



# A LEGACY OF CARING:

Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto

Created by Valerie Gauthier,  
project archivist

Edited by Grace Sauv , CSJ

August 2016

# INTRODUCTION

THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH WERE FOUNDED IN 1648 IN LE PUY-EN-VELAY, FRANCE, WITH A MISSION TO LEAD OTHERS TO UNION WITH GOD AND WITH THE DEAR NEIGHBOUR BY UNDERTAKING ALL WORKS OF MERCY.

TWO CENTURIES LATER, ON OCTOBER 7, 1851, FOUR SISTERS CAME TO TORONTO, CANADA TO CARE FOR ORPHANS, TO TEACH CHILDREN AND TO SERVE THE SICK POOR AND THE MOST VULNERABLE IN SOCIETY. UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF MOTHER DELPHINE FONTBONNE, THEY IMMEDIATELY BEGAN TO RESPOND TO TORONTO'S NEEDIEST.

THIS EXHIBIT HIGHLIGHTS THE CONGREGATION'S ROLE IN HEALTH CARE AND FEATURES IMAGES FROM THE CONGREGATIONAL ARCHIVES. BETWEEN 1857 AND 1925, THE COMMUNITY SET UP SIX HEALTH CARE INSTITUTIONS ACROSS THE COUNTRY: FOUR IN TORONTO, ONE IN COMOX, BC., AND ONE IN WINNIPEG, MB.

# HEALTH CARE INSTITUTIONS FOUNDED BY THE SISTERS:

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| 1. House of Providence (Toronto, ON)         | Est. 1857 |
| 2. St. Michael's Hospital (Toronto, ON)      | Est. 1892 |
| 3. St. Joseph's General Hospital (Comox, BC) | Est. 1913 |
| 4. St. Joseph's Hospital (Toronto, ON)       | Est. 1921 |
| 5. St. Joseph's Residence (Winnipeg, MB)     | Est. 1923 |
| 6. Our Lady of Mercy Hospital (Toronto, ON)  | Est. 1925 |



# 1. HOUSE OF PROVIDENCE, TORONTO

Est. 1857

# HOUSE OF PROVIDENCE

STEMMING FROM BISHOP DE CHARBONNEL'S VISION OF A PLACE OF RELIEF FOR THE DESTITUTE, THE HOUSE OF PROVIDENCE WAS FOUNDED IN TORONTO AND ENTRUSTED TO THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH IN 1857. IT WAS LOCATED ON POWER STREET, NEAR QUEEN ST. EAST.

BY 1865, OVER 450 RESIDENTS (INCLUDING IMMIGRANTS, ORPHANS, WIDOWS, THE ELDERLY, AND THE DISABLED) WERE PROVIDED DAILY FOOD AND SHELTER UNDER THE CARE OF TEN SISTERS.

IN URGENT NEED OF REPAIR BY THE 1950S, THE HOUSE OF PROVIDENCE WAS RELOCATED TO ST. CLAIR AND WARDEN IN SCARBOROUGH IN 1962. IT WAS RENAMED PROVIDENCE VILLA AND HOSPITAL, ITS FOCUS CHANGING TO RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR THE ELDERLY AND PROVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES. THE ORIGINAL BUILDING WAS DEMOLISHED TO MAKE WAY FOR THE RICHMOND STREET RAMP FROM THE DON VALLEY PARKWAY.

IN 1998 THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH TRANSFERRED SPONSORSHIP OF THE INSTITUTION TO THE CATHOLIC HEALTH SPONSORS OF ONTARIO. KNOWN TODAY AS PROVIDENCE HEALTHCARE, THE INSTITUTION WILL CELEBRATE 160 YEARS OF OPERATION IN 2017.



North entrance of the House of Providence on Power Street, looking south towards Richmond Street, in the 1930s. The building on the far right was the Sisters' residence.



Female residents in the third floor sitting room in the 1940s.



Residents prepare to board a bus outside the House of Providence, possibly for an outing on Rosary Sunday, in the 1940s.



Chef Tony Vella and  
Sr. Mary Magdalene in  
the House of  
Providence kitchen  
(1957).



Sr. Aloysia bandaging a male patient's leg in the infirmary of St. Teresa's Unit (1958).



Women's wing on the  
first floor (1958).

1st floor women, R.P.,  
Sr. Emiliana's floor



Sister St. Osmund giving food to a group of approximately 20 men outside the House of Providence, (1958).



The House of Providence farmhouse, Scarborough, in 1925.

The new Providence Villa and Hospital was built on this property in 1962.



Aerial view of the new  
Providence Villa & Hospital in  
Scarborough, April 1963.



A Sister attends to a resident in the men's ward of the new Providence Villa, 1962.



Sr. St. Lawrence in the  
Villa's dining area, 1962.



Ed Sullivan visits  
Providence Villa, 1964.

Left to right: Sr. Vianney,  
Sr. St. Gertrude, Vern  
Moore (Chairman of the  
Board), and Ed Sullivan.



Providence Villa façade  
in the 1970s.



Sisters at the unveiling of the Heritage Toronto Plaque for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Providence Health Care in 2007.



## 2. ST. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL, TORONTO

Est. 1892

# ST. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL, TORONTO

DURING A DIPHTHERIA EPIDEMIC IN 1891, SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH RESPONDED TO A CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS TO CARE FOR THE SICK IN TORONTO'S NEWLY OPENED ISOLATION HOSPITAL IN RIVERDALE. TORONTO'S MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH, DR. NORMAN ALLEN, EXPRESSED THE RESPECT AND APPRECIATION OF THE CITY AND SUGGESTED THAT THE SISTERS OPEN A GENERAL HOSPITAL IN THE CITY TO BETTER CARE FOR THE SICK. THE SISTERS ACCEPTED HIS PROPOSAL AND FOUNDED ST. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL ON BOND STREET.

ST. MICHAEL'S OFFICIALLY OPENED IN SEPTEMBER 1892 WITH 26 BEDS. THROUGHOUT THE EARLY 1900S, THE HOSPITAL SAW MANY EXPANSIONS AND ITS FACILITIES GREW SIGNIFICANTLY OVER THE DECADES, SHAPING ST. MICHAEL'S AS ONE OF THE LEADING MEDICAL RESEARCH HOSPITALS IN THE WORLD. ST. MICHAEL'S ALSO SERVED AS A TRAINING SCHOOL FOR NURSES FOR 80 YEARS WHEN OVER 5,000 NURSES GRADUATED FROM THE PROGRAM -- INCLUDING SOME OF THE SISTERS THEMSELVES.

IN 1998 THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH TRANSFERRED SPONSORSHIP OF THE HOSPITAL TO THE CATHOLIC HEALTH SPONSORS OF ONTARIO.



The original St. Michael's Hospital (est. 1892), a former Baptist Church, was purchased in 1885 to serve as a boarding house for young working women "Notre Dame des Anges".



Nurses and patients  
in the public ward  
for women, (1930).



St. Michael's Hospital,  
(1950s).



Sr. Mary Zimmerman  
(later hospital  
administrator) in the  
Admissions Office,  
with Dr. Bill Hall;  
ca.1950s.



Sr. Mary Frederick  
(Director of Dietetics,  
left), Sr. St. Catherine,  
and staff of dietary  
services in the 1950s.



Mother Maura with "Serving All Faiths" poster for the hospital's first general public funding appeal, 1954.



Sr. Anne Marie Marrin (first Director of Broadview Clinic) and a nurse help a patient, May 20th, 1971.

The clinic was the first of St. Michael's four outreach services to high-density, low income communities.



First graduating class of St. Michael's Hospital School of Nursing, 1894.

Left to right: Mary Murphy, Annie Crysler, Mary Shinner, Katie Madden, and Lizzie O'Leary.



St. Michael's Hospital  
School of Nursing,  
graduating class of 1915

Graduates, 1915



St. Michael's Hospital School of Nursing,  
graduating class of 1956



### 3. ST. JOSEPH'S GENERAL HOSPITAL, COMOX, BC

Est. 1913

# ST. JOSEPH'S GENERAL HOSPITAL, COMOX, BC

AT THE URGING OF ARCHBISHOP NEIL MCNEIL, THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OPENED THEIR FIRST WESTERN CANADIAN MISSION IN COMOX, BC AND ESTABLISHED ST. JOSEPH'S GENERAL HOSPITAL TO CARE FOR INJURED LOGGERS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

FOUR SISTERS (LED BY SR. MAJELLA DORAN) ARRIVED ON VANCOUVER ISLAND IN JULY 1913 AND SET UP MUCH-NEEDED MEDICAL FACILITIES IN THE FIRST HOSPITAL, A FOUR-BED COTTAGE.

WITH THE HELP OF THE COMMUNITY, THE HOSPITAL GREW AND DEVELOPED INTO A LARGE MODERN FACILITY. BY 1955, OVER 1,000 SURGERIES HAD BEEN PERFORMED AT ST. JOSEPH'S.

AFTER 76 YEARS OF ADMINISTRATION BY THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH, OWNERSHIP OF THE HOSPITAL WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF VICTORIA IN 1989. IT CELEBRATED ITS 100<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY IN 2013.



The four-bed cottage which served as the first St. Joseph's Hospital in Comox, (1913).





Two months later, the four Sisters acquired an eight-room farmhouse on the waterfront.

Left to right: Sr. Majella, Sr. Praxedes, Sr. Claudia, Sr. St. Edmund.



Left to right: Sr. St. Edmund, Sr. Praxedes, Sr. Claudia, Sr. Majella, and Sr. St. Hugh, 1935.

The four on the left were the first Sisters in Comox.



St. Joseph's  
General Hospital,  
(1915).



The first wing expansion, 1924. On the left is the 1915 hospital building.



St. Joseph's General Hospital, Oct. 1937.

Left wing opened in 1914; Middle wing opened in 1924; Right wing opened in 1938.



Nurses in front of  
the 1938 wing.



Left to right: Sr. Berenice,  
Sr. Josepha, Sr. Emerita,  
Sr. Mercedes, Sr. Bathilde,  
1930.

The Sisters in white are  
wearing what was briefly  
a nursing habit.



Sr. Teresa Marie and Sr. Jeanette with children on the St. Joseph's Hospital grounds, (1947).



New St. Joseph's  
General Hospital wing  
under construction,  
March 22, 1966.



Opening of the new  
wing, June 17th, 1967



## 4. ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL, TORONTO

Est. 1921

# ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL, TORONTO

IN RESPONSE TO CONCERNS REGARDING THE LACK OF MEDICAL FACILITIES BETWEEN TORONTO WESTERN HOSPITAL AND THE CITY OF HAMILTON, THE CONGREGATION DECIDED IN 1921 TO CONVERT SACRED HEART ORPHANAGE ON SUNNYSIDE AVENUE INTO A HOSPITAL CALLED ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL (LATER HEALTH CENTRE).

WHEN THE ORPHANAGE WAS RELOCATED IN 1924, THE HOSPITAL WAS ABLE TO EXPAND AND MODERNIZE. OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL DECADES, NEW WINGS WERE CONSTRUCTED TO ACCOMMODATE THE RAPIDLY GROWING NUMBER OF PATIENTS, THE LATEST MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY, AS WELL AS THE HOSPITAL'S NURSING SCHOOL (ALSO ESTABLISHED IN 1921). IN 1962, ST. JOSEPH'S OPENED THE FIRST INTENSIVE CARE UNIT IN TORONTO.

IN 1980, THE HOSPITAL MERGED WITH OUR LADY OF MERCY HOSPITAL (A CHRONIC CARE INSTITUTION ALSO RUN BY THE SISTERS), AFTER WHICH IT BECAME ST. JOSEPH'S HEALTH CENTRE.

IN 1998 THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH TRANSFERRED SPONSORSHIP OF THE HOSPITAL TO THE CATHOLIC HEALTH SPONSORS OF ONTARIO.



On the left:  
Sacred Heart  
Orphanage (until  
1921); on the  
right: the new  
East Wing of St.  
Joseph's Hospital,  
opened in 1931.



First graduates of  
the St. Joseph's  
Hospital School of  
Nursing, May 6th,  
1924



Sr. Vianney Fenn (Director of Nursing) with students, ca.1943.



The Morrow (left) and East (right) wings, (1949).



Sr. St. Maurus Barry  
(hospital pharmacist, and  
the first Sister to obtain a  
university degree in  
pharmacy) with her  
assistant, Sr. Frances  
Sauv  (left); (1950s).



Side view of the entrance to Glendale Wing, opened in 1961, with the Out Patient Department on the ground floor.



St. Joseph's Hospital,  
1969.

Our Lady of Mercy  
Hospital is situated  
north of St. Joseph's.  
The Queensway is just  
south of the hospital.



Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau during his visit to St. Joseph's Hospital, Sept. 29th, 1972.



Lt. Governor Pauline McGibbon (left) and Sr. Mary Carol Lemire (General Superior of the Sisters) unveil the St. Joseph's Health Centre plaque on the day of its Official Opening, May 7th, 1980.



# 5. ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL/ RESIDENCE, WINNIPEG, MB

Est. 1923

# ST. JOSEPH'S RESIDENCE, WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

IN 1923, AT THE REQUEST OF ARCHBISHOP SINNOTT OF WINNIPEG, THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH BOUGHT A PRIVATE HOSPITAL SERVING THE IMMIGRANT POPULATION IN THE NORTH END OF THE CITY. SISTER MERCEDES MULROY WAS THE FIRST ADMINISTRATOR.

BECAUSE OF THE FINANCIAL STRAIN OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION, REPAIRS AND UPKEEP WERE NOT POSSIBLE AND THE HOSPITAL HAD TO CLOSE. HOWEVER ARCHBISHOP POCOCK URGED THE SISTERS TO CONVERT IT INTO A HOME FOR THE ELDERLY IN 1953. IT WAS RENAMED ST. JOSEPH'S RESIDENCE.

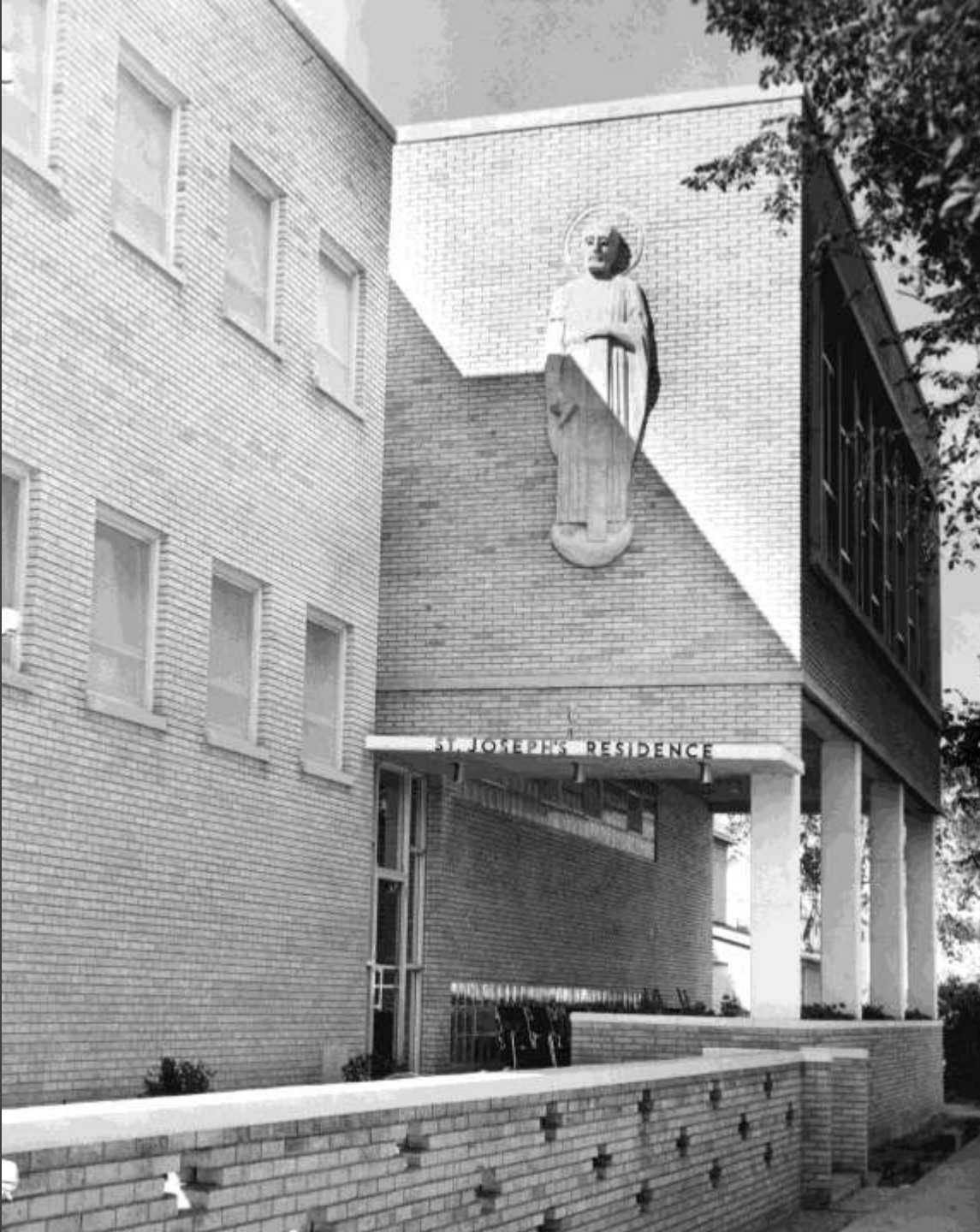
IN 1980, A NEW RESIDENCE OPENED ON LEILA AVENUE AND SEVEN YEARS LATER OWNERSHIP WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE SISTERS OF ST. BENEDICT.



Sisters at the opening  
of St. Joseph's  
Hospital, July 2nd,  
1923.



Original front  
entrance,  
1929.



A low relief statue of St. Joseph was installed on the outside of the building in 1957 after it was converted into a home for the elderly.



Sisters and residents  
gather around for the  
blessing of the Our  
Lady of Grace statue,  
1959.



Sr. St. Hubert in the  
men's dining room at  
St. Joseph's  
Residence, (1967).



Sr. Roberta Freeman,  
the first Administrator  
after the Residence's  
relocation to Leila  
Avenue, 1980.



St. Joseph's Residence on  
Leila Avenue, May 1980.



Sr. Dorothy McDonald, CSJ (right) with Sr. Grace Kowalski, OSB, during the official transfer of St. Joseph's Residence to the Sisters of St. Benedict, Nov. 20th, 1987.



## 6. OUR LADY OF MERCY HOSPITAL, TORONTO

Est. 1925 - 1980

# OUR LADY OF MERCY HOSPITAL, TORONTO

MERCY HOSPITAL FOR INCURABLES OPENED IN 1925 ON SACKVILLE STREET TO CARE FOR RESIDENTS OF THE HOUSE OF PROVIDENCE. OVER THE YEARS OTHERS WERE ALSO ADMITTED.

IN 1940, A NEW HOSPITAL, OUR LADY OF MERCY, OPENED ON THE SAME PROPERTY AS ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL, FACING SUNNYSIDE AVENUE.

IN 1980 THE TWO HOSPITALS MERGED TO FORM ST. JOSEPH'S HEALTH CENTRE.



Our Lady of Mercy  
Hospital for Incurables  
was located at 58  
Sackville Street.

Building on the right is  
the 1932 wing.



Our Lady of Mercy Hospital after relocation to Sunnyside Avenue, (1940). This building was designed by Marani, Lawson & Morris, Architects.

It was replaced by the newly constructed Our Lady of Mercy wing of St. Joseph's Health Centre in 2012.



Miss Lim with patients in  
the Physiotherapy  
Department, ca.1954.



Sr. St. Thomas Ford (far right) and three staff members with two patients, (1960s).



Sr. Mary Avila Mulvihill (in black) and Auxiliary members serve afternoon tea to patients, 1976.

The OLM Auxiliary were a group of volunteers founded in 1960 who spent quality time with residents.



Our Lady of Mercy  
Hospital, (1970s).

# THE LEGACY

THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH ARRIVED IN TORONTO IN 1851 TO CARE FOR ORPHANS AND QUICKLY RESPONDED TO THE SOCIAL NEEDS OF THE DAY WITH THE FOUNDING OF THE HOUSE OF PROVIDENCE IN 1857 TO CARE FOR THE ELDERLY, THE POOR, THE ORPHANS AND THE MOST VULNERABLE.

THE SISTERS SET UP HOSPITALS ACROSS CANADA, WITH FOUR IN TORONTO — ST. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL IN 1892, ST. JOSEPH'S IN 1921, OUR LADY OF MERCY IN 1925, AND PROVIDENCE HOSPITAL IN 1962 — AND OTHERS IN COMOX, BC AND WINNIPEG, MB. THEY ALSO OPERATED NURSING SCHOOLS IN TORONTO AND WINNIPEG.

THEIR DEDICATION AND COMPASSION TO THE SICK AND POOR GAVE RISE TO A BROAD SPECTRUM OF INSTITUTIONAL HEALTH CARE IN TORONTO, ALONG WITH HEALTH CARE INSTITUTIONS IN COMOX, BC AND WINNIPEG, MB.



# A LEGACY OF CARING

Created by Valerie Gauthier,  
project archivist

Edited by Linda Wicks,  
CSJT archivist

August 12th, 2016

# FOR MORE HISTORY ABOUT THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF TORONTO

VISIT THE CSJ HISTORY PAGE AND TIMELINE AT [WWW.CSJ-TO.CA/HISTORY](http://WWW.CSJ-TO.CA/HISTORY)

FIND CSJ ARCHIVES ONLINE AT [WWW.CSJ-TO.CA/ARCHIVES](http://WWW.CSJ-TO.CA/ARCHIVES)