

## Our history

Four Irish Sisters of the Good Shepherd arrived in Melbourne in 1863 responding to a call from Bishop James Goold to support the women and children left behind during Victoria's Gold Rush. Almost 150 years later Good Shepherd Youth & Family Service continues to fulfil the mission and vision of the Sisters, with a focus on improving the lives of women and girls.

**1835** The Order of the Good Shepherd Sisters was founded in Angers, France by Saint Mary Euphrasia Pelletier to care for women in need. Today the Sisters of the Good Shepherd are found in around 72 countries.

**1863** On June 24th 1863, four Good Shepherd Sisters arrived in Melbourne following a request from Bishop James Goold to Saint Mary Euphrasia. The Bishop believed the Sisters could help care for the many young women in need of support in the new colony. The Sisters purchased a house on the banks of the Yarra River at Abbotsford, now known as the Abbotsford Convent.

**1865** The work of the Sisters was quickly established. Services provided included a refuge for women experiencing poverty and homelessness, an orphanage and an industrial school for juvenile offenders.

**1973** The Good Shepherd Sisters adopted a policy of deinstitutionalization which led to hostel-type accommodation being provided for women and girls in need, and non-residential services, such as youth and family counselling and tutoring for school "non attenders" being developed.

**1976** Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service became an Incorporated Association making it a separate legal entity from the Sisters of the Good Shepherd and set up in Collingwood.

**1980** NILS – No Interest Loan Scheme - began, along with Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service's Emergency Housing programs.

**1990** Research project undertaken by Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service to identify areas of social need in and around Melbourne. The study revealed a great need for services on the Mornington Peninsula and the Western Suburbs of Melbourne.

**1990** Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service opened a site in Hastings on the Mornington Peninsula.

**1991** Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service opened a site in St Albans.

**1994** The St Kilda Centre which was a Good Shepherd Sister's project was incorporated into Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service.

