000, Sister Barbara served a five-year term as Provincial of the newly formed Mother Joseph Province.

The Sisters of Providence recognized the call of the laity to express the Providence

“Love is inventive to infinity.” St. Vincent de Paul
charism as leaders of the health system. In 2007, the Provincial Superior and Council discerned it was time to move toward a sponsorship model in which laity and Sisters would serve as the corporate members. Sister Barbara and Jack Mudd, VP for Mission, were appointed co-chairs of the Sponsorship Planning Committee.

On March 18, 2008, the committee issued the following recommendation:

"The Sponsorship Planning Committee recommends that the Sisters of Providence take the necessary steps to establish a new Public Juridic Person to be named Providence Ministries … in order to continue the Sponsorship of Providence Health & Services as a ministry of the Catholic Church."

The radical change transitioned official sponsorship from the Sisters of Providence to a new governance model. In 2010, Barbara Schamber SP, Johnny Cox, Anita Butler SP, Barbara Savage and Chuck Hawley were Missioned as the first sponsors of Providence Ministries.

Sister Barbara says: “One follows the call of the Holy Spirit as we continue to respond to the signs of these changing times.”

“With God’s help, you will continue to succeed in your leadership and in your duties, because our Lord’s work is accomplished not so much by the multitude of workers as by the fidelity of the small number whom He calls.”

– St. Vincent de Paul

Providence of God, we believe in you. Providence of God, we hope in you. Providence of God, we love you with all our hearts. Providence of God, we thank you for all. Amen.
Kevin Haughton, M.D.

Access • Family Practice • Immediate Care • Emergency Care • Cardiac Care

Providence Professional Center

Providence South Sound Internal Medicine
We wish to acknowledge the work of Catherine Johnston who authored Providence Reflections. We are grateful for information and photographs courtesy of Chris Thomas, Communications Senior Manager, Southwest Washington. Details in the stories have been changed to protect patients’ identities.
THE MISSION

AS EXPRESSIONS OF GOD’S HEALING LOVE, WITNESSED THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF JESUS, WE ARE STEADFAST IN SERVING ALL, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO ARE POOR AND VULNERABLE.