



# DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **The Sisters of St. Joseph Announce Relocation and Plans for New Facility**

St. Augustine, Fla. — The Sisters of St. Joseph of St. Augustine, a long-standing congregation of Catholic women serving in the Diocese of St. Augustine, have announced plans to relocate from their historic Motherhouse, Our Lady of Lourdes Convent and St. Joseph Renewal Center. This move, expected to unfold over the next two to three years, marks a significant transition to a new, modern facility that better meets their evolving needs.

Sister Kathleen Carr, general superior of the Sisters of St. Joseph, shared, “Our historic buildings hold tremendous value. However, they were designed for a different time, and we now need a facility that prioritizes the well-being, safety and sustainability of our Sisters and their ministries.” She emphasized that the new facility would allow the Sisters to continue their threefold mission: caring for each Sister until her journey is complete, sustaining current ministries and fostering a legacy for the church.

Reflecting on this moment of transition, Bishop Erik Pohlmeier of the Diocese of St. Augustine expressed his gratitude for the Sisters’ extraordinary service since 1866: “Only God knows the countless lives touched by the Sisters’ faithful dedication. In this moment, we pray with them and celebrate our shared work for the Kingdom of God. I am confident in the prayerful discernment of the Sisters and am ready to offer my support during this time of transition. May God fill them with joy and hope for the fruits of their labor and consolation for any loss they feel. Even in times of change, we can be sure that God is with us.”

The Sisters' history in Florida began in September 1866, when eight Sisters arrived from Le Puy, France, at Picolata Landing on the St. Johns River. Described by their historian as “eight ordinary women” with “a very great love of God, of the ‘dear neighbor’ and of the congregation,” they came at the request of Bishop Augustin Verot, the first bishop of the Diocese of St. Augustine, to educate and evangelize freed slaves. The Sisters’ ministry soon expanded across Florida, establishing schools, hospitals, nursing homes and various outreach efforts.

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The new facility will offer multiple levels of care for the Sisters' community and serve as the headquarters for St. Joseph Ministries. This move also allows for expanding charitable works and further lay formation. "Our ministries are not ending; rather, they are evolving and expanding," Sister Kathleen added. "This transition will allow us to be better stewards of our resources and invest in a sustainable future."

The Sisters are committed to informing the community and welcoming questions during this transition. For more information, please contact Phyllis Croucher, development director of the Sisters of St. Joseph, at [pcroucher@ssjfl.org](mailto:pcroucher@ssjfl.org) or (904) 829-3735.

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