

Mother Alacoque Hayes

Mother Alacoque was born Frances M. Hayes on March 15, 1897, in Conn, Ontario to Garrett Joseph Hayes and Katharine Cronin. She was a lay teacher for five years before she took up her religious vocation. She entered the community on September 8, 1920, received the habit on June 30, 1921, and made her first vows on September 22, 1923, and her final vows on September 22, 1926. She taught in Hamilton, and later in Mount Forest, and then in Arthur where she was the local Superior. She then taught in Brantford, again serving as the local Superior, returning to teach in Hamilton at Cathedral Girls' High School, and then back to Brantford, where she taught and served as local Superior. After approximately 40 years of teaching, she was elected General Superior for the community and served in this position from 1960-1972. Upon her retirement, she was at St. Joseph's Villa in Dundas from 1972 until her death on January 28, 1974.



Mother Alacoque presided over a time of transition following Vatican II, which saw changes in the balance between contemplative and apostolic life. During her term of office as General Superior, on her request, the Motherhouse became a member of The Principal Pontifical Work For Religious Vocations in 1966. In the same year, with the revision in canon law, she oversaw consultations with the Sisters on how to adapt the Constitutions and Customs to the Decrees of the Sacred Synod on Religious Life. During her tenure, the first mission was opened in Teculután, Guatemala. Her time in office also saw the opening of Mount St. Joseph Centre, a residential facility for emotionally disturbed children in Hamilton. Some of the many changes to community life during her time in office included changes in religious dress and prayer life, and the

beginnings of discussions concerning the administration of nursing schools.

When the Federation was founded, there were approximately 3,000 Sisters of St. Joseph in missions across Canada, the Bahamas, Guatemala, Brazil, and Peru. The General Superiors began meeting to share concerns and support each other, and so when the Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life was received, they were anxious to comply with the wishes of Vatican II, and to unite the congregations into a Federation. Support was obtained from the Archbishops and Bishops of each diocese in which a Motherhouse was located, and from Archbishop Flahiff, a member of the Post-Conciliar Commission. On September 20, 1966, His Eminence Cardinal Antonuitti, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Religious, sent approval of the statutes for a five-year period. Mother Alacoque Hayes was a founding member of the Federation. After her death, Sister Marina wrote, "It will take a long time to get used to the reality that Mother has joined the heavenly Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Such a reunion!"