

# **Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada**

## **Finding Aid - Education, Sarnia, ON series (F01-S115)**

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# **Education, Sarnia, ON series**

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## **Table of contents**

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Summary information .....	3
Administrative history / Biographical sketch .....	3
Scope and content .....	5
Notes .....	5
Access points .....	7
Series descriptions .....	7

## Summary information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada
<b>Title:</b>	Education, Sarnia, ON series
<b>Reference code:</b>	F01-S115
<b>Date:</b>	1940-2005 (creation)
<b>Physical description:</b>	12 cm of textual records 6 photographs : b&w 1 photograph : col

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## Administrative history / Biographical sketch

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### 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, L#naapéewak, 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

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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.

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## Scope and content

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This series concerns the involvement of the Sisters of St. Joseph in the London diocese in the field of education in Sarnia, Ontario, where the Sisters worked as teachers, principals, and administrators. The records are primarily concerned with St. Michael's School, St. Patricia's High School, and St. Patrick's High School. Material in this series includes correspondence, photographs, news clippings, event programs, histories, yearbooks, alumni newsletters, and St. Patrick's High School's newsletters. The school newsletter, also referenced as the school paper, was called *\*The Annunciata\** and later renamed *\*The Shamrock\**. The St. Patrick's High School's yearbooks were also called *\*The Shamrock\**. The correspondence is concerned with the Sisters' employment, the Sarnia Roman Catholic Separate School Board's involvement with the schools, the opening of St. Patricia's Senior School, and the amalgamation of St. Patrick's Senior High School and St. Patricia's Junior High School. There are also meeting minutes of the Sarnia Roman Catholic Separate School Board and lists of teaching Sisters and the schools they taught at.

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## Notes

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### 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 Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of London.

### 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

File F01-S115-03-04 contains some sensitive material which is restricted to public 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]

C. Bondy (ed.), \*The Sisters of St. Joseph of the Diocese of London: Their Contribution to the Health Field in Canada and in Peru. Their Contribution to the Education Field in Canada and Other Parts Of The World\*, unpublished manuscript. (Researchers: E. Bardawill, C. Bondy, M . L. Kirwin, C. Kuefler.)

## Note [General]

The Sisters taught and served as principals in Lambton county, including Sarnia, Camlachie, Corunna. Courtright, Watford, and Wyoming beginning in 1906. The separate schools they taught at in Sarnia included St. Patrick's High, Our Lady of Mercy, Sacred Heart, St. Michael, Blue Water, St. Joseph's, St. Patricia, St. Benedict, and St. Helen. The Sisters first arrived in Sarnia in 1906 to teach at Our Lady of Mercy school. One of the highlights of these early years was a music program initiated by Sr. Majella Conway based on the curriculum of the Toronto Conservatory of Music under which several pupils received their A.T.C.M. diplomas. In 1916, St. Joseph's school was opened in an old Methodist church, and construction completed on a new school in 1917, with high school classes beginning in 1919. St. Patrick's school opened in 1935 and was enlarged in 1947 with classrooms for grades 12 and 13, a commercial class, a library, and auditorium. During their time in Sarnia, the Sisters lived at Our Lady of Mercy convent, and travelled to Petrolia, Forest, Port Lambton, and Corunna on weekends to teach catechism from 1950-1960. In 1951, the Sisters offered to donate the salary of one teacher to St. Patrick's High school for one year and make a refund from the salaries of other Sister teachers for ten years. In 1954, grades 9 and 10 moved to St. Patricia's school, while grades 11-13 and the commercial class remained at St. Patrick's High school. Until 1967, classes were segregated by sex but at this time, boys' and girls' classes were integrated. A new St. Patrick's school opened in 1968, amalgamating both St. Patrick's and St. Patricia's schools. Due to overcrowding, grades 9-11 moved to the old Central High school building, followed by grades 12-13 in 1986. The school was still known as St. Patrick's High school.

In 1943, during WW II, the mines in northern Ontario closed, and families moved to work at Polymer Synthetic Rubber plant in Blue Water. These French speaking families left good jobs to live in shacks with no streets and no running water. The school was a two-room building with no running water, and since it was during the war, Daylight Savings Time was all year long, so the school day began in darkness in rooms brightened only by coal oil lamps, necessitating oral teaching until about 9:45 a.m. when the children could see enough to read and write. Bilingual Sisters taught at this school, and since there was no church, Mass was celebrated in the basement. When the school burned down, children were bussed to St. Patrick's school until a large mess hall was rented from Polymer and converted to classrooms. A new school finally opened in 1947, again staffed by the Sisters who commuted from Our Lady of Mercy convent in Sarnia.

## Other notes

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

## Access points

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

## Series descriptions

### Subseries F01-S115-01: St. Michael's School

Date: 1968 (creation)

Publication status:

Published

#### File / item list

Reference code	Title	Dates	Physical description
F01-S115-01-01	File - Sarnia/Camlachie	1968	

### Subseries F01-S115-02: St. Patricia's High School

Date: 1955-1967 (creation)

Publication status:

Published

#### File / item list

Reference code	Title	Dates	Physical description
F01-S115-02-01	File - St. Patricia's High School	1955-1967	

### Subseries F01-S115-03: St. Patrick's High School

Date: 1944-2005 (creation)

Publication status:

Published			
<b>File / item list</b>			
Reference code	Title	Dates	Physical description
F01-S115-03-01	<b>File - St. Patrick's High School</b>		
F01-S115-03-02	<b>File - St. Patrick's High School 1921-1975</b>		
F01-S115-03-03	<b>File - Newsclippings and Photographs</b>		
F01-S115-03-04	<b>File - Alumnae/Anniversaries</b>		
F01-S115-03-05	<b>File - Newsletter</b>		
F01-S115-03-06	<b>File - Shamrock-1953-54 [yearbook]</b>	1954	
F01-S115-03-07	<b>File - Shamrock-1956 [yearbook]</b>	1956	
F01-S115-03-08	<b>File - Shamrock-1960 [yearbook]</b>	1960	
F01-S115-03-09	<b>File - Shamrock-1961 [yearbook]</b>	1961	
F01-S115-03-10	<b>File - Shamrock-1962 [yearbook]</b>	1962	
F01-S115-03-11	<b>File - Shamrock-1964 [yearbook]</b>	1964	
F01-S115-03-12	<b>File - Shamrock-1979 [yearbook]</b>	1979	
<b>Subseries F01-S115-04: Sarnia Roman Catholic Separate School Board</b>			
<u>Date:</u> 1972 (creation)			
<u>Publication status:</u>			
Published			
<b>File / item list</b>			
Reference code	Title	Dates	Physical description
F01-S115-04-01	<b>File - Lists and Programs</b>	1972	