

Providence in the West: A Timeline, 1856-2010

1856-1902: Pioneering Healthcare and Education

1903-1960: Growth and Diversity

1961-1974: Transition Years

1975-2010: New Life through Collaboration

March 25, 1843	Sisters of Providence religious community founded in Montreal, Quebec, by Bishop Ignace Bourget and Mother Emilie Gamelin.
December 1, 1852 - February 1, 1853	The first Sisters of Providence come to the American west from Montreal, but their mission is cut short by lack of preparation and support. On their way home to Quebec, they stop in Valparaiso, Chile, and remain to serve orphans and others in need. Their ministry results in the establishment of Bernarda Morin Province.
December 8, 1856	Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart and four Sisters of Providence arrive in Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory, from Montreal. They open their small home to orphans and the elderly.
April 15, 1857	Providence Academy, first permanent school in the Pacific Northwest, founded in Vancouver as a day school, boarding school, and orphanage.
June 7, 1858	St. Joseph Hospital, the first permanent hospital in the Northwest, founded in Vancouver (now Southwest Washington Medical Center).
January 28, 1859	Incorporation of the Sisters of Charity of the House of Providence in the Territory of Washington, the parent corporation of the sisters' current ministries and one of the oldest existing corporations in the region.
March 19, 1859	Bylaws on the new corporation are established, and the care of the corporation entrusted to St. Joseph as "spiritual president."
1861-1867	Sisters hold territorial contract for care of the mentally ill, establishing a separate hospital in Vancouver.
September 23, 1863	Sisters extend their ministry in Washington Territory beyond Vancouver with the foundation of St. Joseph School in Steilacoom, then a burgeoning port town on Puget Sound.
February 18, 1864	St. Vincent Academy founded in Walla Walla, taking the Providence ministry into the interior of the Washington Territory.
October 17, 1864	Sister Mary of the Infant Jesus and three sisters travel to St. Ignatius, Montana Territory, to teach the native children. From St. Ignatius, the Providence ministry expands throughout present-day western Montana and northern Idaho.

August 11, 1868	Providence of Our Lady of Seven Dolours School, on the Tulalip Reservation, is the sisters' first school for Native Americans in Washington Territory.
April 19, 1873	Foundation of St. Patrick Hospital, Missoula, Montana Territory, which now holds the distinction of being the sisters' oldest foundation in the west.
July 19, 1875	St. Vincent Hospital, the first permanent hospital in Oregon, founded in Portland (now Providence St. Vincent Medical Center).
May 3, 1877	The foundation for Providence Hospital, Seattle, is laid when three sisters arrive to open the King County Poor Farm in the Georgetown area.
January 27, 1880	St. Mary Hospital founded in Walla Walla, Washington Territory.
July 30, 1880	St. Mary Hospital founded in Astoria, Oregon Territory.
August 5, 1884	The sisters' ministries in the Northwest are officially placed under the patronage of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.
April 30, 1886	Sacred Heart Hospital (now Sacred Heart Medical Center) founded in Spokane.
July 6, 1886	St. Mary Hospital, the sisters' first hospital in western Canada, founded in New Westminster, B.C.
August 5, 1886	St. Clare Hospital founded in Fort Benton, Montana.
June 18, 1887	Foundation of St. Peter Hospital on what is now the campus of the Washington State Capitol, Olympia.
March 29, 1891	The Sisters of Providence establish seven administrative provinces, with three in the west: Sacred Heart Province, based in Vancouver, Washington; St. Ignatius Province, based in Missoula, Montana; and St. Vincent de Paul Province, based in Portland, Oregon.
August 2, 1891	St. Elizabeth Hospital (now Providence Yakima Medical Center) founded in Yakima, Washington.
September 23, 1892	Columbus Hospital (now Benefis Healthcare) founded in Great Falls, Montana.

April 17, 1893	St. Ignatius Hospital (now Whitman Community Hospital) founded in Colfax, Washington.
February 19, 1900	Celebration of the centennial of Mother Emilie Gamelin's birth throughout Canada and the western United States.
September 12, 1900	The Sisters of Providence Constitutions are approved by the Vatican, opening the way for new ministries in service to people in need.
January 19, 1902	Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, age 79, dies at Providence Academy, Vancouver.
May 24, 1902	The sisters' ministry expands to California with the opening of Providence Hospital, Oakland (now part of Sutter Health System).
June 20, 1902	The sisters' ministry is extended to Alaska with the opening of Holy Cross Hospital, Nome.
Summary	Although some of their early missions had closed, in 1902, the sisters operated 17 hospitals and 8 schools in Washington, Oregon, Montana, Idaho, California, and Alaska, with several additional missions in western Canada.

March 1, 1905	Providence Hospital founded in Everett, Washington.
December 2, 1910	St. Thomas Home, an orphanage and boarding school, founded in Great Falls, Montana (services continue today through St. Thomas Child and Family Center).
May 27, 1911	Sacred Heart Hospital (now Providence Medford Medical Center) founded in Medford, Oregon.
May 21, 1912	Closure of St. Vincent de Paul Province, based in Portland, Oregon. Its U.S. institutions (hospitals in Oakland, Port Townsend, Portland, Medford, and Astoria) become part of Sacred Heart Province, while western Canadian institutions become part of the new Holy Angels Province, based in Vancouver, B.C.
April 11, 1917	Mother Mary of the Infant Jesus, foundress of the sisters' ministries in St. Ignatius Province, dies at St. Ignatius, Montana.

January 25, 1924	The Provincial Administration of Sacred Heart Province moves from Vancouver, Washington to the new Mount St. Vincent complex in Seattle, which also houses St. Vincent's Home for the Aged (now Providence Mount St. Vincent).
August 21, 1925	St. Joseph Home for the Aged (now St. Joseph Care Center-West) founded in Spokane, Washington.
April 21, 1926	Provincial Administration of St. Ignatius Province moves from Missoula, Montana to Sacred Heart Hospital, Spokane.
1927	Centennial of Mother Gamelin's first home for the elderly in Montreal is celebrated in the sisters' new homes for the elderly in Seattle and Spokane.
1920s - 1950s	Sisters of Providence begin teaching at numerous Catholic parochial schools throughout the west, in addition to their own historic academies.
September 8, 1932	College of Great Falls founded in Great Falls, Montana (now the University of Great Falls).
February 9, 1938	Providence Hospital founded in Anchorage, Alaska (now Providence Alaska Medical Center).
June 24, 1941	St. Peter Claver Interracial Center, which provides a gathering place and cultural programs for African-American and Asian-American families, founded in Seattle.
September 8, 1941	Providence Hospital joins St. Vincent Hospital in serving the people of Portland. This is the only time the sisters opened two hospitals in the same city.
September 12, 1942	St. Joseph Hospital (now Providence St. Joseph Medical Center) founded in Burbank, California. This is the last hospital founded by the Sisters of Providence in the western United States.
1943	Centennial of the Sisters of Providence religious community is celebrated throughout the west.
June 1, 1945	Our Lady of Providence Nursery (now Providence Child Center) opens in Portland, Oregon. The ministry for care of orphaned infants was taken over from the Sisters of Mercy, who established St. Agnes Baby Home in 1902.
October 18, 1951	Provincial Administration of St. Ignatius Province moves to Mount St. Joseph, Spokane, which also provides a home and infirmary for retired sisters.

August 1, 1955	Providence High School founded in Burbank, California.
1956	Centennial of the arrival of the Sisters of Providence in the west is marked by celebrations and publication of <i>The Bell and the River</i> , a biography of Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart.
Summary	At the end of 1960, the sisters in Sacred Heart and St. Ignatius Provinces operated 22 hospitals, 9 of their own academies, 4 homes for the elderly, 3 other care facilities, and staffed 12 parish schools.

June 14, 1961	Provincial Administration of Sacred Heart Province moves to newly-constructed Providence Heights College of Sister Formation in Issaquah, Washington. The college offered liberal arts degrees to sisters from both St. Ignatius and Sacred Heart Provinces, and from many other women's religious communities.
1962-1965	The Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) calls for renewal of the Roman Catholic Church and leads to sweeping changes in religious life.
May 1, 1966	Saint Joseph Residence, Seattle, opens as a retirement home and infirmary for sisters of Sacred Heart Province.
July 1966	Sisters adopt modified habits in keeping with Vatican II reforms.
August 4, 1966	Providence Academy, Vancouver, closes after 110 years of service.
September 1966	Pioneering a new ministry, three sisters open St. Monica Parish Service Center in Coos Bay, Oregon, to train and assist lay people in religious education programs and parish development.
June 15, 1967	Arthur Crandall and Thomas Underiner are hired as the first lay administrators of hospitals in the former St. Ignatius Province (St. Patrick Hospital, Missoula and Columbus Hospital, Great Falls, respectively).
October 16, 1967	St. Joseph Hospital, Vancouver, is transferred to a community group and continues today as Southwest Washington Medical Center.
June 30, 1968	Unable to finance necessary renovation, the sisters transfer sponsorship of St. Joseph Hospital, Fairbanks, to a community group.

November 20, 1969	William Connolly is hired as first lay administrator of a hospital in the former Sacred Heart Province (Providence Portland).
June 1, 1969	Providence Heights College of Sister Formation in Issaquah, Washington closes after only eight years. Provincial and corporate administration remain there.
April 13, 1970	After ninety years of service, St. Mary Hospital, Astoria, Oregon, is transferred to Columbia Memorial Hospital.
1970s	Due to declining numbers and a changing focus for their ministries, the sisters withdraw from their commitment to staff parochial schools. Individual sisters remain in education ministry, teaching in parish schools, CCD programs, or adult education.
June 1974	The sisters' historic school in Missoula, Sacred Heart Academy, merges with Loyola High School to become Loyola Sacred Heart, under sponsorship of the Diocese of Helena.
December 31, 1974	St. Clare Hospital, Fort Benton, Montana, is transferred to sponsorship of Choteau County.
Summary	At the end of 1974, the sisters in St. Ignatius and Sacred Heart Provinces sponsored 17 hospitals, 1 high school, 1 college, and several care centers for children or the elderly.

March 17, 1975	Provincial Administration of Sacred Heart Province moves from Providence Heights in Issaquah to offices in downtown Seattle. The Corporate Office (now System Office) begins to expand as more lay people are hired to assist the sisters in administration of the hospitals.
April 1979	St. Vincent Hospital, Portland, assumes management of Newberg Community Hospital, Newberg, Oregon, beginning a new era of growth through collaboration between Providence and local communities.
September 1, 1979	Sisters open Providence Hospitality House, Seattle, to offer emergency shelter to women and children.
September 28, 1979	Jack Brown becomes first lay person to serve as President of the Health Care Corporations in Sacred Heart Province.

May 1, 1980	Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, in a statue by sculptor Felix de Weldon, becomes the State of Washington's second representative in National Statuary Hall, Capitol Building, Washington, D.C.
July 1, 1981	Sacred Heart Province assumes sponsorship of Seaside General Hospital (now Providence Seaside Hospital) in Seaside, Oregon.
July 1, 1983	The Dominican Sisters of Holy Cross, with headquarters in Edmonds, Washington, transferred sponsorship of St. Joseph Hospital (Aberdeen, Wash.) and St. Helen Hospital (Chehalis, Wash.) to the Sisters of Providence.
January 1, 1985	The Good Health Plan of Oregon, the first HMO sponsored by the Sisters of Providence, lays the foundation for the current Providence Health Plans.
February 27, 1985	The sisters' historic ministry of providing housing for seniors and people in need is renewed with the opening of Vincent House, Seattle, followed soon by Providence House, Yakima, and Emilie House in Portland.
December 1, 1985	Central Memorial Hospital, Toppenish, Washington - now Providence Toppenish Hospital - becomes part of Providence.
December 31, 1985	St. Ignatius Province assumes sponsorship of St. Brendan Nursing Home -- now St. Joseph Care Center-East, Spokane.
1986	In collaboration with four other religious communities, the sisters of St. Ignatius Province open Miryam House, a home for single women in transition in Spokane.
July 1, 1986	Dwyer Community Hospital, Milwaukie, Oregon - now Providence Milwaukie Hospital - becomes part of Providence.
December 28, 1987	Providence and Cook Inlet Housing Development Corporation collaborate to open Mary Conrad Center, a home for seniors in Anchorage.
April 1, 1988	Providence Centralia Hospital, Centralia, Washington, is formed from merger of St. Helen's Hospital, Chehalis - formerly operated by the Dominican Sisters - and Centralia General Hospital.
August 1, 1989	Sisters from the three western provinces establish a mission in the Philippines.
March 1, 1990	St. Ignatius Province assumes sponsorship of St. Joseph Hospital, Polson, Montana, from Presentation Health System.

June 5, 1991	Governance of the Sisters of Providence Health Care Corporations in Sacred Heart Province is reorganized, with establishment of a Board of Directors separate from the sisters' Provincial Council.
March 19, 1992	Providence Services established as a holding company for the education, healthcare, and social service ministries of the Sisters of Providence in St. Ignatius Province.
August 4, 1993	Providence Services assumes sponsorship of Dominican Network hospitals and care centers in eastern Washington.
December 1993	Sisters of Providence Health System (now Providence Health & Services) adopted as the new name for the Health Care Corporations in Sacred Heart Province.
December 23, 1993	Mother Emilie Gamelin is declared Venerable, the first step in the process towards canonization in the Catholic Church.
January 25, 1995	Five Sisters of Providence open a mission in La Papalota, El Salvador.
1990s	Providence Health System and Providence Services continue to expand with new low-income housing facilities, long-term care centers, and primary care clinics.
May 1, 1996	Providence assumes sponsorship of Holy Cross Medical Center, Mission Hills, and St. Elizabeth Care Center, Toluca Lake, California, from Holy Cross Health System.
April 16, 1999	Washington State Legislature designates Mother Joseph's birthday as a non-observed holiday in Washington State.
September 1, 1999	Little Company of Mary Health Services and Providence Health System become co-sponsors of all Providence and Little Company facilities in Southern California.
January 1, 2000	The sisters in St. Ignatius and Sacred Heart Provinces come together to form the new Mother Joseph Province. The province sponsors both Providence Services and Providence Health System, as well as several other ministries and intercommunity programs.
February 19, 2000	Bicentennial of Mother Emilie Gamelin's birth is celebrated by the Sisters of Providence and colleagues throughout the world.
June 30, 2000	Strategic alliance transfers sponsorship of Providence Seattle Medical Center to Swedish Health Services.

March 27, 2001	Opening of Mother Gamelin's tomb and recognition of her remains, Sisters of Providence chapel, Montreal
August 2001	Foundation of Providence Peter Claver House, Seattle, Washington
September 23, 2001	150th anniversary of the death of Mother Emilie Gamelin.
October 7, 2001	Beatification of Mother Emilie Gamelin, foundress of the Sisters of Providence.
2002	Alaska State legislature proclaims 2002 "Sisters of Providence Year". The Sisters of Providence and Alaskans celebrate in Nome, site of the sisters' first hospital.
January 19, 2002	Mother Joseph Year commemorates the 100th anniversary of the her death.
October 4, 2002	Foundation of Belltown Senior Apartments, Seattle, Washington (ministry discontinued)
October 15, 2002	Sister Kathryn Rutan, member of the Mother Joseph Province Leadership Team, becomes Superior General of the Sisters of Providence, a first for a native of the American West.
August 15, 2003	Providence Yakima Medical Center and Providence Toppenish Hospital are sold to Health Management Associates, Naples, Florida.
2005	Providence Everett Medical Center celebrates 100 years.
January 1, 2006	Providence Health System and Providence Services merge to become Providence Health & Services.
December 8, 2006	The one hundred fiftieth anniversary of the Sisters of Providence arrival in the Pacific Northwest.
June 30, 2008	Providence acquires Tarzana Regional Medical Center in Tarzana, California to form Providence Tarzana Medical Center.
January 28, 2009	The one hundred fiftieth anniversary of the incorporation of the Sisters of Providence in Washington.

January 1, 2010	Providence Ministries, the Public Juridic Person sponsorship of Providence Health & Services, begins.
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