

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **St. Joseph's Care Group Dedicates Monument to Foundress**

(Thunder Bay, ON. June 27, 2007) St. Joseph's Care Group dedicated a monument today to recognize Mother Monica as the foundress of St. Joseph's General Hospital. The Hospital opened in 1884 and was the first hospital in the community of Prince Arthur's Landing at the time.

The monument was unveiled and blessed by Most Reverend Frederick Colli, Bishop of Thunder Bay in a ceremony at St. Andrew's Catholic Cemetery.

Sister Bonnie MacLellan, General Superior, Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie, said following the blessing of the monument, "Truly, Mother Monica was a great woman, great in her love of God, great in her love of neighbour, great in the inspiration she was to all who work with those in need. The Sisters of St. Joseph of Ste. Sault Marie are pleased that SJCG has recognized Mother Monica with this monument."

Mother Monica was one of 5 Sisters from the Sisters of St. Joseph in Toronto who volunteered to move to the pioneer town of Prince Arthur's Landing in 1881, to provide religious, educational and hospital services. Mother Monica was appointed housekeeper of the convent and soon realized the need for a hospital, as people were brought to her for care after being injured during construction of the rail line or sick with typhoid and other illnesses. Subsequently, Mother Monica initiated the first medical insurance plan in the country as result of her fundraising efforts to expand and pay for supplies needed for treatment.

Lil Bergamo, Chair, Board of Directors, St. Joseph's Care Group said, "Although St. Joseph's Care Group stands as the true monument to the Care, Compassion and Commitment of Mother Monica and the Sisters, we wanted to honour the foundress and commemorate over 123 years of health care service the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie have provided to our community. "

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**St. Joseph's Hospital ♦ St. Joseph's Heritage ♦ Lakehead Psychiatric Hospital ♦ Balmoral Centre ♦ Hogarth Riverview Manor Behavioral Sciences Centre ♦ Diabetes Health Thunder Bay ♦ Sister Margaret Smith Centre**

*St. Joseph's Care Group is accredited with the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation and provides services in complex care, rehabilitation, mental health and addictions, long-term care and supportive housing. As well, community programs are provided at Frank Murphy Community Centre. SJCG has approximately 1700 employees, over 400 volunteers and an annual operating budget of \$115M and is the fifth largest employer in Thunder Bay. To learn more about SJCG, visit the web site at [www.sjcg.net](http://www.sjcg.net).*