



Timeline

Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary

Artwork: Blessed Marie Rose Durocher. Artwork: Jean Morningstar, SNJM



1811-
1840s

1843-
1844

1849

1859

1860s

1870s-
1890s

1900-
1910s

1920s-
1950s

1960s-
1970s

1980s

1990s

2000-
on

The
Future





Eulalie-Melanie Durocher with parish children. Watercolor: Emerence Verrier

1811–1840s: Eulalie-Melanie Durocher

Eulalie-Melanie Durocher is born on October 6, 1811, to a prosperous and cultured French-Canadian family in **St-Antoine-sur-Richelieu, Quebec**, Canada. From 1831 to 1843, she learns what’s involved in parish hospitality and administration by assisting her brother, a Catholic priest, at his rectory in Beloeil, Quebec. While riding her beloved horse, Caesar, through the countryside and visiting parish families, she sees how grim life can be for children – especially girls – who have no one to teach them. She sets her heart on becoming a Sister and an educator; meanwhile, she works with children and helps them develop their faith.

***In the world:** The War of 1812, sometimes described as the “second war of [U.S.] independence,” is fought against Great Britain and its allies. As a British colony, Canada (with help from First Nations soldiers) successfully repels American invasions, most of which happen in Southern **Ontario**. The British keep Canada and the U.S. keeps its lands, but many native peoples east of the Mississippi River are driven west.*

1811-
1840s

1843-
1844

1849

1859

1860s

1870s-
1890s

1900-
1910s

1920s-
1950s

1960s-
1970s

1980s

1990s

2000-
on

The
Future



Drawing: Sister M. Donald, SNJM

1843: Birth of a religious congregation

October 28, 1843: Frail health keeps Eulalie-Melanie Durocher from joining existing religious congregations. Undeterred, she continues to work with children in her brother's parish. Impressed by her work, the Bishop of Montreal urges her to found a new religious congregation, the **Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary**. She and two companions begin their novitiate in **Longueuil, Quebec**. The women receive their religious names: Sister Marie Rose (Eulalie), Sister Marie-Madeleine (Henriette Céré), and Sister Marie-Agnès (Mélodie Dufresne).

On December 8, 1844, the three foundresses make their first vows on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Sister Marie-Rose is named the Congregation's first superior.

In the world: Charles Dickens publishes "A Christmas Carol" in 1843.



1811-
1840s

1843-
1844

1849

1859

1860s

1870s-
1890s

1900-
1910s

1920s-
1950s

1960s-
1970s

1980s

1990s

2000-
on

The
Future





Blessed Marie Rose
Painting: Carissima
Dabrowska
1958

October 6, 1849:

Mother Marie Rose dies on her 38th birthday

*Today the bell of the convent sadly tolled her passing, and her religious, in the deepest grief, wept for the one who had given them an example, and whom death had taken so soon from their embrace.**

The Holy Names community is only six years old – but the Sisters are determined to carry on after the death of Mother Marie Rose. At this time 30 Sisters (aided by 14 women in the process of becoming Sisters) teach 384 students in four schools, all in Quebec.

In the world: *The California gold rush begins.*

Hit song: *“The Man on the Flying Trapeze”*

***Quotation credit:** From “Courage, Mes Chères,” compiled by Sue Woodruff, SNJM, for a Eucharistic Celebration honoring Blessed Marie-Rose on her feast day.



1811-
1840s

1843-
1844

1849

1859

1860s

1870s-
1890s

1900-
1910s

1920s-
1950s

1960s-
1970s

1980s

1990s

2000-
on

The
Future





12 Oregon Foundresses

SNJM Archives, U.S.-Ontario Province

1859: Going where the needs are

During the second half of the 19th Century, the Congregation expands. The archbishop of **Oregon**, who has ties to Quebec, asks the Sisters to send teachers. Mother Theresa of Jesus missions 12 Sisters – one sixth of the Congregation. After a 36-day voyage (at one point their ship catches fire), they reach Portland, a rough timber town with few Catholics. Fifteen days later, **St. Mary's Academy** has six students – three Catholic, two Jewish and one Anglican. At year's end, the student head count is 112.

***In the world:** 1859: abolitionist John Brown raids the Harpers Ferry Armory in West Virginia in an unsuccessful effort to spark an armed slave revolt. He and the 21 men in his group are defeated by a detachment of Marines led by then- Col. Robert E. Lee.*



1811-
1840s

1843-
1844

1849

1859

1860s

1870s-
1890s

1900-
1910s

1920s-
1950s

1960s-
1970s

1980s

1990s

2000-
on

The
Future





Sisters on Lake Merritt in Oakland, California. SNJM Archives, U.S.-Ontario Province.
Right: Detail from the Tower of Freedom monument to the Underground Railroad in Windsor, Ontario. Sculpture faces the Gateway to Freedom monument across the Detroit River in Detroit, Michigan. Sculpture by Ed Dwight. Photo: Wiki Creative Commons.



1860s: Onward!

New York, Ontario, California, Florida

1864: Sisters arrive in **Ontario**, Canada. **1865:** Sisters arrive in **New York State**. **1868:** On May 10, the Sisters establish the Convent of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in Oakland, **California**. Both **Holy Names High School** and **Holy Names University** trace their beginnings to that ministry. That same year, Sisters are missioned to Key West, **Florida**, to open a school for girls and form a convent. The school opens in an abandoned Army barracks.

In the world: Before and during the U.S. Civil War, Windsor, **Ontario** is a destination for fugitive slaves seeking freedom via the Underground Railroad. In **1869**, the 1,907-mile Transcontinental Railroad spans the United States. Sisters traveling between Canada and the West Coast can get there without spending weeks at sea.



1811-
1840s

1843-
1844

1849

1859

1860s

1870s-
1890s

1900-
1910s

1920s-
1950s

1960s-
1970s

1980s

1990s

2000-
on

The
Future



1870s-1890s: More ministries

1874: Sisters are recruited to Winnipeg, **Manitoba**, Canada, to take over **St. Mary's Academy**, established earlier by the Grey Nuns (a congregation Eulalie Durocher had tried to enter).

1880: **Holy Names Academy** opens on November 9 in Seattle, **Washington**.

1881: Two Sisters travel from Key West, Florida, to Tampa to open a convent in a stable and a school in a blacksmith's shop. By year's end, 72 students are taking classes. On Valentine's Day, **1894**, arsonists set fire to St. Peter Claver School in Tampa where Holy Names Sisters teach African-American children. In **1896** the Sisters open a school for Hispanic children in West Tampa.

1884: Academy of Notre Dame, later known as **Academy of the Holy Names**, opens in Albany, **New York**.

1889: **Ramona Convent Secondary School** is established at Ramona Acres in Los Angeles County. The site is now in the city of Alhambra, **California**.

1893 St. Mary's College, now **Marylhurst University**, opens in Portland, **Oregon**.



Academy of the Holy Names, Albany, N.Y. Boarding and day school for girls. College preparatory departments of Music and Painting

Postcard, Academy of the Holy Names, Albany, New York

Albany Postcard Project (www.albanypostcardproject.com), an initiative of Albany Archives. Publisher: The Albany News Company; publishing era 1907-1915. Contributor: The Pruyn Collection, Albany Public Library.

1811-1840s

1843-1844

1849

1859

1860s

1870s-1890s

1900-1910s

1920s-1950s

1960s-1970s

1980s

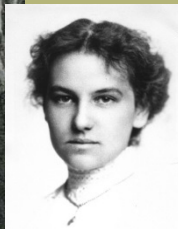
1990s

2000-on

The Future



Children at the Grotto near St. Mary's Home (later known as Christie School and now Youth Villages), Marylhurst, Oregon. *Inset:* Caroline J. Gleason (Sister Miriam Theresa, SNJM); details in text at right. SNJM Archives, U.S.-Ontario Province.



Early 1900s: Care and justice

1907: Schools for teacher training open in Seattle and Spokane, **Washington**. One year later, **St. Mary's Home** for orphans (later called Christie School, now Youth Villages) opens at Marylhurst, **Oregon**. At that location in **1911**, **Convent of the Holy Names** is dedicated, followed a year later by Marylhurst Normal School (later **Marylhurst University**).

1912: Caroline Gleason (later Sister Miriam Theresa) organizes a staff to survey women's working conditions in factories, stores and offices; her findings are data for Oregon's passage of the nation's first **minimum wage/maximum hour law** in **1913**. Sister Miriam Theresa is the first woman to receive a Ph.D. from the School of Social Work at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

In the world: The Wright Brothers achieve flight in the sand dunes of Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, in **1903**. Albert Einstein publishes his special theory of relativity. World War I begins in Europe in 1914.



1811-
1840s

1843-
1844

1849

1859

1860s

1870s-
1890s

1900-
1910s

1920s-
1950s

1960s-
1970s

1980s

1990s

2000-
on

The
Future



1920s-1950s: The Depression, followed by a world (once again) at war

1925: Pierce v. Society of Sisters Supreme Court Case. The U.S. Supreme Court declares Oregon's 1922 Compulsory School Law unconstitutional. The Ku Klux Klan had backed the law that compelled families to educate children in public schools. The legal challenge was brought by the Holy Names Sisters and a military academy.

1931: Holy Names Central High School in Oakland, California, combines the four high schools in the Oakland area that were staffed by SNJMs at the time. That same year Sisters arrive in Basutoland (now Lesotho) in Southern Africa.

1931-1940: Sisters teach in **Japan** until being sent home toward the onset of World War II.

1938 Holy Names College (formerly Holy Names Normal School) opens in Spokane, Washington.

In the world: Economic depression begins in 1929. America enters World War II after Japan bombs Pearl Harbor. The Cold War begins after World War II ends.



World War II

The College of Holy Names (now Holy Names University in Oakland) hosts service women in a dormitory. The dorm in the gymnasium could accommodate 30 women. *Poster: University memorabilia.*

Post-War Period: The Baby Boom coincides with a dramatic increase in Catholic religious vocations. That growth continued: In 1960, there were 4,000 Sisters of the Holy Names spread over three continents; they taught some 100,000 students.

Poster: @Everett Historical Portfolio via shutterstock stock image number 249576526

1811-1840s

1843-1844

1849

1859

1860s

1870s-1890s

1900-1910s

1920s-1950s

1960s-1970s

1980s

1990s

2000-on

The Future



1960s and 1970s: Changing times in society and the Roman Catholic Church

1960: Holy Names College, Spokane, **Washington**, moves to a former military base in the city and is called **Fort Wright College of the Holy Names**.

1962: Sisters arrive in **Brazil** and **Peru**.

1963: Sisters begin welcoming guests at **Villa Maria del Mar Retreat Center** in Santa Cruz, **California**.

1965: Some 188,000 women religious serve in the U.S. **2009:** The number declines to fewer than 60,000.

1970-2007: Sisters are in **Cameroon** in Central Africa (1970-1972) and **Haiti** (1975-2007).

1974: **SNJM Associates** established for lay persons.

1970s: In Oakland, **California**, **Holy Names University** goes coeducational.

***In the world:** Reforms of **Vatican II** allow lay persons to take on stronger roles in Catholic ministries.*

Photo: Holy Names Sister with students in the newly integrated St. Gabriel school in Washington, D.C. SNJM Archives, U.S.-Ontario Province.



1811-1840s

1843-1844

1849

1859

1860s

1870s-1890s

1900-1910s

1920s-1950s

1960s-1970s

1980s

1990s

2000-on

The Future



1980s: Building communities, changing lives

1981: Heritage College, now **Heritage University**, begins in Toppenish, **Washington**, as a successor institution to Fort Wright College, Spokane (formerly Holy Names College, which formerly was Holy Names Normal School). A year later in Spokane, **Holy Names Music Center** opens. It shares the legacy of the Spokane colleges.

May 23, 1982: Beatification of Mother Marie-Rose by Pope John Paul II in Rome. She is now known as **Blessed Marie Rose Durocher**.

1983: Four Holy Names Sisters approach the Tutwiler, **Mississippi**, Town Council and are allowed to re-open **Tutwiler Clinic** in the **Mississippi Delta**. Support services follow – including an outreach program that evolved into **Tutwiler Community Education Center**.

1986: The Sisters and three other religious congregations open **Transitions** ministry in Spokane, Washington, to help homeless women (and their children) turn around their lives through housing, social services and job training.

1989 Durocher Service Development Program opens in Jonestown, **Mississippi**, to engage residents in community development.

***In the world:** Globalization and technology advance. The Berlin Wall – an icon of the Cold War – is torn down.*



Scrapbook photo of Holy Names Sister Marie Zénon D'Astous (RIP 2015), Tutwiler Clinic.

1811-
1840s

1843-
1844

1849

1859

1860s

1870s-
1890s

1900-
1910s

1920s-
1950s

1960s-
1970s

1980s

1990s

2000-
on

The
Future



South Central Los Angeles Ministry Project

1990s: Gospel-based responses to unrest and inequality

1991: The Sisters of the Holy Names join with 16 other religious communities to sponsor the **Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center (IPJC)** – “a movement in hope” – in Seattle, **Washington**.

1992: The ministry now known as **Jonestown [Mississippi] Family Center for Education and Wellness** opens. **Marie Rose House** begins serving Mexican immigrants in Wapato, **Washington**. Sisters from eight communities found the **South Central Los Angeles Ministry Project (SC LAMP)** in response to devastating riots. In each case, Sisters base the ministries on the local community’s desire to improve parenting and literacy skills and enhance children’s chances to learn.

1994: Two Holy Names Sisters in Oakland, **California**, open **Next Step Learning Center** to help adults acquire literacy skills and prepare for high school equivalency exams or college.

***In the world:** The Cold War era continues to thaw; the internet gains ground; ethnic conflicts lead to genocides in Rwanda and Bosnia. An accord called the “Good Friday Agreement” is reached in 1998 after some two years of talks and decades of conflict between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.*



1811-
1840s

1843-
1844

1849

1859

1860s

1870s-
1890s

1900-
1910s

1920s-
1950s

1960s-
1970s

1980s

1990s

2000-
on

The
Future





In **2003 Nuestra Casa** is founded in Sunnyside, **Washington**, after a Holy Names Sister surveyed 200 people to determine the greatest needs of the Lower Yakima Valley. The result: the ministry annually provides “walk-in” support to more than 1,000 people. Photo: English class. More information: <http://nuestracasasunnysidewa.com>

2000-on: Meeting communities’ needs

2001: **Mary’s Woods** continuing care retirement community welcomes both Sisters and lay persons at Marylhurst, **Oregon**. That same year, two SNJMs start **A Call to Vietnam** to teach English to a Vietnamese congregation (Sisters Lovers of the Holy Cross) and to provide services to marginalized communities, including blind persons and pregnant teens.

2002: Holy Names Sisters and six other religious communities form **UNANIMA International**, an NGO that promotes economic and social advancement.

2008: When Ursuline Sisters in Windsor, **Ontario**, no longer need a house, they donate it to the Holy Names Sisters. The resultant ministry, **Angela Rose House**, shelters refugees.

In the world: World Trade Center terrorist attack, September 11, 2001.



1811-1840s

1843-1844

1849

1859

1860s

1870s-1890s

1900-1910s

1920s-1950s

1960s-1970s

1980s

1990s

2000-on

The Future





2003: Sisters from the U.S. and Ontario gather at Asilomar Conference Grounds in Northern California to reflect on what their future might be. At the meeting they wear “Asilomar scarves.”

The future: “In unity will be your strength.”

—Bishop Bourget to the first Sisters

What’s next?

In the 1990s, Sisters of the Holy Names in the U.S. and Ontario, Canada, reflect on how they might strengthen mission and ministries and pool their administrative resources. The result: in 2006, the Sisters form the **U.S.-Ontario Province**. That decision is rooted in the message that Montreal Bishop Bourget gave the first Holy Names Sisters in 1843: **“In unity will be your strength.”**

Today, “unity” might mean working with other groups to halt human trafficking... protect the environment... promote water as a human right and a public good... encourage immigration reform. Unity involves co-sponsoring coalitions for socially responsible investment. And unity includes inviting lay women and men to share the Sisters’ mission and values – to carry the spirit of Blessed Marie-Rose into the future.



1811-
1840s

1843-
1844

1849

1859

1860s

1870s-
1890s

1900-
1910s

1920s-
1950s

1960s-
1970s

1980s

1990s

2000-
on

The
Future

