

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

## **Finding Aid - Education, St. Thomas, ON series (F01-S114)**

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# **Education, St. Thomas, ON series**

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## Summary information

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**Repository:** Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada  
**Title:** Education, St. Thomas, ON series  
**Reference code:** F01-S114  
**Date:** 1933-2005 (creation)  
**Physical description:** 17.5 cm of textual records  
1 photograph : b&w  
4 photographs : 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

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 contains records concerning the involvement of the Sisters of St. Joseph in the London diocese in the field of education in St. Thomas, Ontario. While the records mention interactions with the Elgin County Roman Catholic Separate School Board and other schools in St. Thomas, the records in this series are all from or about St. Joseph's High School. Material includes a feasibility study, yearbooks, news clippings, correspondence, photographs, pamphlets, and drama festival programs. The correspondence primarily concerns administration, funding, alumni events, and the Sisters who worked at the school. The major topics of the material are the Sisters' employment, administrative concerns, the school's drama department, and coordination of alumni events. There is also an annotated script for the play *\*TUB\** by James W. Nichol, which the school performed in 1971.

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## Notes

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### Title notes

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

### Physical condition

The yearbook in F01-S114-02-05 has three black and white photographs pasted into page 47.

### Immediate source of acquisition

These records were accumulated by the Sisters of St. Joseph of London.

### Arrangement

Order 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

Files F01-S114-01-04 and F01-S114-01-08 contain some sensitive information and are therefore 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 of St. Joseph from the London diocese arrived to teach in St. Thomas, Ontario in January 1879 at the request of Father Flannery of Holy Angels parish. Mother Ignatia Campbell sent two novices, Sister Bernard Jordan, and Sister Celestine McCarthy, who initially stayed at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Doyle. The convent was finally opened on February 2, 1879, and had a hallway dividing the classrooms on the left from the convent on the right of the main entrance. In 1897 a larger convent was built at 10 White Street. In 1879, the first music class was formed by Sr. Patricia Mallon followed by Sister Angela McKeogh, who both taught piano and voice. In 1902, Mother Ignatia Campbell became the Superior of the convent in St. Thomas which had seven other Sisters living there and spent her time visiting the poor and the sick. On May 12, 1912, a new auditorium opened at Holy Angels school and was blessed by Bishop Fallon of London. The same year, Mr. T. Heinroth came to visit the School. He examined the classes in singing plain chant -the Ward method and was happy with the results. On May 29, 1925, a new addition with two classrooms, a chemistry laboratory, board room, and library opened for continuation classes. In 1928, Cecilia Moore, later Mother Julia Moore, General Superior of the congregation from 1959-1971, graduated from St. Joseph's High School, having also attend Holy Angel's school for her elementary grades. In 1935, radios came to the classrooms, enabling the teachers to take advantage of the model lessons broadcast by the Educational Department, Toronto. When WW II took place, 14 boys signed up for active service. Commercial classes were also taught, and in 1941, all students in these classes secured good positions. Some Sisters travelled daily from St. Thomas to Aylmer to teach at Our Lady of Sorrows school, while others taught catechism classes on weekends in Port Stanley, West Lorne, and Wallacetown. In 1955, a new addition was built for the high school, and in June 1957, St. Raphael's school opened. In September 1965 fees began to be charged for students registered at St. Joseph's High school. In 1973, teachers went on strike to protest Bill 274 which imposed binding arbitration on lay teachers who resigned over salary disputes and the Sisters stood with them, and the bill was shelved. In November 1974, the Sisters stood shoulder to shoulder with lay teachers in their salary dispute with the Elgin County Roman Catholic Separate School Board, and a settlement was reached in January 1975. The lay teachers insisted that the Sisters receive a full salary, rather than 85% after this. At their centennial year of service to St. Thomas, St. Anne's and Holy Angel's parishes honored the 179 Sisters who had served as teachers and principals.

Other places the Sisters taught in Elgin County included Aylmer, Wallacetown, Sparta, and Dutton from 1879 to 1996, and West Lorne from 1957 to 1972.

## 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)
- St. Thomas (place)

## Series descriptions

### Subseries F01-S114-01: St. Joseph's High School

Date: 1933-2005 (creation)

Publication status:

Published

#### File / item list

Reference code	Title	Dates	Physical description
F01-S114-01-01	<b>File - Sisters of St. Joseph</b>		
F01-S114-01-02	<b>File - St. Joseph's High School – Confidential</b>		
F01-S114-01-03	<b>File - St. Joseph's H.S. - newsclippings</b>		
F01-S114-01-04	<b>File - Alumnae</b>		
F01-S114-01-05	<b>File - Drama</b>		
F01-S114-01-06	<b>File - Events [2016-6]</b>		
F01-S114-01-07	<b>File - Pamphlets [2016-6]</b>		
F01-S114-01-08	<b>File - St. Thomas High School Sister Teachers List</b>		

### Subseries F01-S114-02: St. Joseph's High School Yearbooks

Date: 1967-1987 (creation)

Publication status:

Published			
<b>File / item list</b>			
Reference code	Title	Dates	Physical description
F01-S114-02-01	<b>File - 1966-67-Sojourn [yearbook]</b>	1967	
F01-S114-02-02	<b>File - 1969-Sojourn [yearbook]</b>	1969	
F01-S114-02-03	<b>File - 1970-Sojourn [yearbook]</b>	1970	
F01-S114-02-04	<b>File - 1971-Sojourn [yearbook]</b>	1971	
F01-S114-02-05	<b>File - 1972-Sojourn [yearbook]</b>	1972	
F01-S114-02-06	<b>File - 1973-Sojourn [yearbook]</b>	1973	
F01-S114-02-07	<b>File - 1974-Sojourn [yearbook]</b>	1974	
F01-S114-02-08	<b>File - 1976-Sojourn [yearbook]</b>	1976	
F01-S114-02-09	<b>File - 1977-Sojourn [yearbook]</b>	1977	
F01-S114-02-10	<b>File - 1984-The Ram [2016-4]</b>	1984	
F01-S114-02-11	<b>File - 1985-The Ram [2016-4]</b>	1985	
F01-S114-02-12	<b>File - 1986-The Ram [2016-4]</b>	1986	
F01-S114-02-13	<b>File - 1987-The Ram [2016-4]</b>	1987	