

Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada

Finding Aid - Assembly series (F01-S139)

Generated by Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada on April 30, 2025

Language of description: English

Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada

485 Windermere Road P.O. Box 487

London

Ontario

Canada

N6A 4X3

Telephone: 519-432-3781 ext. 404

Fax: 519-432-8557

[Email: csjarchives@csjcanada.org](mailto:csjarchives@csjcanada.org)

<https://atom.csjarchive.org/index.php/assembly-series>

Assembly series

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Summary information

Repository:	Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada
Title:	Assembly series
Reference code:	F01-S139
Date:	1990- 2009 (creation)
Physical description:	4 cm of textual records 4 photos : col. 10 x 15 cm
Language:	English
Dates of creation, revision and deletion:	July 2, 2020May 22, 2023

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 documents the Assembly meetings and contains registration forms, related correspondence, prayers, leadership team reports, reflections on the assembly days, excerpts of publications, questionnaires, brochures about celebrations, lists of groups and participants, schedules, and brochures containing reports on the topics discussed.

Notes

Title notes

- Source of title proper: Title is derived from the contents of the series.

Immediate source of acquisition

The records were transferred to the archives by the administration.

Arrangement

Order was imposed by the archivist.

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

There is a series and file list.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Note [Sources]

Sr. Loretta Manzara, pers. comm., July 2, 2019.

Note [General]

Chapter meetings happened every four years and were the most official gatherings of the Sisters. A Chapter is the formal, decision making body of the congregation at which the leadership council is elected, and decisions are taken by the membership as a whole. Assemblies happened in the middle period between Chapters, in other words every two years. Assemblies were meant as a time to get together, to discuss decisions made at Chapters, to make or evaluate new potential decisions, and to prepare for major works to do at the next Chapter. This was also the time for celebration and prayer. Assembly meetings lasted for two days.

Assembly meetings were a necessary part of the congregation's government structure. For every Assembly, a summary was written about what had been discussed, or questioned, or proposed during the meeting. The documentation was often accompanied by photos of participants.

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Other notes

- **Publication status:** Published
- **Level of detail:** Partial
- **Status description:** Revised

Access points

- Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada (London, Ont.)
- Multiple media (documentary form)
- Photographs (documentary form)
- Textual records (documentary form)
- Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada (London, Ont.) (subject)
- London (place)

Series descriptions

Subseries F01-S139-01: Events

Date: 1993-2009 (creation)

Scope and content: This subseries provides reflections and topics proposed, working documents and possible materials to be included into discussions at Assemblies. There are four photos of people during the Assembly of 1993. The Assembly days of 2001 include opening reflections, reading excerpts and mission statements; and community reports. The Assembly days of 2001 include papers on prophets in religious life; and prayers. The Assembly days of 2009 include some related correspondence; lists of participants; and individual and communal reflections on how to live faithfully.

Physical description: 2 cm of textual records

4 photos : col. 10 x 15 cm

Access points:

- Multiple media (documentary form)

Publication status:

Published

File / item list

Reference code	Title	Dates	Physical description
F01-S139-01-01	File - Assembly days, 1993	1993	
F01-S139-01-02	File - Assembly days, August 2-5, 2001	2001	
F01-S139-01-03	File - Assembly days, August 1-4, 2002	2002	
F01-S139-01-04	File - Assembly days, 2009	2009	

Subseries F01-S139-02: Reports

Date: 1990-2005 (creation)

Scope and content: This subseries includes leadership reports for the corresponding Assembly days. It includes brochures with the final plans and summaries of the discussions. The years and the corresponding topics discussed are as follows: the notion of power over others (1990); results of the committee work on examining the present and future needs of Mount St. Joseph; reports on the Chapter 1999 and what they learned in the previous years; as well plans for the next years (2001); and discussions on decision-making and collaborating with others (2005).

Physical description: 2 cm of textual records

Access points:

- Textual record (documentary form)

Publication status:

Published			
File / item list			
Reference code	Title	Dates	Physical description
F01-S139-02-01	File - Leadership report, 1990		
F01-S139-02-02	File - Committee reports, 2001 [2013-42]		
F01-S139-02-03	File - Leadership team report, 2001 [2013-42]		
F01-S139-02-04	File - Mid-term leadership report, 2005 [2013-42]		