

## BRITISH ROOTS

When the Sisters of St. Margaret came to Boston to act as superintendents at Children's Hospital in 1873, the Society of St. Margaret was less than twenty years old. The community had been founded as a nursing order in 1855 by the Reverend John Mason Neale to care for the poor and ill in the countryside around East Grinstead in Sussex, England. At the same time they also taught Christianity and evangelized as there was opportunity. This work was so original and exciting that many were drawn to support and join the sisterhood. The demand for the help of the sisters was so great that daughter houses were established in Aberdeen (1864) and London (1866).

## BOSTON

When the sisters came to Boston in 1873 they did not limit themselves to the work of nursing at Children's Hospital but also established a School of Embroidery, an Altar Bread Department and a Parochial School (in connection with the Church of the Advent). In 1883 they moved into three townhouses on Louisburg Square on Beacon Hill which they used as a convent and a small private hospital. The Convent was a place for others to come for retreat and spiritual guidance and the chapel there was a place where the Daily Office was recited and the Eucharist was celebrated. The convent was an inspiring center for the growing community of Sisters and their Associates.

## SERVING

From the very beginning the Sisters did a great deal of visiting among the sick and the poor and served the hungry from the soup kitchen at the Church of the Advent. They founded a nursing home on Joy Street for African-American women and children which was called St. Monica's Home. This was later moved to Roxbury where it remained until 1988. In 1881 the first long term work outside of Boston was established in Montreal where the sisters had been nursing in an epidemic of smallpox. In time, other works were developed: in Washington, DC; Philadelphia, PA; Newark, NJ; Bracebridge, Ontario; and Lexington, KY. Today, there are mission houses in New Hartford, NY; New York City (Manhattan),



The Boston Convent

## INWARD and OUTWARD

Wherever the order is, the sisters live a balanced life of active work and contemplative prayer and in each house there is a chapel where the Daily Office is said and the Eucharist is celebrated. The Society has a special devotion to the Eucharist. Always the community is ready to share its life with those who come seeking to come closer to God or those needing help on their way. Days of Prayer and opportunities for time in retreat or simply peace and quiet are offered. At the same time some sisters go out and teach, serve as chaplains in hospitals and prisons, celebrate the Eucharist, preach, minister with the homeless, the poor and the elderly. Whatever we do is done to the honor and glory of Jesus.

## INTO THE FUTURE

When St. Monica's Home closed in 1988, the community decided to move the Mother House from Beacon Hill to Roxbury. So the property was adapted for its new use and a new modern chapel was built. The community moved in 1992. The Convent has become the perfect setting for the gathered community of Sisters and Associates, as well as for visitors and guests who come for retreats, for meetings, for quiet time away from the hectic pace of modern life,

## A PROFILE OF OUR COMMUNITY

There are presently 27 Sisters, two dogs and five cats in the community. The ages range from thirty to ninety-four. Members come from all walks of life. Among them are former teachers, nurses, musicians, and bankers. The community is also multi-cultural. Five sisters are from Haiti, two are from Canada, and one is from Tortola. Two sisters are ordained priests in the Episcopal Church, and one is currently in the ordination process.

## OUR DAILY LIFE

The daily life of the Sisters differs from location to location. At the Convent in Boston, daily life is shaped by the Daily Office and Eucharist. The structure of the day looks something like this:

6:00 a.m. Morning Prayer in Chapel  
6:30 a.m. Private Meditation  
7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist in Chapel  
8:15 a.m. Breakfast  
9:00 a.m. Work, study, ministry  
12:00 n Noontday Prayer in Chapel  
12:30 p.m. Noon meal  
1:00 p.m. Work, study, ministry  
5:30 p.m. Evening Prayer in Chapel  
6:00 p.m. Evening meal  
7:30\* Compline in Chapel  
(\*or 8:30 pm—call ahead)

All of our services are open to the public and to our guests and we welcome you to join us!

# The Sisters of St. Margaret

are an Episcopal Religious Order of women called to glorify God and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ through our worship and work, prayer and common life. Our commitment to God and to one another is expressed through vows of poverty, celibate chastity and obedience.

## THE STORY OF THE SISTERS OF ST. MARGARET



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