**THE LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR IN DUNDEE FOR 151 YEARS**

**About 1847** there were approximately 200 Catholics living in Lochee and their nearest church was St Andrew's in the Nethergate. At this time Fr. Stephen Keenan purchased a property at Liff Road known as "Waltons" (name later changed to Wellburn), in order to build an academy to be known as St Clements. This seminary was for the board and education of young men who proposed to enter upon learned or commercial professions. The coach house was renovated and converted into a church for public worship and the first mass was celebrated on 8th September, 1848. In 1849 a new wing was built at St Clement's Academy. In 1850 Balgay Farm (nicknamed the Priest's Farm) was purchased in order to build a hospital beside the academy. The school closed in February, 1854.

By 1853 the catholic population was in the region of 500 and it was decided to build another chapel in the grounds. Fr. Kinsella, the parish priest, carried out this plan and it was used as a public place of worship until 1884. This building became the laundry. Wellburn was tended by the Sisters of Mercy until 1860, when they moved down to Larch Street. St Joseph's Church was built on the former convent grounds.

In 1863 four Little Sisters and two novices of order of The Little Sisters of the Poor, arrived in Dundee where k/Ir Thiebault, a rich industrialist, wished to see them installed. The sisters lived in the white cottage ,at the junction of Blackness Road and Glenagnes Road until they took up residence in Wellburn. With Father Ernest Lelievre, Mr Thiebault bought them the property in Liff Road, asking only that the small chapel serving the growing community of Irish Catholics in Lochee continue to be used.

**Wellburn St Joseph's** opened 27 April, 1863 with five lady residents. In 1868 an extension was completed for men and over the next five years the number of residents grew to nearly 100.

In 1866 the local authority erected an isolation hospital within the grounds of Wellburn. The hospital', which was timber built, was used for several years, and served Dundee and Lochee. In 1874 it was removed to King's Cross Hospital, before it was later destroyed.

In 2014 tile order of The Little Sisters of the Poor announced that they would be leaving Wellburn at the beginning of 2015, because of fewer younger members, but we are glad to hear that some form of accommodation might have been reached to allow them to continue their work.