

# Sisters of Charity of Australia

1838 –

URL: <http://www.sistersofcharity.org.au/>

## Details

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The Sisters of Charity of Australia was established in Parramatta on 31 December 1838. The Sisters came from Ireland at the request of the Archbishop of Sydney to care for the convicts at the Female Factory in Parramatta and the children at the Female Orphan School. In 1847, some of the Sisters moved to Tasmania to support women and children in poverty. They ran two orphanages and, later, cottage care and Family Group Homes in New South Wales and Tasmania. In 2021, the Sisters were involved in health and aged care, education, social services and issues of social justice.

At the request of the Archbishop of Sydney, five Sisters of Charity left Ireland for Parramatta, New South Wales in 1838, they were the first religious institute of women in Australia. Upon arrival, the Sisters commenced regular visits to the Parramatta Female Factory Precinct and the Female Orphan School to support the women and girls there.

In 1847, three sisters from Parramatta moved to Tasmania, setting up a convent in Harrington Street, Hobart. From around the time of their arrival in Tasmania, the Sisters ran St Joseph's School in South Hobart.

In the late 1800's the Sisters opened orphanages for girls. They established St Joseph's Orphanage opposite their convent on Harrington Street, Hobart in 1879, and in 1888, St Anne's Orphanage in Liverpool, New South Wales.

According to the 1949 Constitution of the Sisters of Charity, the Sister-in-Charge should know each girl in the orphanage and her history personally. The Constitution also emphasised the importance of the girls' health. Diet was supposed to be appropriate for growing children and cleanliness maintained by adequate numbers of baths and toilets. Dormitories had to be well-ventilated. The orphanage was expected to provide regular medical and dental care, and education was 'a sacred duty'. The girls were "to be prepared to live their lives as good citizens on earth, so that they may be worthy of entrance to their true Home – Heaven".

In the 1960's the Sisters of Charity in Australia started to provide new forms of care for children, operating cottage care at St Joseph's Child Care Centre, and opening Family Group Homes in both New South Wales and Tasmania, and the Theresian Emergency Centre for short-term crisis care in Sydney. The Sisters stopped providing out-of-home care in 1985.

## More info

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### Related Entries

Ran

- [St Joseph's Orphanage \(1879 - 1970\)](#)  
Date: 1879 - 1978
- [St Anne's Orphanage \(1888 - 1977\)](#)
- [St Anne's Children's \(Emergency\) Centre \(1979 - 1985\)](#)
- [Theresian Emergency Centre \(1965 - 1983\)](#)
- [St Anne's Group Homes \(1960s - 1985\)](#)
- [Carinya Family Group Home \(1969 - 1978\)](#)
- [St Joseph's Child Care Centre \(1970 - 1999\)](#)

The Sisters of Charity ran St Joseph's Child Care Centre from 1969 to 1978.

- [Villa Maria Family Group Home \(1964 - c. 1981\)](#)
- [Loreto Family Group Home \(1966 - 1982\)](#)
- [Bimbadeen Family Group Home \(19 November 1976 - 1980\)](#)
- [Theresian Holiday Home \(1938 - 1965\)](#)

#### Related Organisations

- [Congregational Archives of the Sisters of Charity of Australia](#)

## Resources

- Green, Maureen, [Submission no 348 to the Senate Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care](#), 2005
- Cannell, Josephine, *To the beckoning shores: urged on by the love of Christ*, 2007

## Records

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### Records held by other organisations

- [Sisters of Charity Archives \(1879 - 1973\)](#)
- [M2181 St Joseph's Orphanage \(1949 - 1954\)](#)

The file contains extracts from the Constitution of the Sisters of Charity.

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