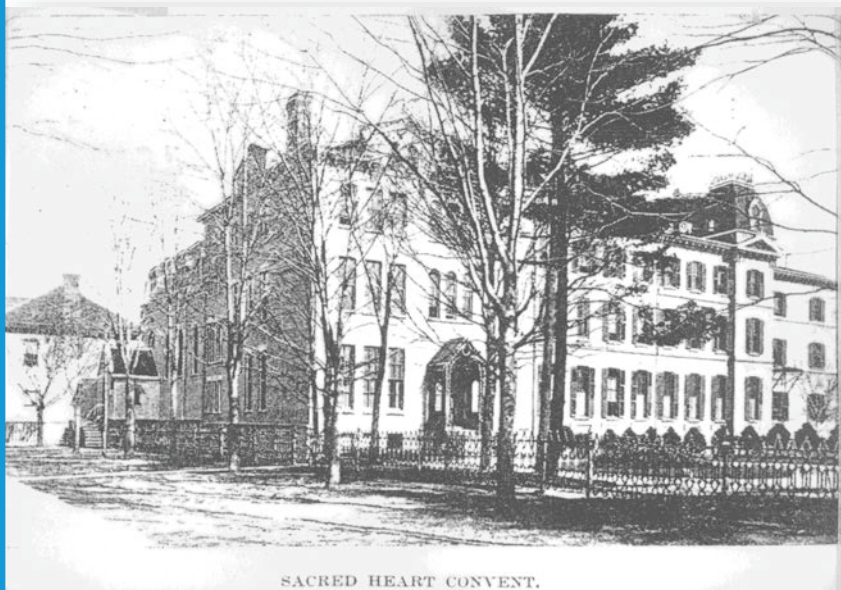


# The Sisters of St. Joseph : Historical London Sites



The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in  
Canada Archives

2014



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This booklet tells the story of some of the historical sites for the Sisters of St. Joseph in London, Ontario. It is organized chronologically, beginning with the arrival of the Sisters in London in 1868.

Due to space considerations, only an abbreviated history of each site is given. Efforts have been made to use an historical photograph to illustrate each site. If the archives did not have one in its holdings, a contemporary photograph has been used.

All of the information and the photographs in this booklet are from the Congregational Archives.

We hope you enjoy learning about the history of women who dedicated their lives to supporting their “dear neighbors.”

In the words of our founder, Mother St. John Fontbonne, “O my Sisters, let us love one another! It is so sweet, so good to love! And again it is the command of our Lord.” The Sisters of St. Joseph have truly shown their love to the people of London, Ontario for a century and a half. This booklet is dedicated to them.



**St. Joseph's Hospital,  
London, Ontario 1983**

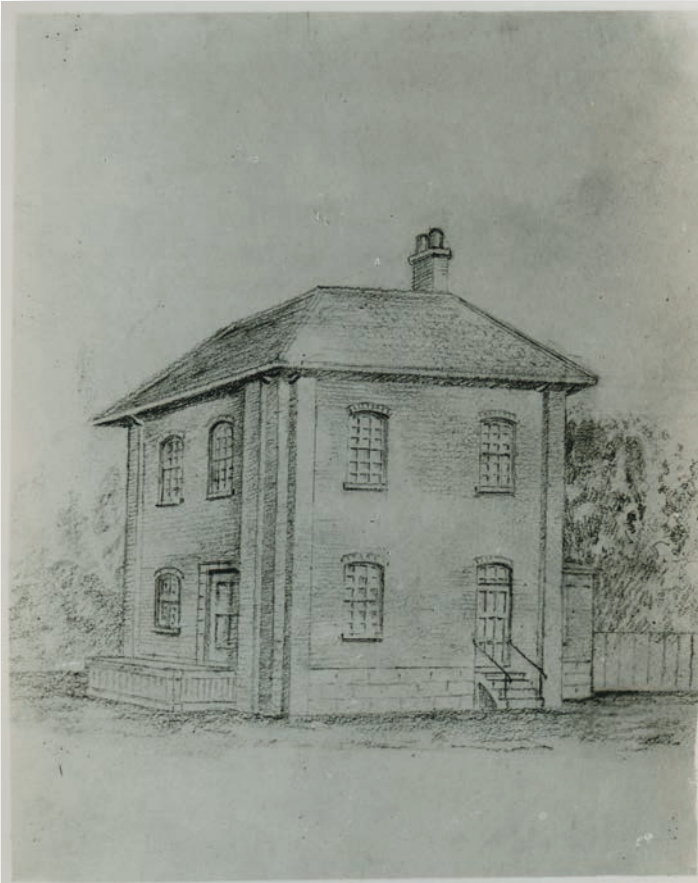


**Mother Ignatia Campbell—  
Queen's Avenue and Wel-  
lington Street**

Mother Ignatia Campbell is one of 50 prominent citizens honored in a bronze sculpture “People and the City: a Monument for the City of London”, installed in 1991. She was born Catherine Anne Campbell in the Thorah Township of the Brock Settlement in Ontario on November 17, 1840. She entered the Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto Motherhouse on October 9, 1855. In response to a request by Bishop John Walsh, Sister Ignatia and four other Sisters travelled to London to establish a convent in 1868. The Sisters were to tend to the sick and poor, teach in the separate schools, visit prisoners, and establish an orphanage as part of their duties. They arrived December 11, 1868 and made their home on Kent Street before moving to Mount Hope to prepare the orphanage for seventeen orphans arriving October 2, 1869. Bishop Walsh appointed Sister Ignatia as General Superior on December 18, 1870.

Mother Ignatia’s 25th anniversary was celebrated in 1881 and she was presented with a silver monstrance for the chapel by her brother Archdeacon Kenneth Campbell. When the river steamer Victoria sank, Mother Ignatia responded quickly, ensuring that the Sisters provided aid to the community. She was the moving force behind the opening of the Mount St. Joseph Orphanage in 1900, as well as the St. Joseph’s Hospital in 1888, and the School of Nursing in 1901. Mother Ignatia resigned as General Superior in 1902, and was elected first councillor of the community. Her Diamond Jubilee was celebrated in 1916 for three days. On December 10, 1918, the community celebrated the 50th anniversary of the arrival of the Sisters of St. Joseph to London. Sister Ignatia was the only living member of the original group of Sisters.

Sister Ignatia died on January 3, 1929 at age 88. Her funeral Mass was held in the Chapel of the Sacred Heart Convent, with Bishop Fallon present.



**First Convent—  
170 Kent Street**



At the request of Bishop John Walsh, five Sisters of St. Joseph from Toronto arrived in London on December 11, 1868, the year following Confederation. They were: Mother Teresa Brennan, Sister Ignatia Campbell, Sister Ursula McGuire, Sister Francis O'Malley and Sister Appolonia Nolan, a lay Sister. They were accompanied by Reverend Mother Antoinette McDonald and were welcomed by Bishop Walsh, Rev. J.M. Bruyere, V.G., and Rev. P. Egan, the Pastor of St. Peter's Church, as well as members of St. Peter's congregation. Awaiting the Sisters were sleighs which conveyed them from the train station to a temporary home on Kent Street, where the ladies of the parish had prepared an excellent dinner for them. This first convent was a small two-storey brick house with a lean-to kitchen of one storey, located on the present school grounds adjoining St. Peter's Parish Hall. It was originally built by the Dominican Fathers. On their first Christmas, the Religious of the Sacred Heart sent a dinner of turkey and plum pudding all steaming hot to the Sisters, beginning a lasting friendship between the two communities.

The Sisters were given the mission to teach the parish children in the separate schools, to visit the sick and poor, prisoners in jails, and to care for the orphans. A property, Mount Hope, was purchased by the Diocese for an orphanage. On October 2, 1869, the Sisters moved to this new location, which became their new convent, as well as a refuge for the elderly and orphans. Their first convent was then used for a few years as a select school and for music rooms.

The London Congregation became independent from the Toronto Congregation on December 10, 1870.



**William Barker House—  
Grosvenor and Richmond  
Streets and College Avenue**

The property which became Mount Hope originally belonged to William Barker, formerly the mayor of London. It was bounded by Grosvenor, Burlington (now Richmond), George and Thomas (now College). It was originally a school of the Religious of the Sacred Heart from 1857 to 1867 but found to be unsuitable for education due to its size and location. It was bought by John Cooke Meredith from the Congregation in 1867. It was then sold to Francis Smith on May 1, 1869 for the sum of \$9,250. The property was then purchased by Bishop John Walsh on May 10, 1869 for the same price. It officially opened as the new Motherhouse and orphanage for the Sisters of St. Joseph on October 2, 1869.

The former Barker residence had beautiful grounds including orchards which made way for the new brick building added to the Barker house. Inside the building, there was a chapel, a parlour, various workspaces, kitchen and bake room, refectories, and accommodation for the Sisters as well as dormitories for orphaned girls. The house was heated by wood stoves and lit by coal oil lamps, with a good oven in the basement where the Sisters made their own bread. Water came from a single well as well as being hauled from the river in barrels. A frame building at the rear of the house held a school room, sleeping quarters for resident men, a laundry, and dormitory for boys. Not far from the frame building was a two-storey brick building used by the Religious of the Sacred Heart as their poor school.

The building was extended in 1877 to become the Mount Hope Motherhouse, Orphanage and Home for the Aged, and in 1899, renamed the House of Providence. In 1951, St. Mary's Hospital was built on one side, and in 1966, Marian Villa built on the other side. When Marian Villa was built, people were gradually moved over from the House of Providence building. The Barker House was torn down in 1965 when Marian Villa was built, and the 1877 extension was demolished in 1980 when the addition to St. Mary's Hospital was built.



**Mount Hope Motherhouse, Orphanage and Home for the Aged—**

**Richmond and Grosvenor Streets and College Avenue**

Located on the original Barker House property, Mount Hope served as Motherhouse for the Sisters of St. Joseph, as well as an orphanage and care facility for the elderly. Seventeen orphans – fifteen from Toronto and two from London – arrived at the opening, but that number soon grew to fifty. By June 1870, elderly men and women from Victoria Hospital and the Municipal Home for the Aged also came to live there.

In 1876, Mount Hope was expanded to provide more room for its residents. The new Gothic building was opened on October 7, 1877. It was four storeys and was built of white brick with red trim around the windows and porches. A large, airy and bright basement contained the kitchen, store rooms, refectories and school rooms. The first floor had parlours, a community room and the novitiate, while the second floor held rooms for the Sisters. The chapel was on the north wing opposite the Bishop's parlour. The cupola on the third floor was surrounded by rooms for orphan girls. The fourth floor held the children's dormitories. There were also dormitories for elderly women, while elderly men were housed in the remodeled former boys' dormitory.

In 1880, Mount Hope provided shelter to over 200 people, its only source of revenue being the salaries of Sister teachers and donations. By the late 1890s, there was overcrowding and many elderly residents required medical care, and so it was decided that the elderly and orphans should be separated. In 1899, the orphans moved with the Sisters to their new Motherhouse at the former Hellmuth Ladies' College, which was renamed Mount St. Joseph. The elderly residents stayed at Mount Hope, which was renamed House of Providence. House of Providence was demolished in 1980, but today, the Mount Hope Centre for Long-Term Care stands where it once did.



**Mount Hope Orphanage—  
Richmond and Grosvenor  
Streets and College Avenue**

The Mount Hope Orphanage opened in the former Barker house on October 2, 1869, which served not only as an orphanage, but also as a home for the aged. The children and the elderly always had separate quarters, but shared a dining room. On October 7, 1877, a new addition to the former Barker house was opened on the Mount Hope property, with more space for the Sisters, the orphans, and the aged. In the same year, the orphanage experienced an outbreak of diphtheria for three months.

The children were brought in by the Children's Aid Society, or at their request or with their permission. On June 10, 1899, the Hellmuth Ladies' College was purchased and renamed Mount St. Joseph, and children were transferred there. At this time, the Mount Hope property was renamed the House of Providence.

The Sister teachers in the orphanage school were required to have the same qualifications as those teaching in the parochial schools in the city. The school inspector made regular visits to the orphanage classroom. Classes were taught from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. every day of the week except Sunday. Girls were taught sewing, knitting and general housework. In 1900, approximately 108 school age children were moved from Mount Hope to Mount St. Joseph, and classes were taught in two classrooms there, with a third added later on. The younger children remained at Mount Hope Orphanage, which was now known as House of Providence, and their education continued as before. They were moved to Mount St. Joseph in 1914.



**St. Peter's School—  
Richmond Street and Kent  
Street**



Three Sisters of St. Joseph began teaching at St. Peter's School in January, 1869. It was the first separate school in London followed by St. Mary's School which was founded in 1874. The school was originally built in 1858 and had just three rooms, until a new six-room building was constructed in 1882. At first, the Sisters taught junior and senior girls and junior boys. In 1893, they were asked by Bishop Denis O'Connor to assume the Principalship and the responsibility for teaching boys. Examinations had not yet been established, and children who passed through the eight elementary grades successfully were taught algebra, geometry, French, Latin and advanced English literature. In 1921, the Christian Brothers began teaching upper-elementary school boys at St. Peter's School and the Sisters left. Eventually, grades 9 and 10 classes were moved to St. Peter's Hall. The Sisters of St. Joseph returned in 1932 to teach grades 1 to 8, when the school reverted to its original purpose of providing elementary education for the children of St. Peter's Parish. A four-room addition was built in 1955, but in 1959, the original school was demolished to make room for a new building. The new St. Peter's School opened on March 17, 1960. The Sisters of St. Joseph left in 1975, and the school was closed in 1979. The building was then used for Diocesan offices.

St. Peter's Choir School was established in 1967 at the urging of Monsignor Joseph A. Feeney. He proposed a school offering special music classes to gifted students in order to commemorate Canada's centenary. In 1966, Monsignor Feeney was given permission by the separate school board to use St. Peter's facilities for this school, which planned to enroll up to 60 students in grades five and six. By 1969, the school added grades seven and eight. When St. Peter's School closed in 1979, the Choir School was moved to St. Mary's School, and renamed the St. Mary's Choir and Orchestra Program.



**Victoria Steamer  
Disaster—  
Springbank Park, Cove  
Bridge**

A disaster occurred on May 24, 1881, on Queen Victoria's 62nd birthday. The river steamer Victoria was to depart at 5:00 p.m. and make the trip from Springbank Park to the Dundas Street dock. The river steamer was an 80-foot, double-deck Paddle wheeler, and overloaded with approximately 600 passengers. At 6:00 pm., the Victoria snagged something in the river and sliced a 9-inch hole in the hull. Captain Donald Rankin attempted to run the vessel aground on a sandbar. Due to these unfortunate events, a poorly fastened boiler broke loose, and the steamer's superstructure collapsed on the passengers aboard, landing the victims in the water. The Victoria careened and rolled over near Cove Bridge and the bend in the Thames River (N 42° 58.582 W 081° 16.812). Although the shore was only meters away, the water was 17 feet deep. Tragically, one-third of the passengers aboard the Victoria were killed, a total of 182 people all from the London area, 110 of whom were children.

After the tragedy Father Tiernan, Father Cummins, and Father O'Mahoney gave absolution to the dead and the dying throughout the night. Mother Ignatia Campbell, of the Sisters of St. Joseph, sent her Sisters out in pairs to visit any home, Catholic or Protestant, wherever their services would be of use. The Sisters comforted and consoled the bereaved. United in sorrow, all barriers were swept away, and all denominations attended the Mass offered at St. Peter's Basilica for the victims. As Sister Genevieve Hennessey later wrote, "It was beautiful to see them helping on every side, neglecting their own affairs to attend to the afflicted neighbor." This tragedy touched everyone within London and the surrounding area, and in fact, it was very few families who did not lose a relative and almost every family lost a friend. London mourners hung black crepe on the doors and wore black armbands.



**Hellmuth Ladies' College—  
1486 Richmond Street  
North**

Hellmuth Ladies' College was opened on September 23, 1869, serving as a select ladies' college until 1899. Bishop Hellmuth and his wife lived at the College for two years before building their own home, Norwood House, on the College grounds. When the property was finally sold, Norwood House and 109 acres of the original 140 acres were purchased by Mr. Mills. Through the prompt action of Mr. Philip Pocock, a lawyer, the remainder of the property including the college, chapel and organ, were purchased by the Sisters of St. Joseph for their second convent. The opening took place on April 29, 1900, attended by Right Reverend F. P. McEvay, Bishop of London, and Reverend Father Fisher, O.F.M who joined a procession several miles long which included school children, clergy and church members, all wending their way to the grounds of the new convent from the Bishop's palace and church.

The rechristened Mount St. Joseph remained a convent and home for school-aged orphans until Sacred Heart Convent was purchased from the Religious of the Sacred Heart on April 3, 1914. At this point, the building became a home for orphan boys and girls exclusively, with infants and pre-school children now accepted. In 1953, the orphans were moved to Fontbonne Hall, located on Queen's Avenue. The old orphanage, renamed Fatima Hall, housed over time, the Mount St. Joseph Academy, Fatima Hall High School and Aspirancy, studios for St. Joseph's School of Music and classrooms and playrooms for the Mount St. Joseph Kindergarten and pre-Kindergarten. Through all the years, laundry and maintenance facilities were housed in this building as well. When parts of the building were declared unsafe by the Fire Department, the music studios were moved, and the laundry and maintenance facilities relocated to a new building which also held swimming facilities. In 1976, the former Hellmuth College building was demolished.



**Mount St. Joseph  
Orphanage—  
1486 Richmond Street  
North**

The Sisters of St. Joseph opened Mount St. Joseph Orphanage on April 29, 1900, in the former Hellmuth Ladies' College. That year, approximately 108 school age children were moved from Mount Hope Orphanage to Mount St. Joseph. The younger children remained at Mount Hope, which became known as House of Providence, and were later moved to Mount St. Joseph in 1914.

Fire broke out at Mount St. Joseph Orphanage on April 14, 1925. The flames, which were attributed to defective wiring, were first noticed in the tower and soon moved across the top of the building. The fire was discovered by two boys who had been sent to the fourth floor to retrieve clothing for some younger children. The boys sounded the alarm and all of the older children were evacuated quickly. The Sisters then rushed to the upper floors to carry out the over twenty babies who were sleeping there. Staff and students at the nearby university heard the fire sirens and the bell sounding the alarm, and classes were dismissed so they could help in the rescue. Clothing and furniture were tossed from the windows and the students loaded automobiles and trucks with blankets, clothes and furniture saved from the fire. The infants were taken to St. Joseph's Hospital, the girls to Precious Blood Monastery and the boys to Sacred Heart Convent. The fire was very difficult to fight because of the building's double roof, which the flames got into, as well as a lack of water supply. However, Chief Aitken and his fire crew did their utmost to save the orphanage, and only the roof was lost.

In 1953, Mount St. Joseph Orphanage was closed due to changes in government policy. All children over the age of two were transferred to Fontbonne Hall on Queen's Avenue. Agencies that had referred children under the age of two to Mount St. Joseph were notified of the change in policy and these children were returned to them.





**St. Peter's Seminary—  
1040 Waterloo Street**



**B**ishop Fallon founded St. Peter's Seminary in 1912 at 196 Dufferin Avenue. The first faculty consisting of five priests was assembled by Bishop Fallon and installed in the St. Peter's Basilica Rectory. In 1926, the seminary moved to a new location at 1040 Waterloo Street, which was originally Sunshine Park. The chapel was finished on June 30, 1930. At the opening of the seminary, Bishop Fallon was in attendance along with many dignitaries and one-thousand Boy Scouts who marched in front of the altar after the Mass and lined up before Bishop Fallon, with a number of them receiving Life Saving Medals.

The Sisters of St. Joseph have long been connected to the priests in the London Diocese. Mother Ignatia opened Mount Hope to the priests who were waiting for the new St. Peter's Cathedral to be built. In 1884, Mother Ignatia arranged for the Sisters to take charge of the domestic needs at Sandwich College, later Assumption College and the Sisters continued to work there until 1904. Sister Aloysia Nigh was the General Superior at St. Peter's Seminary from 1912 to 1913 and from 1923 to 1929. She assisted in the drawing up of plans for the new seminary. The Sisters of St. Joseph were responsible for housekeeping at St. Peter's Seminary from 1912 to 1973, and lived in a separate wing. In 1973, Sisters were involved with cleaning the priests' suites, visitors' suites, the chapel and storerooms. They were relieved of laundry work but continued to do the priests' and students' mending. The Sisters also helped with chapel duties such as setting up small altars. Beginning in the 1970s, the Sisters were responsible for teaching, counseling, spiritual direction, field education, liturgy, music, lay student education, and the direction of retreats along with the seminary staff. Sister Virginia Lobban was the longest serving Sister at the seminary, working from 1958 to 1980.



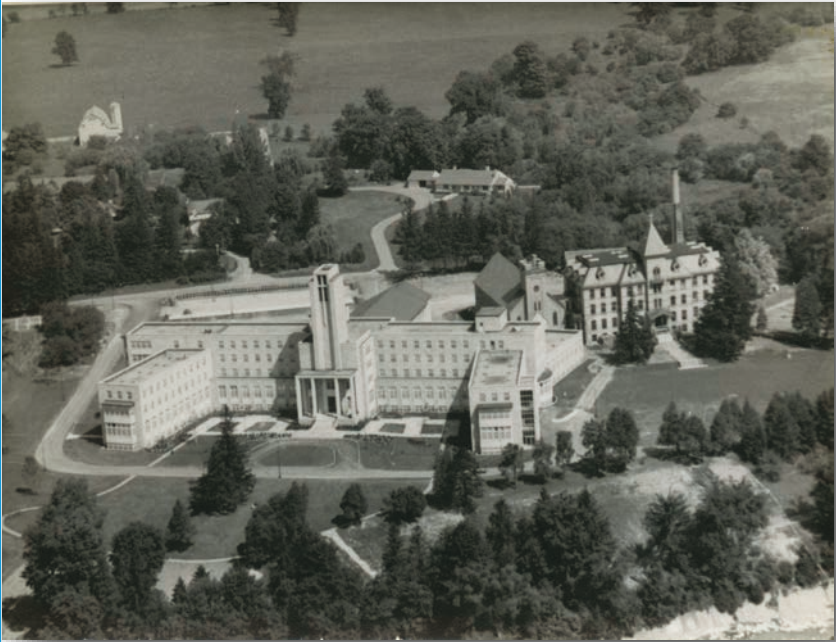
**Sacred Heart Convent—  
411 and 450 Dundas Street**

The building which became Sacred Heart Convent was built in 1854. It was originally the home of Lawrence Lawrason, London's first Police Magistrate. The Religious of the Sacred Heart operated a school at this location, but withdrew in September, 1913. The Sisters of St. Joseph began to use the building for commercial classes in two rooms as well as elementary classes in two other rooms. On March 31, 1914 the convent and property was purchased from its owners, the Religious of the Sacred Heart. The building became the new Motherhouse and Novitiate for the Sisters of St. Joseph.

The Sisters who lived at the convent started teaching music, establishing the Sacred Heart School of Music, later the St. Joseph School of Music, and even an orchestra called the Sacred Heart Concert Orchestra. The first six students from Sacred Heart Commercial High School attended their graduation ceremonies at St. Peter's Hall Auditorium in October, 1938.

In 1915, the Separate School Board bought some of the Sacred Heart School property at the northwest corner. In 1946, the Sacred Heart Convent site was chosen to build a new Catholic high school which would include both a junior and senior school. Until rooms were built for the senior high school, the first two floors of the west wing of the convent were rented to the Catholic School Board and became Catholic Central High School. In 1950, a boarding school for girls was started at Sacred Heart Convent with six students.

The Senior School, named Catholic Central High School (grades 11-13) opened in September 1950 in the convent building, being the amalgamation of Sacred Heart Commercial School (1914-1950), St. Angela's College (run by the Ursuline Sisters from 1913-1950) and De La Salle High School (1920-1951). The Junior School, named Catholic Central Separate School (grades 7-10) opened in September, 1952. In 1953, the building ceased to be a convent and the boarding school moved to the newly built Mount St. Joseph.



**Mount St. Joseph  
Motherhouse,  
Novitiate and Academy—  
1486 Richmond Street North**

The formal opening of the new Motherhouse for the Sisters of St. Joseph, named Mount St. Joseph, was on June 20, 1954, attended by Bishop John C. Cody and 5,000 members of the public. The architects were Watt and Tillman of London, and the General Contractor was Anglin-Norcross Ontario Ltd. The marble for the Immaculate Conception Chapel was supplied by T. Carli-Petrucci Ltd. of Montreal, the woodwork by Globe Furniture Co. of Waterloo, and the marble and terrazzo in the main entrance on first floor main corridors by V. D'Ambrosio & Co. Ltd., Toronto. The mosaic ceiling of the chapel was designed by Count Alexander Soobodo, a member of the Conn Arts Studio in Toronto. The stained glass windows in the nave and sanctuary were made in Florence, Italy and designed by Rodolfo Fanfani of the firm Guido Polloni. The organ was a Casavant two-manual organ, first installed at Sacred Heart Convent. It was rebuilt and slightly enlarged upon installation in the new chapel in 1953. The grounds were landscaped by Gordon Culham and had a playing field, four tennis courts and a replica of the grotto at Lourdes which contained stones from each of the grottos of the world.

The Sacred Heart School of Music moved to the new Motherhouse and its name was changed to St. Joseph's School of Music. The girls' school, now called Mount St. Joseph Academy, moved to its own new wing in 1958. In 1955, the second, third and fourth floors were added to the Novitiate wing. In 1968, Ignatia Hall wing was opened as an infirmary and residence for the senior sisters. It also housed Generalate offices and the Medaille Program Centre, which was located on the ground floor. In 1975, guests from the transplant program at University Hospital were given accommodation at Mount St. Joseph. After the Academy closed in 1985, more rooms were available for families of patients and transplant patients in this wing who had come to London for medical care. The wing also was used for St. Joseph's Health Care Centre.

On December 8, 2005, the property was sold to Ivest Properties and London Property Corporation and leased to Retirement Residences Real Estate Trust (REIT).



**St. Joseph's School of  
Music—  
1486 Richmond Street  
North**

The St. Joseph's School of Music traces its beginnings back a century ago to 1914, when the Sisters of St. Joseph first took up residence at the Sacred Heart Convent in London and began formal music instruction. However, it wasn't until the early 1920s that the school was established as the Sacred Heart School of Music.

The Sisters originally taught a program of studies based on the examination requirements of the Toronto Conservatory of Music (now the Royal Conservatory of Music). However, when the Western Ontario Conservatory of Music was established in London in 1934, the Sacred Heart School of Music began following its courses and requirements. As the years went on the Sacred Heart School of Music continued to grow. School policies were instituted, student recitals took place regularly, scholarships and awards were established, and bi-annual report cards were issued to students. There was even a concert orchestra and a music library.

When the new Mount St. Joseph Motherhouse opened in 1954, the music school was relocated there and its name was changed to the St. Joseph School of Music. The new school contained larger, modern facilities, including St. Cecilia's Recital Hall and adjoining music studios for teaching and practice.

By 1972, the St. Joseph's School of Music had an enrolment of approximately 400 students, and lessons were offered in piano, violin, singing and music theory. At this point the school had 30 teachers, seven of who were Sisters. In September 1982, the St. Joseph School of Music was amalgamated with the Western Ontario Conservatory of Music on the University of Western Ontario campus. The St. Joseph School of Music's programs continued and its teachers were invited to join the conservatory staff.





**Mount St. Joseph  
Academy—  
1486 Richmond Street  
North**



Mount Saint Joseph Academy was a school for girls directed by the Sisters of St. Joseph from 1950 to 1985. It was initially located at Sacred Heart Convent with a mere six students. In 1953, it moved to the newly built Mount St. Joseph convent. At this time, there were 26 students but by 1957, this number had grown to 105 students. In 1958, the Academy was moved to a newly completed wing in the Mount St. Joseph complex.

The mission of the Academy was to provide secondary education for girls in which the Catholic faith was integrated into the curriculum and school life. Students had the option of being day students if they lived in the area or boarders if they came from far away. Students came from across Canada and 10%-15% came from other countries including the West Indies, Mexico, and Hong Kong.

Music was always an important part of life at the Academy, perhaps due to the influence of the St. Joseph's School of Music which was also staffed by the Sisters. Students who wished to learn to play musical instruments did so on their own time, usually through the School of Music. They could also volunteer to join the Glee Club, one of the choirs, or the choral group called the Academy Singers which was well-known in the area.

In addition to regular curriculum classes, students were required to sign up for an activity for their enrichment and cultural development. These activities included photography, driving school, typing, fencing, drama, ballet, horseback riding, charm class, scripture study, physical education, crafts, and home economics club.

The Academy closed in 1985, and the wing that it occupied became a guest wing for relatives of hospitalized patients. It is estimated that over the course of 32 years, between 2,000 and 3,000 students received at least part of their high school education at the Academy.



**St. Joseph's House of  
Studies (Norwood Place) —  
485 Windermere Road**

Bishop Hellmuth and his wife lived at Hellmuth College for two years before building their own home, Norwood House, on the College grounds. When the property was finally sold, Norwood House and 109 acres of the original 140 acres were purchased by Mr. Mills, and the remaining land was quickly purchased by the Sisters of St. Joseph for their second convent and orphanage. In 1912, an eight-acre property adjoining Hellmuth College was purchased by the Sisters of St. Joseph. It was later sold to the Nelles family who built a home and gardener's house which they called Norwood Place. In 1943, the Sisters purchased the property back and renamed the house St. Joseph's House of Studies.

St. Joseph's House of Studies was located at 485 Windermere Road and accommodated about 30 Sisters studying at the University of Western Ontario between 1949 and 1960. In September, 1950 the Sisters also used the house as a residence for 15 Sisters before St. Mary's Hospital was ready to accommodate them.

In the 1950's, the former gardener's house, located at 501 Windermere Road, west of St. Joseph's House of Studies, was used as the home for the chauffeur for the Sisters at Mount St. Joseph. Later, when the house became vacant, it was a residence for two Sisters who renamed it the "Hospitality House."

In April 1960, the House of Studies building was rented to Dr. J. J. McCredie. When the lease expired in 1969, it was decided to use the house as a community retreat centre, and it became Medaille Retreat House later that year.



**Fontbonne Hall—  
534 Queen's Avenue**

Fontbonne Hall, located at 534 Queen's Avenue, was a residence for the Sisters of St. Joseph from May 1951 to September 1953. On September 11, 1953, all children over the age of two were transferred from Mount St. Joseph Orphanage to Fontbonne Hall due to changes in government policy. Agencies which had referred children under the age of two were notified of the change in policy and these children were returned to them. The orphanage was officially opened on December 20, 1953. Fontbonne Hall was more like a foster home than an orphanage, as the new government policies required. The Sisters operated a Day Nursery School which was licensed from 1954 until 1965 for the children of working families. A graded payment scale was offered depending on the family's income, which allowed lower income families to afford this special care.

In June 1965 Fontbonne Board disbanded and in October 1965, it came under the direction of Madam Vanier Children's Services which operated under the Catholic Charities. In June of 1967, the Sisters of St. Joseph withdrew. In June of 1972, the contract at Fontbonne Hall was terminated, but the residents of Madam Vanier Children Services were allowed to stay until their new quarters were ready. On August 4, 1972, a new facility was opened elsewhere in London for the children's care, and Fontbonne Hall was closed. It then was reopened by the Sisters of St. Joseph under a new program called Internos.



**House of Providence and  
Marian Villa—  
21 Grosvenor Street**

Mount Hope opened on October 2nd, 1869 and served as a convent for the Sisters of St. Joseph as well providing care for the orphans and the elderly. By the late 1890s, Mount Hope became overcrowded, and so in 1899, the orphans and Sisters moved to the former Hellmuth Ladies' College, which was renamed Mount St. Joseph. The former Mount Hope was rechristened the House of Providence, and care for the elderly continued at this location. As the numbers of elderly grew, an addition was needed.

By the 1940s, it was understood that many residents needed care for chronic illness and that area treatment hospitals needed to free up beds occupied by chronically ill patients. The Sisters decided that a new facility was needed. Approval for a new hospital was granted by the Government of Ontario, and St. Mary's Hospital was built, opening in May, 1951. Each floor of the House of Providence was then renovated to make the rooms larger and brighter. These renovations were completed in 1952.

In May, 1962 a plan for a new facility to accommodate the need for more hospital beds was approved, and in January, 1966, Marian Villa was opened. This facility was built to care for the health of elderly residents. By 1969, the House of Providence was deteriorating. It was decided to build an additional fifth floor to Marian Villa in 1976, and the House of Providence was demolished in August 1980. In 1981 a new chapel was opened. Dietary and laundry departments opened for use by both Marian Villa and St. Mary's Hospital in October, 1982. On June 24, 1985, Marian Villa, St. Mary's Hospital and St. Joseph's Hospital were amalgamated and named St. Joseph's Health Centre. Today, Marian Villa and St. Mary's Hospital form the Mount Hope Centre for Long Term Care.





**St. Joseph's Hospital—  
268 Grosvenor Street**



**S**t. Joseph's Hospital was founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph under the direction of Mother Ignatia Campbell. This work was encouraged by the Government Inspector of Hospitals and Charitable Institutions, Dr. W. T. O'Reilly, who was impressed by the efficient manner in which the Sisters ran Mount Hope. On October 15, 1888, St. Joseph's Hospital officially opened with 10 beds and space to accommodate 24 patients. The first patient was a woman who, while working in her little shanty, slipped on an onion and fractured her hip. The small hospital was so successful that there was soon a need to build a new adjacent building which opened on October 15, 1892. The new wing had fifty rooms, a chapel, and operating room. By the turn of the century, bed capacity could no longer meet demand, forcing at least 45 to 50 patients to be turned away each month. Plans were thus made for a major building expansion, which was completed on May 12, 1903.

Over the next half century, St. Joseph's Hospital continued its work as a community-oriented healthcare and teaching institution, offering services for family health, chronic long-term care, and rehabilitative and palliative care. On June 24, 1985, the hospital board approved the amalgamation of St. Joseph's Hospital with St. Mary's Hospital and Marian Villa to form St. Joseph's Health Centre. In 1993, the Sisters transferred governance of St. Joseph's Health Centre to the St. Joseph's Health Care Society, formed to ensure the continued success of Catholic hospital care in keeping with the Sisters' legacy.



**St. Joseph's Training School of  
Nursing—  
268 Grosvenor Street**

The St. Joseph's Training School of Nursing opened in 1901. Sister Justina Podlewski was the Superintendent, beginning a tradition of a Sister of St. Joseph serving as the Superintendent until 1973. The School offered a three year diploma program and its graduates were eligible to become registered in 1923. In 1912, the St. Joseph's Nurses' Alumnae Association was formed.

Student nurses resided in the original hospital building on Judge Street until 1927 when a new four storey building was built for the school and nurses' residence. Furnishings were provided by the St. Joseph's Hospital Auxiliary, which was established in 1926. In 1929, the school became affiliated with the University of Western Ontario which gave students the ability to earn a Bachelor of Science Nursing degree. To mark the length of training, students were given black bands on their white caps. After each year of training, a student nurse would receive a wider band. In 1935, the policy was changed which meant only graduates would be given the black band. After objections to the policy, it was decided third year students who were successful, would be given the black band after an interview with the Superintendent.

In 1952, the block system of instruction was used. This method took students off the ward to be given lectures on certain subjects for a period of time, and then returned to the ward.

In 1967, a two plus one program was in place, which entailed two years training and practice, and a final year as intern or practitioner year. The School was renamed the St. Joseph's Regional School of Nursing, and in 1968, a two year program was offered. In 1970, St. Joseph's Regional School of Nursing became part of the Fanshawe College Nursing Program, and renamed the St. Joseph's Campus of Fanshawe College. By 1977, the St. Joseph's Campus closed.



**St. Mary's Hospital—  
200 Grosvenor Street**

The Sisters of St. Joseph built St. Mary's Hospital at 200 Grosvenor Street in 1951. It received its first 35 patients on April 3, 1951 from the House of Providence. It was created to serve the special medical and nursing needs of the chronically ill. Its physiotherapy department was especially well-known for its efficiency, modern equipment, and well-trained staff.

Many of the patients at St. Mary's were there for long-term care and were encouraged to make the hospital their home. Some of the programs that facilitated this were the Patients' Council, a patient newspaper called *Between Friends*, and fund-raising events for charities and the hospital. The hospital's budget was often strained. In 1959, the Ontario Hospital Commission Insurance was created which provided welcome financial relief for many hospitals, including St. Mary's. However, it was a difficult adjustment for administrative and medical staff due to the extra patient evaluations and paperwork required to qualify for the insurance. A year later, in 1960, the hospital re-organized its staff in preparation for the Canadian Council Accreditation Survey which the hospital passed.

The hospital maintained its accreditation over the years despite inadequate facilities which were addressed in 1979-1981 with a large building project. The old laundry and what remained of the Mount Hope Chapel were demolished to make way for a new chapel, laundry, and kitchen which connected the hospital with the neighbouring Marian Villa. In 1986, rehabilitation services were added at St. Mary's Hospital for acute injuries, amputees, neurological, orthopaedic, and chronic pain. In 1979, the Pastoral Department was created at the hospital. A Sister or priest worked part-time to coordinate the Sisters who volunteered for pastoral visits to patients. In 1985, St. Mary's Hospital merged with St. Joseph's Hospital and Marian Villa to become St. Joseph's Health Centre. In 1997, it became part of the Mount Hope Centre for Long Term Care.



**St. Joseph's Family  
Medical Centre—  
346 Platt's Lane**

In the summer of 1966, the University of Western Ontario's Faculty of Medicine collaborated with St. Joseph's Hospital to initiate an Advanced Graduate Training program hosted in the hospital. This was to be a three year training program, one year of which would be a modified rotating internship. The program included a Family Practice service component designed to emulate real practice conditions as closely as possible. By 1968, anticipated enrollment in the program was high enough that the space provided by the hospital was no longer sufficient. A proposal was made to build a Family Medical Centre where the program could be housed.

In the autumn of 1969, a generous donation from Mr. J. Gordon Thompson allowed the Family Medical Centre to open as a fully operational facility on 362 Oxford Street. It was the first full-service family medical centre in Canada. By this time, the Advanced Graduate Training program had attained international recognition and the centre was similarly recognized for the quality of its service.

The facility remained on Oxford Street until 1985, when space and accessibility concerns led the centre to purchase a new building on Platt's Lane. The Sisters of St. Joseph continued their involvement with St. Joseph's Hospital and the centre until 1993.





**Medaille Retreat House—  
485 Windermere Road**

Medaille Retreat House was founded in 1969 as a community Retreat Centre where members of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph could stay to spend time in prayer and contemplation. It was originally located at 485 Windermere Road, at the site of the former St. Joseph's House of Studies. Beginning in 1975 with their "Time Out" program, a 48-hour retreat for single mothers, Medaille House welcomed members of the public for courses and retreat experiences. In addition to the many programs designed to offer peace and spiritual connection, a beautiful labyrinth was added to the grounds as a walking meditation tool in 1998. In response to a growing need, the Sisters created a new space for service and instruction in the Ignatia Hall Auditorium at Mount St. Joseph. Located in the basement, the newly refurbished space was called Medaille Program Centre and began offering programs in the fall of 1990, running until 2006.

During its years of greatest activity, Medaille House welcomed over 2,000 participants over an eight-month period from September 1992 to May 1993. However, decreasing participation led the Sisters to end operations at this location in December, 2004, moving to a new property at 545 Fanshawe Park Road West in March, 2005. The old Medaille House building was demolished in July, 2005 in order to build the new Motherhouse. The dismantling involved Habitat for Humanity volunteers so that materials could be re-used through sale at their Re-Store. Programs at the Medaille Program Centre were discontinued in 2006, and the Medaille Retreat House finally closed in 2012. Today, the CSJ Spirituality Centre carries on the work of Medaille House by providing spiritual direction, while retreats may still be arranged at the new Motherhouse on Windermere Road.



**Theophany House—  
870 Wellington Street**

A “theophany” is a manifestation of God. The name “Theophany” was chosen because the Sisters of St. Joseph saw in their efforts to move toward the full and true meaning of community so many real ways in which God was showing Himself to them and in which they could try to show God to the world. As a direct result of the decision made by General Chapter in 1972, two experimental communities were established – one in Sarnia and one in London. The community in London had six Sisters appointed by the General Council. On August 16, 1972, the Sisters moved into 255 Grosvenor Street. This was a brief placement as the house was to be torn down to provide space for the new hospital’s parking garage. On November 18, 1972, the Sisters moved to 870 Wellington Street, and on December 6, 1972 the First Mass was celebrated.

Theophany House was close to St. Joseph’s Hospital and Sisters working at the hospital would stay at the house. Women considering joining the congregation would visit the house.

On September 18, 1977, the chimney of the house was hit by lightning, spreading soot all over the house. On September 18, 1979, the approval came for the name to be changed from Theophany House to 870 Wellington Street North, and in January of 1980, the chapel underwent renovations. By 1983, the Sisters no longer inhabited the house.



**Internos—  
534 Queen's Avenue**

The building at 534 Queen's Avenue was built in 1870 and purchased by the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1951. It housed a number of overlapping programs, with Internos operating from 1972-1979. Internos means "among us." Initially, Internos was established to fill the need in London social services for a more complete system and residence for girls in need. Part of the goal of Internos was to develop "sensitivity to others' needs, responsibility, and self-discipline" with a long term focus on prevention. The residence was for short or long term stays, and space was allocated for emergency situations requiring accommodation for a night or two. The girls were invited to attend religious meetings and services, but attendance was not mandatory - the purpose was to enable the girls to experience Christian values through living together.

Internos operated independent of government funding, and therefore the girls were screened, interviewed, and accepted based on their individual needs and situations, as well as the needs of the girls already in residence. Some of the girls came from broken homes or were experiencing difficulties with family and societal pressures. Internos offered acceptance, a sense of community, and built confidence which up to this point, had often been lacking in the experience of many of these girls.

From 1977 to 1979 Internos became a residence for young women, beyond high school age interested in "communal living enriched by spiritual dimension" which fostered their interest in an ongoing spiritual lifestyle.



**The Detox Centre—  
471 William Street**




In 1971, a group of citizens met to discuss setting up a detoxification centre. Sister Mary Doyle, of the Sisters of St. Joseph, chaired the group which included representatives from hospitals, social service agencies, the Addiction Research Foundation, the police, the Salvation Army, and Mission Services. Funding was obtained from the provincial government. St. Joseph's Hospital would administer the centre, while the Addiction Research Foundation would plan services. The Board of St. Joseph's Hospital appointed Sister St. Patrick Joyce, of the Sisters of St. Joseph, to be the Director of the St. Joseph's Hospital Detoxification Clinic in 1973.


The clinic opened on Sept. 13, 1973 at 331 Dufferin Avenue, attached to the Addiction Research Foundation at 477 Waterloo Street. The centre contained 20 beds for men, with the objective of providing a hospitable environment in which the alcoholic could be detoxified without medication. In September, 1979, the detox clinic moved to a mansion located at the corner of Queens Avenue and William Street in London. The building was renovated to house alcoholic men and women in one half of the house. Renovations were completed on March 6, 1980, and 534 Queen's Avenue became a refuge for women, while 471 William Street became the new detox centre. The facility, now called the Withdrawal Management Centre, could hold 20 men and 3 women.

During its years in operation, the detox centre at William Street had over 3,300 client visits per year. In 2005, the province terminated its contract with St. Joseph's Hospital. The Sisters of St. Joseph sold the William Street building in September, 2005. The Withdrawal Management Centre moved to the Centre of Hope operated by the Salvation Army on October 31, 2005.

**Wanted**  
**Volunteers**  
GIRLS 16-35  
(15-17 for aspirants)



TO SACRIFICE:  
WORLDLY GOODS, HONORS,  
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FOR A LIFE-TIME OF  
CHRIST-LIKE SERVICE IN | schools  
| Hospitals  
| Homes for the aged

**AS A SISTER OF ST. JOSEPH**

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**MOTHERHOUSE**  
**MT. ST. JOSEPH — LONDON, CANADA**

**Novitiate House—  
250 St. James Street**

The Novitiate House was purchased on September 3rd 1974 from Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Stratton. On October 15th, 1974, on the Feast of St. Theresa of Avila, who is a patron Saint of the Sisters of St. Joseph, the Novitiate House on 250 St. James Street was opened. The Novitiate was for women entering the Congregation. They would spend their first six months as postulants, and then spend two years as novices. The first year was spent studying their vows, charism, and the history of the Sisters of St. Joseph. For at least the first year, they did not take on outside work. During the second year, it was possible to do some outside ministry, but not take on professional roles. After spending this time as novices, they would take their first vows, which were considered temporary vows. In addition to novices, other Sisters resided at the Novitiate House while they were on retreats, or taking courses at the University of Western Ontario. On November 10th, the blessing of the chapel took place with Father Michael O'Brien, the Chaplain at Mount St. Joseph, Sister Mary Brendan, as well as Council members with the Novitiate community. The chapel in the Novitiate House was dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

In the spring of 1978, the Sisters and the resident Associate group at Mount St. Joseph began a gardening project which continued the following year. The gardens were located at Medaille House and at St. Thomas Scholasticate, which is on the St. Peter's Seminary grounds. The Sisters worked tending the garden two evenings a week, weeding and harvesting what they grew. On Thanksgiving Day, the Sisters had brunch and harvested all the vegetables from their garden, and prepared the beds for winter. After this, they celebrated a special Mass of Thanksgiving at St. James Street and had supper. The supper vegetables were all from their gardening project. The Sisters lived at the Novitiate House until September, 30, 1987 when the house was sold.



**Loughlin House—  
446 Queen's Avenue**

The Loughlin House was purchased by the Sisters of St. Joseph from Dr. E. I. Loughlin shortly before his death in the fall of 1975. Dr. Loughlin had built the house in 1938, using the architectural firm of Riddell and Connor of London. The house had five bedrooms, two bathrooms, a waiting room, office and an examination room on the main floor, which was later converted into an entrance room, a small living room and a bedroom. There was also a dining room which became the chapel, and a kitchen on the main floor. In the basement, there was a laundry, furnace, storage area, and a recreation room. The Sisters moved into the house on January 2nd, 1976, and the first Mass was held in the new chapel on March 12, 1976. Throughout their time living at Loughlin House, each sister was very busy with her ministry. Loughlin House was established as a community house, with the goals of reconciliation, communication, consideration, hospitality and simplicity. In 1982, Loughlin House became a formation house when two Associates came into residence. Associates were lay people interested in joining the community.

In April 1986, the Loughlin House underwent renovations in order to prepare for a ministry of ex-psychiatric teens and young adults. Miss Kate Groom was directing the project, and Sister Mary James Finucan joined her. This project ended in June 1989, and the house was reopened as the LIFT house by the Sisters in 1989. In 1990, the property at 446 Queen's Avenue was given to the Ontario government for the Project LIFT (London Interfaith Team) non-profit housing project which came into effect in June 1992. There was a second LIFT House located at 749 Little Simcoe Street.



**House for Women in Need  
(later My Sister's Place)—  
534 Queen's Avenue**

In 1979, a program for women in need grew out of the Internos program, run by the Sisters of St. Joseph. After renovations were completed in March 1980, the mansion at 534 Queen's Avenue was separated into two sections – the Detox Centre, with access from William Street, and a residence for women in need, which was then officially called 534 Queen's Avenue.

The residence offered women in need short term stays of a few days, to longer stays of up to six months. The women in residence may have been experiencing a housing crisis or abuse, or have been in need of rehabilitation programs. Some of the women were also on weekend leaves from the London Psychiatric Hospital. From 1999 to 2003, additional beds were added to house the “Crashbeds” program for homeless women unable to stay in other shelters which had a separate staff unit. “Crashbeds” was funded through the Ministry of Health. The need for this program exceeded the available space and was relocated to another facility.

The continuous need for a safe and stable environment for women facing homelessness was also identified in 2002 by community partners in London. The majority of the programs available at this time were day programs in a mixed-gendered setting, and often did not provide the much-needed support and sense of safety women required. Before they were approached by the Women's Mental Health Addictions Action Coalition (WMHAAC), the Sisters of St. Joseph had made the difficult decision to close the doors at 534 Queen's Avenue due to the declining numbers of Sisters who could run the house. Because of the need to continue providing for a safe place for women, the Sisters decided to provide the financial and moral support to ensure the doors to My Sister's Place opened in 2004. In 2005, My Sister's Place was relocated to King Street.





**St. Stephen's Residence—  
36 Gower Street**

The Alcoholic Recovery Home, St. Stephen's Residence, was a triplex located at 525 English Street. It opened on February 1, 1982. The eight bed home admitted residents from St. Joseph's Hospital Detox Centre, located at 471 William Street, as well as those from referral programs. It was known as a three quarter way house for recovering alcoholics and was operated by the Sisters of St. Joseph as a charitable project. The director of both St. Stephen's Residence and the Detox Centre was Sister St. Patrick Joyce.

While the men were in residence the goal was to support them as they looked for jobs and became re-established in the community. The residents contributed toward their room and board through the help of income support. They were expected to attend Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, were given household chores, shared the main meal each day, and required to attend house meetings. The purpose of these meetings was to focus on interpersonal relationships and shared responsibility for recovery and running of the home. After three to six months, the residents were encouraged to find an apartment and move out to independent sober living. They were still welcome to return for a visit or an evening meal.

With the support of the congregation, a second St. Stephen's House purchased at 36 Gower Street on May 2, 1988. This home had eight beds and a live-out full time cook/housekeeper. Sister St. Patrick continued to administer both homes. In 1989, the English Street home was sold. By the end of 1999, the two homes had helped over 160 men turn their lives around. In 2003, discussions took place to transfer the property and capital funds for St. Stephen's House over to Turning Point, which by 2004 had obtained registered charitable status.



**St. Joseph's Hospitality  
Centre—  
707 Dundas Street East**

In 1982, the leadership team of the Sisters of St. Joseph embarked on a project with the goal of addressing the needs of the poor in London. Sister Mary Jean Klatt investigated the idea of establishing a soup kitchen and determined that the need for one existed. Upon receiving this report, the Sisters began work to find a location. The Hospitality Centre was originally opened at 746 Dundas Street East. On opening day, February 2, 1983, 30 to 35 clients visited the Hospitality Centre. Within six months, the average number of daily guests was 235. Two years after opening, the demand for services had grown to the point where a new location was needed to accommodate guests. In 1987, the Hospitality Centre opened at its new, and still current location at 707 Dundas Street East.

By 1993, the traditional “soup line” had changed to a restaurant format and guests began to pay for their meals as a way for them to contribute and retain their dignity. Breakfast was \$0.50 and lunch was \$1.00. By 2002, the Hospitality Centre stopped opening on Saturdays. In October, 2004, the Sisters of St. Joseph gifted the property at 707 and 709 Dundas Street to the Cross Cultural Learner Centre, with the option to lease the Hospitality Centre back for up to 2019.

Unfortunately, there was a fire in February, 2005 which caused over \$100,000 in damage to the Hospitality Centre. The fire started in the kitchen area around 4:30 p.m. Fire officials believed it was due to an electrical malfunction. After the fire, the Ark Aid Mission helped out by providing meals while the soup kitchen was closed. Many community members, including the Cross-Cultural Learner Centre, gave their support.

Today, the Hospitality Centre still provides meals and friendship to the economically and socially disadvantaged. It also serves as a gathering place where all who participate, both guests and volunteers alike, share support, friendship and the sense of a shared life journey. The centre also provides a referral service to shelters and clothing resources. There are 120 people that volunteer at the centre today, including the Sisters of St. Joseph. On average, the centre serves over 300 meals daily.



**Josephs' House—  
709 Dundas Street East**

Josephs' House was named after the Joseph of the Old Testament and the Joseph of the New Testament who were both refugees. It was located at 709 Dundas Street East. The building at the front was used as a Hospitality Centre, and the large free-standing building at the back was used as a temporary location for refugees who arrived in London. The Sisters of St. Joseph opened Josephs' House on September 24, 1987. During the time the Sisters had charge of the house, 1,100 people passed through, most of whom were refugee claimants or sponsored refugees seeking housing. The refugees stayed for about a month on average. The Sisters provided support for them in coping with the immigration process, providing interpretation, assistance in preparing for meetings with lawyers, and connecting them with others from their communities who were already in London. They also helped the refugees find affordable places to live and provided continued support after they had settled in their new homes. The Sisters subsidized a lot of the costs of sheltering the refugees. They took no salaries, and begged for help for health care for the refugees. The Intercommunity Health Centre which opened shortly afterward did provide some aid, as did the St. Joseph's Hospitality Centre (or soup kitchen) which had opened long before Josephs' House.

Josephs' House was taken over by the Cross Cultural Learner Centre in December, 2004. For two years after the Sisters relinquished Josephs' House, they paid the salaries for Cross Cultural Learner Centre staff. The Josephs' House scholarship recognizes the compassion and service shown by the Sisters of St. Joseph. Although the Sisters are no longer administering Josephs' House, they are still sponsoring refugees. From 1982-2011, the Sisters sponsored 92 refugees from countries all over the world. They have opened their arms and hearts to some of the most desperate and vulnerable people on earth.

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