

If the walls, corridors, nooks and corners, class rooms, music and reception rooms and sacred sanctuaries and cloisters at St. Joseph's Academy on Russell Street East could talk what a story would be chronicled — a story complete with deep and devoted dedication on the part of loyal, considerate, conscientious and capable Sisters, — a beautiful story of successful and enriching labour of love which resulted in the graduation of hundreds of young girls who through the years took their places prominently in the realm of Literature, Science, Art and Religion in a professional way while hundreds of others followed the dedication of heart, soul and mind to take their pedestal places in the home.

St. Joseph's Academy will observe its Seventy-Fifth Anniversary in the life of the community, the Province of Ontario and the Dominion of Canada on June 19th with a gathering of the teaching alumni and on June 20th with a reception sponsored by former graduates of the institution.

In this day and age in the vast cycle of time, Seventy-five years is but a fleeting moment, but it marks a very important milestone in the lives of many people who now have the opportunity of turning back the pages of memory

and in a sense restoring the blessed images of many Mother Superiors and many faithful, lovable, saintly Sisters whose memory in connection with their fine achievements and accomplishments in teaching "young ideas how to shoot" will never be erased but will live for many years to come in the pages of memory.

Although St. Joseph's Academy dates back Seventy-five years, history records that the first Church in this district was a Roman Catholic Church built on the south-east corner of Lindsay and Russell Streets during the residency of Fr. Fitzpatrick. The building was made of logs cut on the premises and was built in the year 1841. The present Church was opened in the year 1858 under the guidance and blessings of Fr. Farrelly, a very devoted and energetic Priest.

The original built in 1874 built in 1874 was burned down after ten years of usefulness but very soon a new one was built and was supervised by the Sisters of Loretta.

### **THE LORETTA CONVENT**

The present St. Joseph's Academy was originally known as the Loretta Convent and is one of the finest of the pioneer buildings in Lindsay. It was commenced in 1872 and opened in 1874. A Lindsay directory of 1877 contained the following item regarding the Convent: "It was built of

white brick, three stories high, with basement and Mansard roof, slated the dimensions of the main building being 75 x 52 feet, with extension of 50 x 30 feet. The school is in charge of the Sisters of Loretta, and is conducted on the Normal School system. The curriculum includes all the branches taught in the public and high schools, besides fancy work, drawing, wax work, music, etc. There are at present 34 boarders, a select school of 85 pupils, and a free day school of 200 pupils. The building, including grounds etc. cost \$50,000.00."

The story of the Sisters of St. Josephs reads like a fairy tale.

The congregation of the Sisters was founded at Le Puy, France in 1650. The purpose was two fold — the sanctification of its members and practice of work of charity for the good of their neighbours. The Sisters literally went through the fires of hell and persecution in early days of the French Revolution in 1789 when convents and monasteries were destroyed and Priests and Sisters sacrificed to death on the altar of their great religious faith. In 1808 during the time of Napoleon the sterling qualities of Mother St. John were recognized. She was summoned from retirement to re-establish the Sisters of St. Joseph at St. Etienne and in a short

time the Order's many branches numbered five thousand. In 1812 Lyons became the central Mother House with Mother St. John as the first Superior General.

In 1836 the Sisters arrived at Carondelet, where they established the Mother House of the Sisters of St. Joseph. An Orphanage was opened at St. Louis and a novitiate at Philadelphia.

The work grew by leaps and bounds in the United States and in 1851 the Rev. Aramand de Charbonnel, Bishop of Toronto requested the establishment of the Sisters of St. Joseph society in Toronto. This Diocese included Peterboro.

The spiritual efforts of the Sisters grew and expanded throughout Ontario and in 1871 the new Diocese of Peterboro was established.

The Ladies of Loretta became associated with the work of the convent in Lindsay in 1874 when Rev. Father Stafford built a beautiful convent in Lindsay with well furnished classrooms, at a cost of \$60,000, a fabulous sum in those days. The Convent opened with ten boarders and there were 71 pupils in the Select School and 131 in the Convent day school.

In 1890 St. Joseph's Sisters came to Lindsay, taking charge of the Academy and Girl's Parish School.

When the Loretta nuns withdrew they left their chapel and class room furnished but changes had to be made. Two rooms in the basement floor had been used as class rooms by the Parish children. Then it was decided that all class rooms should be on the main floor. Although sixteen Loretta Nuns

left the institution for Toronto leaving only four Sisters of St. Joseph's to carry on, additions were soon made to the staff.

At the time the Sisters had eight borders, three teachers and four girls from Downeyville. The fee for tuition, board and lodging was Eight Dollars per annum. In 1904 it was \$100 and later the fee jumped to \$125. A girl's school was added and the first graduate was Margaret Hickey (Mrs. Timothy Carroll). At present she lives retired in Peterborough.

In 1893 a commercial department was added to meet the demands of business training.

In concluding this story of the Sisters of St. Joseph it can be truthfully said that the story has been one of great adventure, of sacrifice and achievement in the spiritual realm and to a very great extent in the education field. The sincere, devoted, dedicated Sisters by their meek, candid and Queenly behaviour surmounting trying and ponderous problems and have in many ways been a blessing to hundreds of students. No doubt the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary will be fraught with many memorable memories and the event will undoubtedly reflect much credit on the Sisters of St. Joseph.

**"In this day and age in the vast cycle of time, seventy-five years is but a fleeting moment, but it marks a very important milestone in the lives of many people who now have the opportunity of turning back the pages of memory. . . ."**



It is interesting to note that Mrs. T. J. Begley of 21 Russell Street, one of Lindsay's highly respected residents, has fond and endearing memories of the place St. Joseph's Academy has filled in the life of the community and in the lives of countless numbers of graduates. Mrs. Begley was a pupil at the Academy three-quarters of a century ago. "I will never forget the affectionate and compassionate interest the Sisters manifest in teaching young girls. I will always remember the experience and the rich and abiding influence of so many kind, courteous and understanding teachers," said Mrs. Begley.



Sister Marion, principal of St. Joseph's Academy came to Lindsay about five years ago from Peterborough, where she was the principal of St. Peter's Intermediate School. In earlier years Sister Marion taught at Fort William.



Sister Gabriella, Superior of St. Joseph Academy brought to this old and honoured institution of learning a wealth of experience and administration. For several years Sister Gabriella was connected with places of christian education in Fort William and district, supplemented with dedicated service with religious and traditional institutions in the Canadian West. Since her sojourn in Lindsay the sister has endeared herself to officials, Sisters of the Academy and students.



# St. Joseph's Academy

Lindsay, Ontario

Dear Mr. Moynes:

Several times, I called by telephone but was unable to reach you to tell you how very much the Sisters and our friends appreciated your fine account of the history of St. Joseph's Academy and the anniversary of the coming of our Community to Lindsay.

We are very happy that we took Mrs. Begley's good advice to ask you. She assured us that you were an experienced and sensitive writer and we are now convinced of it. There have been many comments on the article, all very favourable, coming in to us by telephone and by note. Copies of the paper have been sent to all the mission houses governed by the Peterborough Motherhouse.

Again, many many thanks,

Sincerely yours,

*Sister M. Gabriella*