

# Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph



**1874** Father Paul Joseph Volk asks the Louisville Ursulines to establish Saint Joseph's Academy for girls at Maple Mount, Kentucky.



## An historic timeline 1874-present

**1883** The sisters acquire a 257-acre farm from the parents of Mother Augustine Bloemer. Today, the sisters have 750 acres and still farm most of them.

**1898** Second building on campus is completed. Mrs. Bloemer has the house built as her residence, but she dies six months later. Today it is used as a Guest House.

**1912** Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph are approved by the Holy See to become an independent and autonomous community. Mother Aloysius Willett is named first superior.

**1918** Ursuline Sisters move to Nebraska to staff schools. This is the first time their mission work takes them to another state. In 1928, they go to Missouri.

**1929** Dedication of present-day Mount Saint Joseph Motherhouse Chapel. Midnight mass was held and the new pipe organ was played.

**1950** Mount Saint Joseph Junior College moves to Owensboro and becomes Brescia College (now Brescia University). Sister Joan Marie Lechner was first resident president from 1960-1974, followed by Sister George Ann Cecil, Sister Ruth Gehres, Sister Vivian Bowles, and Father Larry Hostetter.

**1966** Ursulines begin their first mission work in a foreign country (Chile) after Pope Paul VI asked sisters to mission in South America to reduce the spread of Communism. Today, the sisters still mission in Chillan, Chile by helping impoverished women and children.

**1979** Mount Saint Joseph Academy is entered on the National Register of Historic Places as the oldest academy for girls still in operation.

**1983** Mount Saint Joseph Academy closes (after 109 years). Work begins on Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center.

**1989** While teaching in Guatemala, Sister Dianna Ortiz is abducted, raped and tortured. She escaped from this horrible ordeal and has since become a strong advocate for torture victims. She founded the Torture Abolition Survivors and Support Coalition (TASSC) in Washington, D.C. and wrote a book about her experience.

**1993** The Ursulines begin their ministry for Hispanics by opening up Centro Latino in the former Saint Peter's Convent and School in Stanley, Kentucky. Today, they have additional ministries for Hispanics.

**2000** The Sisters record "Act, Move, Believe, a Cantata in Community," in the Motherhouse Chapel. The music is available on CD. An F-3 tornado hits Owensboro, Kentucky.

**2004** To commemorate their arrival 125 years ago, the sisters recreate the flatboat journey down the Ohio River from Louisville to Owensboro. Television and radio stations all over the country cover the story.

**2006** A Rosary Walk is dedicated at Mount Saint Joseph.

**2010** Lourdes Hall is remodeled and becomes the new home for archives, the business office, vocations, and the leadership Council. Lourdes was built in 1960 for use as the infirmary.

**1882** First addition to the school building (south wing) is constructed. Mother Augustine Bloemer becomes superior.

**1895** First entrance of five young women into the novitiate: Sisters Ursula Jenkins, Angela Kohl, Mary Agnes O'Flynn, Mary Joseph Winters and Mary Clotilde Harvey. Five maple trees are planted for the postulants.

**1905** North wing of Academy is added. Graduate Ida Mai Hunter founds the Mount Saint Joseph Alumnae Association.

**1914** Saint Angela Hall is built for novitiate housing. In 1925, this will become Mount Saint Joseph Junior College for Women. Today, it is used for offices.

**1919** Ursuline sisters go to New Mexico to start Catholic schools. Father Paul Volk dies.

**1934** A post office is established at Maple Mount. Today, the zip code is 42356.

**1937** Severe flooding occurs all over Kentucky. Some sisters have to be brought home by a ferry over Panther Creek.

**1961** A gymnasium and classrooms are added to Saint Michael Hall. Saint Ursula Hall is built in 1962.

**1965** The sisters modified their habits from floor-length to knee-length after Vatican II made many changes within the Catholic Church. Habits later became optional.

**1971** The Ursuline Sisters host an old-fashioned picnic to benefit the retired sisters. It is now a popular annual event.

**1982** Paul Volk Hall is built and dedicated as a retirement home for the sisters.

**1983** The Ursuline associate program begins. Sister Fran Wilhelm, right, is the first director. Today, there are over 300 Ursuline associates.

**1991** Sister Stanislaus Hagan becomes the first sister at Mount Saint Joseph to turn 100. She had lived at the Mount since she was orphaned at age 14. She loved teaching and roses.

**1992** The Motherhouse Chapel renovation is completed. Updates include adding a bell tower and flexible seating.

**1998** The newly renovated, handicapped accessible Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center is unveiled.

**2002** Saint Joseph Villa, a spacious, modern home for the elderly with three wings, is completed. Saint Ursula Hall is renovated.

**2005** The Ursuline Sisters of Belleville, Illinois merge with the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph. Hurricane Katrina displaces thousands of New Orleans residents. Sister Carol Shively, OSU, superintendent of the Diocese of Shreveport, helps provide shelter and schooling to survivors.

**2008** The Ursuline Sisters of Paola, Kansas merge with the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph.



*Pictured: Sister Mary Samuel Hamilton, Mother Ambrose Martin, Sister Gonzaga Cotter and Sister Teresita Thompson.*

