

Sestre milosrdnice



University Hospital

## HISTORICAL REVIEW

Since the very foundation of our Hospital, St. Vincent de Paul Sisters of Charity have been engaged in patient care. Along with excellent physicians working at the Hospital, the strict rules of St. Vincent de Paul Sisters of Charity order, and the eagerness, prudence and patience practiced by the order in managing the Hospital from 1846 to the end of World War I certainly contributed most to the high reputation of the Hospital. Since 1894, when it was moved to Vinogradska cesta, the Hospital has continuously grown and developed in the number of departments, patients and physicians, following all modern achievements in European and world medicine. Sisters of Charity wanted to follow the development of nursing in other, developed countries and to introduce formal education of their members for hospital work and patient care.

However, it was only after World War I that the order could initiate formal education of their members. The first sisters started their academic studies at University of Zagreb and University of Innsbruck as early as 1918. Upon completion of their studies, they were qualified to work as teachers at General High School in Zagreb, founded by the order. In 1920, two sisters received education in Vienna and were qualified, as it used to be said then, to teach nurses<sup>1</sup>. In 1921, the first school for auxiliary nurses in tuberculosis dispensaries was opened by the Health Board decision. Sisters-nurses having worked at a hospital for at least four years could also enroll in this school. Thus, professional education of nurses started in 1921, which was of great importance for our Hospital because the act on hospitals required professionally educated nurses to work in hospitals. The two sisters



*Nurses graduated from St. Vincent de Paul Sisters of Charity School on March 27, 1934, with their professors.*

having received their education in Vienna also worked as teachers in this school. During the 1921-1931 period, 202 members of the order received education at this school. However, as order members were also engaged in other hospitals, e.g., in Rijeka, Zemun, etc., in 1931 (80 years ago!) they decided to establish their own nursing school. The school was named Nursing School at Sestre milosrdnice Hospital in Zagreb. The school worked until 1945, and besides sisters-teachers, lecturers also were physicians from our Hospital, e.g., Kurt Hühn, Lujo Thaller, and others.

Later on, other schools were also opened at our Hospital: for sick attendants, midwives, pediatric caregivers, physical and occupational therapists, and in 1960 school for nurses. Thus, education of nurses has a long tradition at our Hospital and is continuing so because nurses are irreplaceable in patient care.

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### Reference

1. Kratka povijest Družbe Sestara milosrdnica sv. Vinka Paulskog u Zagrebu. Zagreb: Vrhovno tajništvo Družbe, 1935:462.