

# St Joseph's Catholic Orphanage for Girls

1868 – 1901

**Other Names:**

- Roman Catholic Girls' Orphanage
- Catholic Girls' Orphanage
- Victoria Square Orphanage
- Perth Roman Catholic Orphanage (Female)
- Orphanage Industrial School for Roman Catholic Girls
- Orphanage for Roman Catholic Girls

## Details

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St Joseph's Catholic Orphanage for Girls was established in Perth by the Sisters of Mercy in 1868, for girls from the Poor House. Children who were destitute were accommodated, along with orphans. In 1901, the Home moved to Subiaco and became the St Joseph's Girls' Orphanage.

An orphanage for Catholic girls was first established in 1868 when 11 girls were taken from the Poor House to live at the Sisters of Mercy Convent behind the Catholic pro-Cathedral in Victoria Avenue. By the end of that year, the convent had 27 children and no more room. A public appeal, supported by both Catholics and Protestants, raised £1400 for new premises. A new Convent of Mercy in Victoria Square was completed in 1871 and the orphanage was named St Joseph's Catholic Orphanage for Girls. In 1901, the orphanage moved to the former premises of the St Vincent's Boys' Orphanage on Barrett Street, Subiaco, and became the St Joseph's Girls' Orphanage.

## Gallery

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**Convent of Mercy**

**Description:** This is a digital copy of a photograph of the Convent of Mercy, which is where the St Joseph's Catholic Girls' Orphanage began. It is from the State Library of Western Australia's collection of online images that were made available by the Royal Western Australian Historical Society.



**Orphanage Industrial School for Roman Catholic Girls, Hay Street East, Perth**

**Description:** 'Orphanage Industrial School for Roman Catholic Girls, Hay Street East, Perth' is an image included (p.20) in the *Report by the Superintendent of Public Charities and Inspector of Industrial and Reformatory Schools, etc.*, for the year ending 31 December 1900. This image shows a group of approximately 30 girls standing in gardens in front of a long two-storey building with enclosed upper floor verandahs. The younger girls are wearing white dresses, and the older girls are wearing dark dresses. Many of the girls are holding wide-brimmed hats. A group of nuns are standing several metres behind the girls.

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# More info

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## Chronology

- **St Joseph's Catholic Orphanage for Girls (1868 – 1901)**
  - St Joseph's Girls' Orphanage (1901 - 1971)
    - Catherine McAuley Centre (1971 - 1991)
      - Mercy Community Services (Inc) (1997 - 2002)
        - MercyCare (2002 - current)

## Related Entries

### Run by

- [Sisters of Mercy, Perth Congregation \(1846 - 2011\)](#)

### Related Events

- [Committee to Consider the Capitation Grant for Orphanages, Crown Colony of Western Australia \(29 March 1884 - 3 June 1884\)](#)

The cost of raising a child in the Catholic Girls' Orphanage was examined by a Committee in the Legislative Council.

### Related Organisations

- [Female Home \[Poor House, Perth\] \(1851 - 1909\)](#)

St Joseph's Catholic Orphanage for Girls began with girls transferred from the Female Home (Poor House, Perth).

Date: 1868 -

## Resources

- McLay, Anne, [Women Out of Their Sphere: A History of the Sisters of Mercy in Western Australia](#), 1992
- Australian Catholic Social Welfare Commission and the Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes, *A piece of the story : national directory of records of Catholic organisations caring for children separated from families*, November 1999
- [Report by the Superintendent of Poor Houses](#), 1882 - 1889. *Relevance*: 1883, 1884, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1889
- *Reports upon the Roman Catholic Orphanages for the Year Ending 30th June 1884*, 1884
- *Annual Report of the Roman Catholic Orphanages for 1884-85*, 1885
- *Report by the Superintendent of Poor Relief*, 1890 - 1896. *Relevance*: 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895, 1896

## Records

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For more information and to access your records, follow the links below:

## Records

- [Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea Perth Archives \(1847 - 1991\)](#)
- [Correspondence Files, Colonial Secretary's Office, Chief Secretary's Department \(1883 - 1983\)](#)

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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/st-josephs-catholic-orphanage-for-girls/>