

Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada

Finding Aid - Sister Cathleen Flynn series (F01-S146)

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Sister Cathleen Flynn series

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Summary information

Repository: Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada
Title: Sister Cathleen Flynn series
Reference code: F01-S146
Date: 1947-2017 (creation)
Physical description: 10 cm textual records
37 photos : col.
14 photos : b&w

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

Cathleen Flynn was born in London, Ontario on May 1, 1933. She entered the congregation on July 1, 1951, and received her habit on January 3, 1952. She made her final vows on January 3, 1957. Her religious name was Sister Mary Brendan. She was the daughter of Timothy Flynn and Mary McNally both of Ireland. Cathleen attended St. Mary's Elementary School, St. Angela's College, and Catholic Central High School in London, ON.

While in the novitiate, Sister Mary Brendan completed her teacher training at London Teachers' College in 1955. She then earned her BA at Assumption University in Windsor, ON, followed by her MA at Manhattanville College in New York, NY in 1967. She completed her STM in (Masters in Sacred Theology) at Regis College in Toronto in 1983, and her PhD in Ministry, also at Regis College in 1990. From 1955-1961, Sister Mary Brendan was a teacher and principal in Windsor. She returned to London and taught at the same high school she had attended in her youth, from 1961-1963. She then served as Mistress of Novices at Mount St. Joseph Motherhouse in London from 1964-1971. As a member of the Commission of Religious, Sister Mary Brendan made a significant contribution to Synod II of the Diocese of London in 1969. She was then elected General Superior, a position she held from 1971-1979. As Superior General, Mother Mary Brendan was a member of the boards of the community's hospitals in London, Chatham, and Sarnia. The varied works of the Sisters involved her in separate school education as well as the private Mount St. Joseph's Academy and St. Joseph's School of Music in London. She was also involved in health care, social work, pastoral care, the mission field in the NWT and in Peru, care of the aged, and retreat programs.

Sister Cathleen then worked as the Assistant Director of Continuing Education at Regis College in Toronto from 1983-1986. While a student in the Doctor of Ministry Program at Regis College, she worked as the Director of Continuing Education from 1986-1990, and upon graduation, continued in this role until 2000. She then became the Director of the Master of Arts Degree program at Regis College in 2000, and then the Vice President of Regis College from 2001-2002. She served on the Board of Governors at Regis College from 2000-2005. Sister Cathleen also served on the Faculty Council, Academic Council, and Dean's Council at Regis College in 1996, on the Appointment and Rank Committee in 1998, as Vice Chair

of the Academic Council in 2003, and was appointed Professor Emerita from 2007-2008. Sister Cathleen died on February 13, 2020.

Scope and content

The series contains photographs, biographical material pertaining to her election to General Council, her MA in Sacred Theology from Regis College in 1983, her Doctor of Ministry degree from Toronto School of Theology in 1990, her employment at Regis College as Director of the MA in Ministry and Spirituality Program, various news-clippings, a hand painted Feast Day album, a hand painted card from the Precious Blood Sisters in 1979, and various Jubilee memorabilia. The series also contains different versions of Sister Cathleen's curriculum vitae, a report by her about a pilgrimage she made to Europe and the Holy Land, and a paper written about Sister Cathleen by her grandson, Brandon Graham, in 2017.

Much of this series is made up of reports to the General Chapter from various Sisters in 1979. There is extensive material on the topic of catechetics, religious education and the future for Sisters in parish ministry. In a letter to the Secretary of State, Vatican Apostolic College, Mother Mary Brendan reported on the success of literacy programs provided to Portuguese immigrants in London. A report from the Archdiocese in Edmonton describes the need for a five-year National Religion Program consisting of teams of Sisters providing instruction in Catholic schools, and the involvement of lay people to provide instruction to adults. A report on the activities of the St. Joseph's School of Music 1975-1979 discusses the renovation of the Recital Hall, instruction in piano, singing, violin and music theory for 390 students annually, participation in the Royal Conservatory of Toronto and the Western Conservatory, a scholarship fund, professional development for the Sisters and the hosting of and participation in local music festivals. A report by one Sister in April, 1979 expresses uncertainty as to the future of the music school.

In early 1979, Mother Mary Brendan wrote to Sisters across the country seeking their views in response to the promulgation of Vatican II, the Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World. One Sister wrote with concern for the socio-economic interests of the Third World and rising tensions within the Christian communities about how to respond. In another report, Sister St. Patrick Joyce outlined what were novel recommendations for the treatment of alcohol addiction and the concept of detoxification centres.

Sisters committed to the continuation of work of the Boulee Street mission which served the needs of a low income neighborhood in London and support for those in jail. In another report, a Sister wrote on the topic of evangelization and Christian renewal in a climate of diversity, pluralism and the attraction to Eastern spiritual disciplines. In another report, one Sister called for an increased commitment to youth and adults through solid religious instruction and the teaching of prayer. There is also a survey, report, and recommendations prepared for the Most Reverend J.N. MacNeil by the Ad Hoc Committee for Pastoral Assistants in the Archdiocese of Edmonton, February 1979 outlining the scope of work and hiring of pastoral assistants to aid priests in their work.

On the topic of the higher incidence of divorce and the Marriage Tribunal, Sisters recommended that more women study, teach and write about the Canon law conventions and procedures in jurisprudence. There are several reports outlining emergent changes within the healthcare system related to governance, administration, funding, personnel, medico-moral issues, medical treatments, and technology. Sisters confirm there was a common need for continued pastoral care at the hospitals in London, Sarnia, and Windsor. It was observed that there were increasing needs for retreats for Sisters and lay volunteers offered by the Medaille House in London and for societal formation, or a reorientation to religious life.

This series contains sixteen speeches written by Mother Mary Brendan and a paper she wrote for the Synod on the role of religious women in the community through teaching, hospital care, administration, and social

work. Certificates of her educational achievements and professional memberships dating from 1947 to 2001 are included along with a certificate she received with a medal from Queen Elizabeth.

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 archivist of the London congregation.

Arrangement

Order was imposed on the records 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 available.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Note [Sources]

Dictionary of Biography of Sisters of St. Joseph of Canada.

Other notes

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

Access points

- Flynn, Cathleen (subject)
- 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)

Collection holdings

Subseries: F01-S146-01 - Photographs

Title: Photographs

Reference code: F01-S146-01

Physical description: Photographs

Publication status:

Draft

File: F01-S146-01-01 - Photographs

Title: Photographs

Reference code: F01-S146-01-01

Date: 1971-1979 (date of creation)

Publication status:

Draft

Subseries: F01-S146-02 - 1971-1979

Title: 1971-1979

Reference code: F01-S146-02

Publication status:

Draft

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File: Biographical material

Title: Biographical material

Publication status:

Draft

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