

Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada

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Summary information

Repository:	Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada
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Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

The Sisters of St. Joseph of the Diocese of London, Ontario was first incorporated on February 15, 1891 under chapter 92 of the Statutes of Ontario, 1870-1. London, Ontario is on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, L̄naapéewak, and Attawandaron Peoples.

On December 11, 1868, at the request of Bishop John Walsh, five Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto arrived in London, Ontario. Mother Teresa Brennan, Sister Ignatia Campbell, Sister Ursula McGuire, Sister Francis O'Malley and Sister Appolonia Nolan were accompanied by Reverend Mother Antoinette McDonald and were welcomed by Bishop Walsh, Rev. J.M. Bruyere, V.G., and Rev. P. Egan, pastor of St. Peter's Church. Awaiting the Sisters were sleighs that transported them from the train station to a temporary home at 170 Kent Street.

In accordance with their mission in London, three Sisters began teaching at St. Peter's School in January, 1869. After classes, they visited the sick, the poor and the imprisoned. They were also mandated to open an orphanage in the future. In order to accomplish these tasks, more Sisters and larger facilities were necessary.

On October 2, 1869, the Barker House at the corner of Richmond and College Street in North London was purchased and the Sisters moved there from Kent Street. The building was named Mount Hope, and it became the first Motherhouse of the Sisters, eventually housing the elderly, orphans, Sisters and novices. On December 18, 1870, the Sisters of St. Joseph became an autonomous congregation in the London diocese, independent of the Toronto congregation. Sister Ignatia Campbell was appointed Superior General, an office she held until 1902. On February 15, 1871, the congregation became legally incorporated.

On October 7, 1877, an addition was made to Mount Hope. This building stood until it was demolished on August 3, 1980, surrounded by the growing healthcare institutions founded by the Sisters, beginning with St. Joseph's Hospital which opened at 268 Grosvenor Street on October 15, 1888, and followed by the opening of St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing in 1895, and the construction of a new nursing school

building in 1927, which saw its last graduation in 1977. On May 1, 1951, St. Mary's Hospital was opened, followed by Marian Villa on January 12, 1966. In 1985, the hospital complex was renamed St. Joseph's Health Centre, and ownership was transferred in 1993 to St. Joseph's Health Care Society.

But it was not only in London that Sisters saw the need for healthcare and nursing education. On October 15, 1890, they opened St. Joseph's Hospital on Centre Street in Chatham, Ontario, which remained under their control until 1993. In 1895, they opened St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing, which saw its last graduation in 1970. On October 18, 1946, they opened St. Joseph's Hospital at 290 North Russell Street in Sarnia which remained under their control until 1993. In Alberta, they administered St. Joseph's Hospital in Stettler (1926), St. Joseph's Hospital in Galahad (1927), the General Hospital in Killam (1930), and St. Paul's Hospital in Rimbey (1932).

On April 10, 1899, the Sisters opened Mount St. Joseph Motherhouse, Novitiate and Orphanage at the former Hellmuth College at 1486 Richmond Street North in London. The orphans were moved to this new location from Mount Hope, which remained a home for the elderly and was renamed House of Providence on June 3, 1899. The orphanage remained at Mount St. Joseph until it was moved to Fontbonne Hall in 1953 (to 1967). The original Hellmuth College building was demolished in 1976.

Later, on September 14, 1914, the Motherhouse and Novitiate moved to Sacred Heart Convent at Colborne and Dundas Streets in London, with the orphans remaining at Mount St. Joseph. The Sisters lived at Sacred Heart Convent until 1953, when they moved back to the newly built Mount St. Joseph, on the original location of the former Hellmuth College. The new Motherhouse and Novitiate was officially opened on June 29, 1954. It was here that they continued a private girls' school which had begun in 1950 at Sacred Heart Convent, and was now known as Mount St. Joseph Academy (to 1985). It was here too that they continued a music school which had also begun at Sacred Heart Convent and was now called St. Joseph's School of Music (to 1982). The Médaille Retreat Centre began here in 1992, and the Sisters also administered a Guest Wing for relatives of hospitalized patients (to 2005). The Sisters departed Mount St. Joseph for their new residence, a green building at 485 Windermere Road in London, in 2007.

On September 4, 1873, St. Joseph's Convent opened at 131 North Street in Goderich, Ontario, followed by other convents in Ontario, including Ingersoll (1879), St. Thomas (1879), Belle River (1889), Windsor (1894), Sarnia (1906), Kingsbridge (1911), Seaforth (1913), St. Mary's (1913), Woodstock (1913), Kinkora (1916), Paincourt (1923), Maidstone (1930), Leamington (1932), Delhi (1938), Tillsonburg (1938), Simcoe (1938), Langton (1939), West Lorne (1957), and Zurich (1963).

The Sisters also opened missions in other parts of Canada, including in Alberta: Edmonton (1922), Wetaskiwin (1929), St. Bride's (1934); and in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories Yellowknife (1953), and in British Columbia in Haney, now Maple Ridge (1956), and Rutland (1970). Branching even further afield, Convento San Jose was opened in Chiclayo, Peru in 1962.

Over the years, as well as their service as teachers in the separate school system, as music teachers, as healthcare workers, as nursing educators, in providing care to orphans, and in providing parish ministry, pastoral care, and administering spiritual retreats, the Sisters were also involved in social service ministry. In Windsor, they opened the Roy J. Bondy Centre on September 13, 1970 which was a receiving home for the Children's Aid Society, withdrawing in 1982 but continuing to provide residential care for disabled children afterward. In London, they opened Internos, a residence for teenage girls attending school and later for troubled teens (to 1979). This was followed by the opening of St. Joseph's Detoxification Centre on September 13, 1973 (to 2005) and St. Stephen's House, an alcoholic recovery centre on February 1, 1982 (to 2000). Loughlin House in London opened as a residence for ex-psychiatric female patients in 1986 (to 1989), followed by the Home for Women in Need at 534 Queens Avenue in 1979 (to 2004).

Later, St. Josephs' House for Refugees was opened in 1987 (to 2005), followed by St. Joseph's Hospitality Centre, a food security program, on February 2, 1983.

On November 22, 2012, the congregation amalgamated with those in Hamilton, Peterborough, and Pembroke into one charitable corporation under the name Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada by the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada Act, a Private Act of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which received Royal Assent on June 13, 2013.

Scope and content

This series contains historical summaries of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of London, Ontario during their western mission in the Diocese of Nelson, British Columbia from 1970 to 2010. There is a chronicle of the activities of Sister Mary Lillian Kuntz in her role of administering the Marriage Tribunal in the Nelson Diocese from 1983 to 2010. She documents her academic pursuit to gain a degree and license in Canon Law at St. Paul's University in Ottawa; tasks such as acting as secretary in meetings; and her travels, both for leisure and to attend retreats and conferences, to British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario, Canada as well as in Montana, Utah, and Washington, USA. She also includes accounts of celebrations, the purchase of replacement cars, weekly potluck dinners and card playing referred as the Bridge Club, watching the Grey Cup games and the Winter Games in Nelson, and observing salmon spawning at Kokanee Park in British Columbia.

This series also contains a historical summary from 1994 to 1998 of the activities at the Anawim House of Prayer in Nelson, British Columbia. Sister Lynn Rouleau, Director, and Sister Mary Zimmer, Assistant Director operated a property complex of seven buildings that comprised the Anawim House of Prayer. The topics in the summary include managing the programs and groups of people who used the premise for meetings, workshops and conferences such as Spiritual Direction for personal contemplation, Youth Groups, Children's Day Camp and Beach Campfires, Catechetical Workshops, Senior's Health Rights Information Sessions, and retreats. There is also a short summary of the activities at St. Theresa's Parish in Kelowna (Rutland) from 1970 to 1985, with a focus on the development and implementation of the Canadian Catechism Series, a teaching aid book for catechists.

This series has a list of Sisters who served in British Columbia, Nelson from 1985 to 1998, Kelowna (Rutland) from 1970 to 1992, and in Osoyoos, Oliver, and Trail, from 1975 to 1980. There is material related to the passing of other religious figures in the area. There is a printed program in memory of Nelson Bishop Wilfred Emmett Doyle, who passed in 2003. There is also correspondence, newspaper clippings, and obituaries on Reverend Edward Clement Doyle, who was passed in 1980. Finally, there is a May 14, 1980 program in memory of Reverend Edward Clement Doyle.

In addition, there are panoramic photographs of the Anawim House of Prayer and the Chapel in Nelson in 1994, and a photograph of Bishop Wilfred Emmett Doyle, two Sisters, and children in a church in Trail, British Columbia.

Notes

Title notes

- **Source of title proper:** Title is based on the contents of the series.

Immediate source of acquisition

These records were accumulated by the Sisters of London, Ontario.

Arrangement

Original order was maintained.

Location of originals

The records are located at The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada Archives.

Restrictions on access

The Archives reserves the right to restrict access to the collection depending on the condition of the archival material, the amount of material requested, and the purpose of the research. The use of certain materials may also be restricted for reasons of privacy or sensitivity, or under a donor agreement. Access restrictions will be applied equally to all researchers and reviewed periodically. No researcher will be given access to any materials that contain a personal information bank such as donor agreements or personnel records, or to other proprietary information such as appraisals, insurance valuations, or condition reports

Conditions governing use

Permission to study archival records does not extend to publication or display rights. The researcher must request this permission in writing from the Archives.

Finding aids

Series and file list available.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Note [Sources]

CSJ Archives, “Kuntz, Mary Lillian (December 30, 1935-October 23, 2015),” https://www.archeion.ca/%3Bactor/browse?occupation=316583&subject=468601&sort=alphabetic&place=66134&sf_culture=en&repository=101108&sortDir=asccessed 2024/08/28.

Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce, “This Land. Their Land,” <https://www.discovernelson.com/discover-nelson/thisland/>, accessed 2024/08/28.

Note [General]

The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of London, Ontario operated several missions in British Columbia: Haney (Maple Ridge) from 1956 to 1985, Kelowna (Rutland) from 1970 to 1992, Mission from 1980 to 1985, Oliver from 1974 to 1978, and Prince George from 1972 to 1977. In April 1983, Bishop Wilfred Emmett Doyle of the Diocese of Nelson, British Columbia requested a Sister to live and work in the Nelson Diocese to administer the Marriage Tribunal. The position was offered to Sister Patricia Hogan, but she had to decline due to her election to the General Council. The offer then went to Sister Mary Lillian Kuntz who then from 1983 to 1985 pursued and obtained a bachelor's degree and licence in Canon Law at St. Paul's University in Ottawa. On August 29, 1985, Sister Mary Lillian arrived in Nelson, British Columbia by car from Edmonton, Alberta. She lived with other Sisters of St. Joseph and Sisters of

Charity of Halifax at a semi-furnished rented house on Silica Street, dubbed the Silica Street Community, and worked in offices on Ward Street. In 1985, there was a total of eighteen Sisters residing in Nelson. The City of Nelson is situated on the traditional homeland of the Sinixt, Ktunaxa, Yaqan Nukiy-Ktunaxa, Métis and other First People and Aboriginal peoples.

While in Nelson, Sister Mary Lillian lived with Sister Margaret Walsh of the Congregation of Notre-Dame. On November 30, 2009, Sister Mary Lillian announced that May 31, 2010, would be her last day as the Director of the Nelson-Kamloops Interdiocesan Tribunal, and that she would be willing to continue as the Defender of the Bond. On May 31, 2010, there was a farewell BBQ event for Sister Mary Lillian and Sister Margaret Walsh, and on June 5, 2010, a yard sale marked the end of the Sisters stay in Nelson, British Columbia.

Sister Mary Lillian's responsibilities in the Nelson Diocese included conducting Tribunal interviews for the Tribunal Office, giving workshops in four deaneries on Marriage and Marriage Preparation, Natural Family Planning, and Communication and Conflict Resolution. She attended conferences in Ottawa, such as the Canadian Canon Law Conference, as well as Tribunal workshops and the Western Regional Canon Law Conference from April 15-18, 1996, in Seattle, Washington, USA. Sister Mary Lillian participated in meetings with committees such as the Synod Implementation Committee, Diocesan Pastoral Council Meetings, Sexual Abuse Prevention and Support Committee Meetings, Third Millennium Committee Meetings, Nelson Diocesan Sisters' Council Meetings, and Regional Council Meetings in Edmonton, Alberta.

The Sisters of St. Joseph of London, Ontario also answered the call to operate the Anawim House of Prayer in the Diocese of Nelson from 1994 to 1998. The Bishop of Nelson, Peter Mallon, appointed Sister Lynn Rouleau as the Director, and Sister Mary Zimmer as the Assistant Director. The Sisters arrived from Edmonton, Alberta, on August 28, 1994, to administer the programs and manage the financial accounts of the Anawim House of Prayer. Anawim House was located on the west side of Lake Kootenay, 1.6km from Nelson. The complex comprised seven buildings: a main building with a gathering area, dining room, kitchen, offices, and three bedrooms; a small alpine framed chapel; the Sisters' cottage residence; guest house with four bedrooms; pumphouse; carport; and tractor shed. The Anawim House programs included private individual and group retreats and hosting meetings and workshops led by various organizations and committees. In September 1997, Bishop Eugene Jerome Cooney of Nelson, sold the Anawim House of Prayer and later apologized on September 24, 1997, to the Anawim Advisory Board for not informing the Sisters. On the last day of their final meeting at Anawim House, the Women's Scripture Group made a time capsule of poems, letters, prayers, and brochures, and buried it under a cedar tree near a stream and land bridge on November 9, 1997. Sister Lynn announced her resignation on December 17, 1997, and moved out on January 10, 1998.

Other notes

- **Publication status:** Draft
- **Level of detail:** Partial
- **Status description:** Final

Access points

- Multiple media (documentary form)

Collection holdings

File: F01-S031-01 - History of the Diocese of Nelson, and photographs

Title: History of the Diocese of Nelson, and photographs

Reference code: F01-S031-01

Date: 1970-1985 (date of creation)

: 0344

Location of originals: London Annals Box 5 (0344)

Publication status:

Draft

File: F01-S031-02 - History of Nelson, Davies Street [Sr. Margaret Mary Winter, and Sr. Mary Lillian Kuntz]

Title: History of Nelson, Davies Street [Sr. Margaret Mary Winter, and Sr. Mary Lillian Kuntz]

Reference code: F01-S031-02

Date: 1983-2010 (date of creation)

: 0344

Location of originals: London Annals Box 5 (0344)

Publication status:

Draft

File: F01-S031-03 - Anawim House of Prayer

Title: Anawim House of Prayer

Reference code: F01-S031-03

Date: 1994-1998 (date of creation)

: 0344

Location of originals: London Annals Box 5 (0344)

Publication status:

Draft

File: F01-S031-04 - Reverend Edward Clement Doyle

Title: Reverend Edward Clement Doyle

Reference code: F01-S031-04

Date: May-June 1980 (date of creation)

: 0344

Location of originals: London Annals Box 5 (0344)

Publication status:

Draft
