

Marian Pilgrimages of the Archdiocese of Toronto

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The subject of this paper is rigidly confined to the historical aspects of the two shrines in the Archdiocese of Toronto which enjoy the status of formal pilgrimage, that is, to the Shrine of Our Lady of Peace at Niagara Falls and to the Shrine of Our Lady of Grace at Mary Lake, near King, Ontario.

A fuller discussion of Marian devotion in the Archdiocese would have to give consideration to the normal devotions to Our Lady practised in every parish and mission within its boundaries. It would also have to provide an account of special devotions which take the form of perpetual novenas to Our Lady under one or other of her special titles, the Immaculate Conception, Mother of Sorrows, Mother of Perpetual Help, Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal and so on. Indeed no full history could limit itself to the present boundaries of the diocese but would have to take into consideration wonderful old parishes like that of the Assumption in Sandwich (now Windsor) which belonged to Toronto before the Diocese of London was established, and which, indeed, predates the establishment of the Diocese of Toronto itself.

But this paper is not concerned with presenting the full picture. It is not even attempting the essential picture. If it were it could not pass over the story of St. Mary's, Toronto's third parish, founded in 1852 and dedicated to Mary's Immaculate Conception at approximately the time of the Church's definition of this doctrine; nor could it ignore St. Mary's, Barrie, originally the Parish of the Most Pure Heart of Mary, which can be traced back beyond 1855, the date of its formal founding, into the churchless mission of Simcoe County served from the Cathedral during the early '40's.

Our present concern is with two pilgrimage shrines which play an important role in the history of the diocese, which have attracted over the years large numbers of faithful pilgrims, and which are still, strangely enough, but little known even to the faithful of the archdiocese. In the present account, even the devotional character of these shrines will be minimized in favor of the strictly historical factors which are, after all, the professed though certainly not exclusive concern of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association.

OUR LADY OF PEACE, NIAGARA FALLS

The most significant pilgrimage, from a purely historical point of view, in the Archdiocese of Toronto, is that to the shrine of Our Lady of Peace in Niagara Falls, Ontario. This shrine has long been administered by the Carmelite Fathers

and consists today of a parish church dedicated to Our Lady of Peace and a seminary known as Mount Carmel College. It is not so flourishing as it once promised to become, though it is a genuinely wonderful pilgrimage to this day. It is not impossible that one of the tangible results of the Marian Year in Canada will be a profound quickening of the spirit of prayer and love along the fascinating bank of the Niagara River.

The story of this shrine, like that of every ecclesiastical foundation in the Niagara peninsula, looks back in a general way to the first Masses said on the peninsula by the Sulpician missionaries. Fathers Galinée and De Casson are known to have been there in 1669, and Father Louis Hennepin, according to records, celebrated Mass before La Motte and his men on the shore of the Niagara River on December 11, 1678.¹

The earliest settlers in the area adjacent to the Falls were without the service of a resident priest. Tradition relates that they used to travel to Kingston in order to make their Easter duty. The first priest to make regular visits to the Falls was Father James W. Campion who came in twice a year, between 1826 and 1829, to administer the Sacraments. Regular Sunday Mass was introduced by Father Edward Gordon from the neighboring parish of Niagara-on-the-Lake. The cornerstone of the first mission church at the Falls was laid June 13, 1836. The building, when completed, was dedicated by Father Gordon to his own patron, St. Edward.

Father Gordon's tiny mission of St. Edward's was erected into an independent parish in 1858 with Father Juhel as its first pastor. It was only shortly after this that Archbishop Lynch of Toronto, in view of hard feelings current about the time of the Civil War, changed the name of the parish church from St. Edward to Our Lady of Peace.²

The shrine as such owes its existence to Archbishop John Lynch. Before becoming Bishop of Toronto, Father Lynch was a member of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission. In 1856 he had founded the Seminary of Our Lady of the Angels (now a part of Niagara University). This seminary was located in the Buffalo diocese, on the American side of the river not far from Niagara Falls, N. Y. In 1859 Father Lynch was appointed coadjutor to Bishop de Charbonnel, and in the following year, on the latter's retirement, became Bishop of Toronto.

Bishop Lynch knew and loved Niagara Falls. He felt that the natural beauty of the waterfall, which was drawing more and more tourists to the district each year, should be made to serve the cause of Our Lady. In 1861, accordingly, he sought and obtained from Pope Pius IX a document establishing the little church of Our Lady of Peace as a place of pilgrimage, and attaching rich indulgences to

¹ Dean W. R. Harris, *The Catholic Church in the Niagara Peninsula, 1625-1895*, Toronto, 1895. Missionaries like Father de la Roché Daillon (1626) and Fathers Brébeuf and Chaumonot (1640) had certainly been to the Indian settlements around Niagara.

² H. C. McKeown, *The Life and Labors of Archbishop Lynch, Toronto*, 1886.

it.³ On August 18, 1861, Archbishop Lynch, accompanied by a group from Toronto, consecrated the little Church to Our Lady of Peace in what was actually the first pilgrimage to the shrine. The occasion is described in Xavier D. Macleod's *History of the Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary in North America* as follows: "The grand cataract itself has been consecrated by his lordship Doctor Lynch to the Blessed Virgin of Peace ... It was on the Sunday within the octave of Our Lady's Assumption that the church was dedicated. Hundreds of pilgrims, after hearing Mass in the city of Toronto, proceeded by steamer and railway to the shrine. And when they came back, at least upon the steamer, they chanted, with the sublime, perpetual voice of the cataract for basso, the Vespers of the Blessed Virgin. After which all knelt, with their faces towards Toronto, in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, thanking the Redeemer, there present, for their preservation from all casualties during that, the first pilgrimage to Our Lady of Peace" (pp. 318.320).

The Bishop also acquired a property of two hundred acres in the immediate vicinity and began to look about for a suitable order of priests to administer the shrine. It was not until 1875 that he succeeded in getting the Carmelites of Kansas to promise priests to care for the pilgrimages which had already begun. The Carmelites were eminently suited to this kind of work by reason of their experience in Europe and because they were in so special a way dedicated to the service of the Mother of God. The Carmelites had not been in America long but they were doing wonderful work wherever they were located. They came to the diocese of Toronto with the highest possible recommendation from Bishop Louis M. Fink, O.S.B., Vicar Apostolic of Leavenworth, Kansas.⁴

It was in October 1875 that Father Ignatius Beerhorst, O.C.C., arrived at Falls View to take over the administration of the parish of Our Lady of Peace and to carry on the pilgrimages. Archbishop Lynch placed at his disposal the large property acquired some years before and held in readiness for the building of a hospice and retreat house. He also prepared his well-known pastoral letter in which he made public his invitation to the Carmelites and his own extensive plans for the development of the shrine. This pastoral appeared in April, 1876, and provides a useful commentary on the establishment of the shrine:

The Cataract of Niagara yearly attracts thousands of lovers of sublimity and grandeur. They come to wonder, but few, alas, to pray. The place has been to us from childhood an object of the greatest interest. A picture of it fell into our hands – we were awe-struck with its beauty, and wished that we could adore God there. The vision of it haunted us through life. The providence of God at length conducted us to it, and almost miraculously provided the means of commencing near it the Seminary of Our Lady of Angels in the diocese of Buffalo, N.Y. On our being appointed by the Holy See Bishop of Toronto, it

³ See Appendix A.

⁴ Letter of July 9, 1875, in Chancery Office, Toronto.

was our first care to secure on the Canada side of Niagara Falls a large tract of land on which to erect religious establishments, where God would be worshipped with a perfect homage of sacrifice and praise, and where the Catholic Church would be fittingly represented.

It was at the commencement of the American civil war. Our heart was moved with sorrow at the loss of many lives, and the prospect of so many souls going before God in judgment, some, it is to be feared, but ill-prepared. The beautiful rainbow that spanned the Cataract, the sign of peace between God and the sinner, suggested prayers and hopes to see the war soon ended; and we called the church 'Our Lady of Victories or of Peace.' A convent was soon erected on the grounds, and nuns of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, called of Loretto, were installed ...

We have for many years searched for a fervent congregation of men to found a monastery and a church worthy of the place and its destination. Enthusiastic pilgrims of nature's grandeur come here to enjoy its beauty; others, alas, to drown remorse. We desired to have a religious house where those pilgrims would be attracted to adore nature's God in spirit and in truth, and who would there find, in solitude and rest, how great and merciful God is. The fathers of the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the most ancient in the Church and dear to the heart of our Blessed Mother, have commenced this good work. Our Holy Father Pius IX has been graciously pleased to confer upon the present little church plenary indulgences and other favors granted to the most ancient pilgrimages of the old world. The fathers also propose, when a suitable house is built, to receive prelates and clergy of the Church as well as laity to make retreats; and to those priests, worn out in the service of their Divine Master, a home where they can quietly prepare for eternity. Missions will be also given in parishes by the religious at the request of the bishops. A place more fitting for such an Institution could hardly be found. God Himself has made the selection. It is easy of approach from all parts of the country, and on the confines of two great nations. We have full confidence that God will finish His own work by inspiring the hearts that love Him, and His Blessed Mother of Mount Carmel, to contribute to the erection of a church and monastery there. Those pious souls will lay up for themselves treasures in the bosom of God, from which they will draw in their great need, when about to balance their accounts before His judgement-seat ...

In Europe there are many sanctuaries, but few in this new world. Niagara will be one, and first of the most famous where God will be adored on the spot in which He manifests Himself in such incomparable majesty and grandeur. The festivals that will be most religiously celebrated in this sanctuary, besides the first-class festivals of the Church, are the ninth of July, called Our Lady of Miracles or Peace; the sixteenth, Our Lady of Mount Carmel; twenty-ninth of September, the Festival of St. Michael; fifteenth of October, St. Teresa; twenty-first of November, Presentation of the Blessed Virgin; and the tenth of December, Festival of Our Lady of Loretto.⁵

⁵ Pastoral Letter of Archbishop Lynch, April, 1876. See H. C. McKeown, *Life and Labors of Archbishop Lynch*, 214-222.

It was in these sincere, if elaborate, words that the establishment of the shrine was promulgated to the faithful of the Archdiocese of Toronto. This was in 1876. For some time it was impossible to implement the Archbishop's visionary plans in any effective way. In the first place, the Carmelites in America were not yet formally organized, and secondly, the economic position of Catholics in the Peninsula was most precarious. Thus it was that through the late 70's and 80's the little parish church functioned quietly as a modest Marian shrine. Men like Fathers Beerhorst, Mayer and Smits labored diligently to spread devotion to Our Lady and encouraged the wearing of her scapular. Visitors from other parts of the diocese and from Buffalo on the American side of the river came to Falls View in steadily increasing numbers, and a deep and genuine affection for the Shrine of Our Lady of Peace developed in the hearts of clergy and faithful.

Towards 1890 there were definite signs of more rapid progress. Chief among these was the formal organizing of the Carmelite order in America. The various early Carmelite foundations, dating from 1865 or later, were quite independent of one another, and it was not until 1890 that the first province, The Province of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, was established. The first provincial chapter, held in the spring of 1890, elected Father Pius R. Mayer as provincial. The real flourishing of the shrine of Our Lady of Peace dates from this time.

The work of promoting and developing the shrine at Falls View fell largely into the hands of the prior, Rev. Anastasius J. Kreidt. He began to publicize widely the lovely shrine of Our Lady at Niagara and sought the patronage of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in Canada and the United States. He also announced plans to build the Hospice and Retreat House projected by Archbishop Lynch some fourteen years before. Cardinal Gibbons was one of the first American prelates to lend his support to the undertaking, and the Most Rev. J. Walsh, Archbishop of Toronto wrote as follows on May 23, 1890:

Dear Father Kreidt:

I am glad to hear that you intend to begin, as soon as means will allow you, the construction of a house for spiritual retreats at Niagara Falls, in this archdiocese. I sincerely hope that your appeal to a charitable public for the furtherance of this most praiseworthy and meritorious object will meet with the success it so eminently deserves. A Retreat House, conducted by your zealous fathers, could not fail to do much good for the salvation and sanctification of souls, especially in a place and amid surrounding where nature itself invites to solemn thought and serious reflections, and where, in very deed, one hears: 'The voice of the Lord upon the waters, the God of majesty bath thundered; the Lord upon many waters' (Psalm XXVIII).

Wishing your pious undertaking the divine blessing and a happy issue, I am, dear Father Kreidt,

Yours sincerely in Christ,
John Walsh

he first contribution to the new Retreat House was made by Dean W. R. Harris of St. Catharines.⁷

The shrine of Our Lady of Peace, which had already been richly indulged by Pius IX, now received further privileges from the hand of Leo XIII. In a document dated May 16, 1892, he extended the Portiuncula Indulgences to all Carmelite Churches, making them obtainable on the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, July 16.⁸ This new and singular favor considerably enhanced the prestige of the Carmelite shrine at Niagara Falls and helped to initiate the new period of development.

Another important manifestation of life and growth was the founding of *The Carmelite Review* in January 1893. This review was launched by Father Kreidt with the capable assistance of two brothers who had come to the Carmelites from Hamilton, Fathers Philip and D. F. Best. It was one of Ontario's first Catholic periodicals, and the first regular Carmelite publication to appear in English. Its expressed objectives were to honor Mary, to spread devotion to the brown scapular, and to publish news about the shrine and pilgrimage at Falls View. There is much material in this review to bold the attention of the historian, and it is a particularly useful source for the history of the Carmelite shrine at Falls View during the last decade of the 19th century. A few sentences from the salutatory will serve to show its predominating Marian character:

Our province shall be to treat of our dear Lady in her relations to Carmel. The press has always been potent in propagating particular pious practices, and we hope that our Review will be no less a means of augmenting the Devotion of the Brown Scapular.

It shall be our duty to honor Mary, the Flower of Carmel, to unfold the beauty of that lovely flower, to spread its sweet fragrance far and wide, and to screen it from every foul breath that would dare pollute it.⁹

The next important step in the growth of the shrine and pilgrimage was the laying of the cornerstone of the new Hospice, July 16, 1894. The Archbishop of Toronto presided over the splendid ceremony, and the large attendance from both sides of the river gave the event a truly international character. The account carried in the August number of *The Carmelite Review* gives a good idea of the size and popularity of the shrine:

Early in the morning visitors and pilgrims began to arrive from Buffalo,

⁶ *The Carmelite Review*, 1 (1893), 43-44.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ For English text, see Appendix B.

⁹ *The Carmelite Review*, 1 (1893), 8.

Rochester, Lockport, Niagara Falls, St. Catharines, Hamilton and all surrounding places. Hundreds came fasting, and received the Sacraments in the pilgrimage church. At 10 a.m. the Very Rev. Pius R. Mayer, Provincial of the Order in America, sang the Solemn High Mass, with two other Carmelite Fathers as deacon and subdeacon. His Grace, the Archbishop, assisted at Mass in his pontifical garments, attended by the Very Rev. Vicar-General J. J. McCann, and the Very Rev. President of Niagara University, P. V. Kavanagh. The choir of the church of the Most Holy Redeemer, of Rochester, N.Y., had volunteered its services, and had sent eight of its best singers to sing the Mass and other liturgical songs. They sang a Mass composed by Prof. Seibold, under his own personal direction. After Mass, His Grace addressed the large congregation, which had filled the Church to overflowing, in warm and fervent words ... He then imparted the Papal Blessing to the people, according to the privilege granted the Order of Mount Carmel. Then the clergy and people in procession accompanied His Grace to the site of the new building. Many of our friends, who had not yet seen the work thus far accomplished were surprised at the massive masonry and size of the foundations, and the beauty of the stone and material used in their construction. The cornerstone, most artistically sculptured, a gift from a Protestant friend, was then blessed by His Grace and placed in position. The ceremonies concluded with a beautiful sermon by Father Raphael Fuhr, a Franciscan Father, who had come from his college at Quincy, Ill., to preach at this occasion.¹⁰

It is clear by now that the pilgrimage of Our Lady of Mount Carmel at Niagara Falls was firmly established. Unfortunately, the Carmelite Fathers were unable to give it their undivided attention. In addition to their responsibility for the shrine with its parish congregation, they also attended to St. Patrick's parish within the city limits of Niagara Falls. In 1895 they had to undertake the erection of a new St. Patrick's to look after the expanding Catholic population of the area. This division of labor has always interfered with the development of the shrine. This was particularly true during 1895, 1896 and 1897 when the entire country was in a period of economic stress. However, the shrine moved forward during these years as the following extracts from *The Carmelite Review* demonstrate:

July, 1895. Pilgrims from Buffalo will do well to take the Michigan Central train which leaves the New York Central station in Buffalo at 7.05 a.m., arriving at Falls View at 7.54. Visitors landing at Niagara Falls, N.Y., after crossing the upper Suspension Bridge, will find themselves at a station of the Niagara Falls Park and River Railway, an electric trolley line, of which an advertisement will be found in our advertising pages. Conductors should be asked to stop at the monastery crossing.

The hospice is approaching completion very rapidly. The working men are beginning to put on the roof.¹¹

June, 1896. The pilgrims will have an opportunity to visit the new

¹⁰ *The Carmelite Review*, II (1894), 186.

¹¹ *The Carmelite Review*, III (1895), 180.

Hospice buildings and see the progress of the work. We are sorry that it was impossible to have the building ready for occupation this summer.¹²

August, 1896. The annual pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Peace at Falls View, Ont., on the 16th of July is becoming more popular year after year. The number of pilgrims was so large this year that the accommodations provided were taxed to the utmost and barely sufficed.¹³

July, 1897. The Hospice of Mount Carmel at Falls View is now nearing its completion. It cannot be opened to retreatants and visitors until next year but a certain number of rooms have been made ready to accommodate the superiors and delegates of the various Carmelite houses in America, who are to meet in chapter on July 6th.¹⁴

On June 15, 1899, after years of work and waiting, the Hospice of Mount Carmel was at last opened. It was blessed by Archbishop O'Connor of Toronto, assisted by Bishop O'Connor of Peterborough, and attended by a vast number of Canadian and American clergy. The ceremonies, owing to heavy rain, were held indoors, but in a setting of beauty and reverence:

At 9.00 a.m. His Grace the Archbishop said Mass for the pilgrims, who had come in spite of the rain, at the shrine of "Our Lady of Peace." At 10 a.m. High Mass was sung by Rev. Bernard Fink, O.C.C., of Englewood, N.J., and at 11.30 a.m. the ceremony of blessing the building took place. The visiting clergymen formed in procession, singing appropriate psalms, and passed from floor to floor of the building along the spacious corridors, while the officiating Archbishop sprinkled all the rooms with holy water. On returning to the portal the *Te Deum* was sung and the ceremony concluded with the episcopal blessing.

In the afternoon at 4 p.m. Bishop O'Connor of Peterborough, who had been pastor of the Church of Our Lady of Peace long before the Carmelite Fathers came to the place, preached an eloquent sermon on the many privileges and indulgences accorded to the shrine of "Our Lady of Peace" by Pope Pius IX, on the mission of the Carmelite Fathers to conduct retreats and inspire the faithful to a life of prayer, on the solemn ceremony of blessing the new Hospice, and on the object and work of this institution.

His Grace the Archbishop of Toronto then gave the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament to the assembled pilgrims, and the congregation joined in singing the hymn: "Holy God we praise Thy name," concluding the ceremonies by this public act of thanksgiving.¹⁵

The celebration of the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel a month later was the most elaborate ever. Three thousand pilgrims visited the shrine and listened to sermons preached at various times throughout the day by Rev. Theodore J.

¹² *The Carmelite Review*, IV (1896), 167.

¹³ *Ibid.* 224.

¹⁴ *The Carmelite Review*, 5 (1897), 221.

¹⁵ *The Carmelite Review*, VII (1899), 237.

McDonald, O.C.C., Very Rev. A. J. Kreidt and Very Rev. Dean Harris. The shrine at last had its long-awaited accommodation for visiting pilgrims and facilities for retreats of priests¹⁶ and layfolk.¹⁷ Two contrasting buildings stood almost side by side – the historic little weather-beaten church of Our Lady of Peace and the stately Hospice with its paved approaches and modern adornments.

Perhaps a word is in order about the electrical equipment of this building. No doubt its proximity to the Niagara power plants encouraged the architects to be rather daring in their innovations. At any rate the hospice was provided with the first large-scale electrical cooking apparatus designed in America. Several publications, devoted to the subject of electricity, carried articles about its installations. The most elaborate was by Orrin E. Dunlap in *The Western Electrician*, 1900. Interested readers may find therein tid-bits like the following:

While there are many places in the country where electricity is used for cooking small dishes, it is probable that there is not another electrical kitchen in the world like that installed in the Hospice building, the intention being that it shall have a capacity of cooking all the meals of the residents and guests at the Hospice. The kitchen has not been installed as a novelty, merely to outline the possibilities of electrical cooking, but it was adopted to supersede all other kinds of fuel commonly in use in kitchens, coal, gasoline, oil, etc., and it may be said that it has answered all the demands made upon it in splendid style.

As to what can be accomplished by the installation of this kitchen, it may be pointed out that on the occasion of the recent formal opening and blessing of the Hospice, dinner was cooked for 250 persons in 21½ hours. This did not include the soup making; this requiring some hours of attention, the soup was prepared the day before.

There is a noticeable absence of the smell common where gas is used, and also of the ashes and dirt where coal is the fuel consumed. The dinner or other meal cooked, the heat can be turned off, leaving the kitchen as cool as any other part of the house in summertime. There is no lingering fire to watch and care for; no getting up early to see if the fire is out; no hustling over a slow oven for a quick meal, for the simple turning of a switch sends the current through the range or ovens to any degree the cook may desire. With no call for current in the kitchen, it may be directed to the boilers to heat the water for the various purposes outlined. In the 400-gallon boiler water is boiled from 60 degrees to 212 degrees in six hours with full heat. In the small ovens bread can be baked in 18 minutes.

The special apparatus for the plant was built by the Hadaway Electric Heating and Engineering Company of New York.¹⁸

¹⁶ In 1900 the priests of the Archdiocese of Toronto held their annual retreat at the hospice.

¹⁷ From Monday, Aug. 28 to Sept. 2, 1899, was held the first annual retreat for Catholic teachers. *The Carmelite Review*, VII (1899), 273.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* 305-6.

It is a matter of considerable interest to recall in this Marian Year of 1954 that these early experiments in electrical cooking were carried on under the auspices of the Mother of God.

There is perhaps no point in tracing the history of the shrine and hospice any further. It has never ceased to be a place of pilgrimage during the intervening years. The hospice functioned in its original capacity until 1917 when its operation, because of wartime restrictions, became quite impossible. It was leased out privately in 1917 and operated as a hotel until 1925. Between 1925 and 1927 the building was completed, more or less as originally planned and put to its present use as a seminary. But year by year the pilgrimages have gone on, particularly on the great feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Last year (1953), for example, seven thousand pilgrims visited the shrine on July 16. No doubt this year there will be more than ever before. It may well be that one of the great blessings which the Marian Year will bring to the Archdiocese of Toronto will be to provide further stimulus to this wonderful old pilgrimage of Our Lady of Peace.

OUR LADY OF GRACE, KING CITY

The shrine of Our Lady of Grace is of recent origin but has a rather interesting history. It is located on a property of 814 acres about one mile north of the village of King, Ontario. This farm was once the country estate of Sir Henry Pellatt who has become an almost legendary figure as the builder of Toronto's *Casa Loma*.

Sir Henry Pellatt's fortunes were made with the early development of the Ontario Hydro. He acquired the large property near King for a country home. It was beautifully wooded, contained large tracts of fertile land, and included a lake of about 34 acres. The lake he called Lake Marie in honour of his first wife, Marie Dodgson. The entire farm became known as Lake Marie Farm. Sir Henry erected spacious barns, a lovely lodge overlooking the lake and an attractive gate and gate-house at the south-east corner where the road from King entered the property. The farm soon took on some of the glamour and lustre of its quixotic owner. It was known throughout the countryside as a rich man's farm, an extravagant folly, and the home of Canada's most extraordinary collection of rifles. As Sir Henry grew old he met with severe financial reverses and Lake Marie Farm was put up for sale. It was purchased in 1936 by the Marylake Agricultural School and Farm Settlement Association for \$95,000.00, a sum said to be about one-fifth of what Sir Henry had expended on the lands and buildings.

The Marylake Farm School, as it was usually called, was born in the early 30's out of the economic depression which gripped Canada and the rest of the world. It was largely the work of the Rev. M. J. Oliver, C.S.B., and a group of lay and clerical associates. Plans to acquire a property were laid during 1935. In the spring of 1936 the Association was incorporated and the Pellatt estate purchased. The aims of the Corporation are stated in its charter as follows:

To aid, assist in and encourage the re-establishment of persons or families as self-supporting economic units, and to do all things necessary or conducive to further the objects of the Corporation or calculated directly or indirectly to advance the objects of the Corporation.

The whole project was placed under the patronage of the Mother of God and the name of the farm changed from Lake Marie Farm to Mary Lake. In her name, the poor and needy of Toronto and its environs were given a home and taught the elements of successful farming.

In order to promote the work, Archbishop J. C. McGuigan called a Catholic Social Action Conference on November 11, 1936, and appointed a committee consisting of Rev. Jas. Sheridan, Rev. F. McGoey, Rev. J. W. Dore, C.S.B., and Rev. M. J. Oliver, C.S.B. Out of the Conference came the basic educational principles by which the Mary Lake Farm School was administered. Dominant among these was the educational principle whereby the farm operated a primary school for children and an adult school in which men and women were trained in the technique of farming and in the rural arts and crafts.

It is impossible here to trace its work through the trying years of depression, but it operated with great success until the outbreak of World War II when the unemployment problem was removed. A few names deserve special mention – committee-men like B. W. Hughes, G. M. Kavanagh, Arthur Kelly, farm managers like Joseph Lanthier and Sidney Berthelot, loyal supporters and workers like Lady Windle, Marjorie Nazer and the late Mr. Holmstead.

Large numbers of despondent city people acquired a thorough knowledge of farming through this project, and through the well-known Catholic Settlement plan conducted by Father F. McGoey. Above all, under the aegis of Mary's patronage, the people of the Archdiocese were made familiar with the basic rural issues disturbing modern civilization.

During 1941 the shortage of manpower became so acute that it was no longer possible to maintain the large farm with 345 acres under cultivation, large herds of cattle to be tended and a huge volume of dairy products to be disposed of. It became apparent that Mary must have other uses for Mary Lake and the trustees reluctantly decided to close the School.

It was at this time that Archbishop McGuigan turned his attention to the establishment of a new shrine and pilgrimage. He was well acquainted with the work of the Augustinians in the Maritimes and knew that they would like to establish a monastery near Toronto. Mary Lake was eminently suited to the purpose.

On August 25, 1942, negotiations were opened for the transfer of the farm from the Agricultural Association to the Augustinians. The Vicar Provincial, Father Athanasius Pape, acted for the Order and on September 17th the monks arrived and took up residence on the farm, with Father Leo Ebert as the first prior. The preliminary contract was drawn up on the same day. The following

day the Sacred Congregation of Religious issued its *beneplicium apostolicum* for the new Agustinian foundation at Mary Lake, Toronto. The house was formally opened on October 1, 1942, and on the same day the Archbishop selected its full title “Mary Lake Our Lady of Grace” in recognition of a very ancient devotion of the Augustinians to the Mother of God. On October 26th the purchase of the Mary Lake farm was completed and work on the new shrine was begun at once. The Pellatt Summer Cottage overlooking the lake became the monastery and housed the shrine chapel; and the manager’s house near the huge stables and barn was altered so as to serve as a temporary retreat house. By the summer of 1943 all was in readiness, and on August 27th the first retreat was held at Mary Lake.

This first retreat, August 27-30, 1943, was preached by Father Pape to fourteen retreatants under the captaincy of Mr. Alex G. Sampson, life-long friend of the Augustinians and still in charge of the retreat groups known as “The Pioneers of Our Lady of Grace.”

The first retreat was held in the remodelled Farm Manager’s house. It has since been supplanted by the new Retreat House, opened and blessed on October 19, 1952. The work at Mary Lake has been abundantly blessed. Forty-seven regular groups are holding retreats there during 1954; and some fifteen hundred men will be in attendance. In all 45,000 pilgrims have made their way to the shrine since its modest opening in 1943. These numbers are not large when compared with some of the internationally known shrines, but are most gratifying to those who appreciate the peculiar problems besetting such an undertaking in the Toronto area.

The shrine is a standing testimony of the love of the people of the Archdiocese of Toronto for the Mother of God. It has not been the scene of any extraordinary manifestations like those of Lourdes or Fatima; it is simply a place of quiet prayer. Its chief relic is a piece of the veil, oriental in texture, said to have belonged to Our Lady. In this it is bound by a special bond to the Cathedral of Chartres which claims a similar relic. But at Mary Lake there is no great Cathedral to invite the faithful to gather under its hovering towers, and no Péguy has yet appeared to sing aloud the interior prayers of the advancing pilgrims. Perhaps it comes closest in spirit to another of Europe’s fascinating shrines, one like it a monastic foundation hallowed by the prayers of its cowled monks and bearing by happy chance the identical name *Maria Laach* or Mary Lake.

APPENDIX A PIUS PP. IX

AD PERPETUAM REI MEMORIAM. Exponendum Nobis nuper curavit Venerabilis Frater Joannes Lynch hodiernus Episcopus Torontinus, sibi in animo esse instituere sacram peregrinationem ad Ecclesiam B. Mariæ Virg. cui nomen a Pace sitam ad præcipites lapsus aquarum Loci – Niagara – qui nominatur, dictæ Diœcesis. Enixas ideo preces Nobis admovit, ut pro fidelibus præfatam sacram, peregrinationem peragent,

cælestes Indulgentiarum thesauros de benignitate Nostra reserare dignaremur. Nos ad augendam fidelium religionem animarumque salutem cælestibus Ecclesiæ thesauris pia charitate intenti, admotisque Nobis supplicationibus obsecundantes, omnibus et singulis utriusque sexus Christifidelibus vere pœnitentibus, et confessis, ac S. Communionem refectis, qui uno anni die cujusque eorum arbitrio sibi eligendo singulis annis sacram peregrinationem ad dictam Ecclesiam devote peregerint, et ibi pro Christianorum Principum concordia, S. Matris Ecclesiæ pace et exaltatione. hæresum extirpatione et peccatorum conversione pias ad Deum, et B. Mariam Virginem preces effuderint, Plenariam omnium peccatorum suorum Indulgentiam et remissionem misericorditer in Domino concedimus. Quolibet vero die iisdem fidelibus saltem corde contritis, qui sacram peregrinationem ad memoratam Ecclesiam peregerint, et ibi ut supra oraverint, septem annos totidemque quadragenas de injunctis, seu alias quomodolibet debitis poenitentibus in forma Ecclesiæ consueta relaxamus. Quæ omnes et singulas Indulgentias, peccatorum remissiones, ac poenitentiarum relaxationes etiam Animabus Christifidelium, quas Deo in charitate conjunctæ ab hac lute migraverint, per modum suffragii applicari posse indulgemus. In contrarium facient non obstant quibuscumque Præsentibus perpetuis futuris temporibus valituris. Datum Romæ sub annulo Piscatoris die I Martii MDCCCLXI pontificatus nostri Anno Decimoquinto.

APPENDIX B
LEO PP. XIII

FOR A PERPETUAL REMEMBRANCE. In order that the devotion and piety of the faithful towards the Most Blessed Virgin of Mount Carmel may increase more and more, whence flow the richest and most wholesome fruits for their soul, We, according to the request of Our beloved son, Aloysius Maria Galli, General of the Order of Our Blessed Lady of Mount Carmel, of the Old Observance, have decided to enrich the Carmelite churches with a singular privilege. Wherefore, confiding in the mercy of Almighty God and the authority of His Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, we grant to all and each of the faithful of both sexes who, being truly penitent and having received the Sacraments of Penance and of Holy Communion, shall devoutly visit any of the churches or public chapels, in any place wheresoever, of the Friars or Sisters of the whole Carmelite Order, both Calced and Discalced, in any year on the 16th of July on which the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel is kept, from the First Vespers until sunset of that day, and shall address pious prayers to God for the peace of Christian princes, the extirpation of heresies, the conversion of sinners, and the exaltation of Our Holy Mother the church – to these We mercifully grant in the Lord, as often as they shall do so, a Plenary Indulgence and remission of their sins, which they may also apply to the souls of the faithful who have departed this life in charity with God. Notwithstanding Our, and the Apostolic Chancery's rule of not granting Indulgences ad instar, and other Apostolic constitutions and orders, and whatever else there might be to the contrary. And the present shall be valid for all future times. And We will that the same faith which would be exhibited to the original letter, were it shown, shall also be bestowed upon copies, printed or otherwise, of the same, provided they be signed by a public notary and sealed with the seal of a person constituted in ecclesiastical dignity.

Given in Rome, at St. Peter's, under the Ring of the Fisherman, on the 16th of May, 1892, of our Pontificate the fifteenth year.

S. Card. VANNUTELLI