Archbishop James Duhig had obtained the land but it was Archbishop Robert Dunne who invited the Sisters of the Good Samaritan to come to Brisbane in 1915. They were asked to provide Sisters for the schools at Bulimba and at Coorparoo.

In 1901 the Sisters had gone to Charters Towers and Hughenden, so the suggestion was warmly received as it would mean that there was a Convent en route to the North and a home for those travelling either way.
Our history began when on 1st May 1914, Dr James Duhig purchased “Emerald Hill” from Mr. Gillbank’s for £1500. The property was thickly wooded with many varieties of eucalyptus trees. The family home was on the brow of the hill. A path led down to a pontoon at the river’s edge.

On 24th September 1915, the adjoining property on the corner of Virginia Avenue and Hawthorne Road was purchased from Mr. William Quinn for £1000. His Grace named the property “Lourdes Hill” as it reminded him of Lourdes in France.
Original home of Mr. Gillbank’s, was purchased by Archbishop Duhig in 1914.
On the 7th January 1916, twelve pioneer Good Samaritan Sisters arrived on the “Osterly” accompanied by Mother Berchmans McLaughlin, the Superior General, and Sr M Aquins Kelly.

They were met at the wharf by Dr Duhig and nine other priests. Six Sisters were taken to Coorparoo and the remaining six to Bulimba, where they were warmly welcomed by the parishioners.
The Gillbank’s home which was to be converted into the Convent was not ready so the Sisters were taken to the house at 32 Lindsay Street.
THE FIRST COMMUNITY CONSISTED OF –

Mother Bernard Lysaght

Pioneer member Bulimba foundation 1916,
first Superior at Lourdes Hill Convent.
Pioneer Sister
Catherine Mulholland, Principal of
St Peter and Paul’s school.
Sr Ignatius Duhig
Pioneer member of
Bulimba foundation
1916

On staff at
Lourdes Hill Convent
1916–1919
Sr Gabriel Daley  
Pioneer member of Bulimba foundation 1916.

Sacristan at Lourdes Hill Convent.

She was a gifted artist and much of her beautiful work adorned the chapel.
Sr Adrian Kelly
pioneer member
Bulimba foundation
1916

Registered Primary Teacher transferred from St Peter and Paul’s to Lourdes Hill Convent.

First Music Teacher
Sr Patrick Francis Keleher

Pioneer member

Bulimba foundation

1916.
Lourdes Hill primary students attended from January 1916 until opening of Lourdes Hill Convent on 23.07.1916.
24th January, 1916 – School began at St Peters and Paul’s although school building not finished.

First pupil for Lourdes Hill Convent was Ethel Lee from Cloncurry. She was joined by young Ella Spalding and later Mabel Kennedy from Ipswich.

Lay teacher Miss Claffey lived with them, next door to Convent in Lindsay Street.
9th March – Official opening of Lourdes Hill Convent delayed because of severe storm. Even so collection taken up among those gathered was £700.

13th May – Blessing with announcement that school would be built by Mr. Edward Duhig from designs by Mr. T. R. Hall.
High school finally opened and blessed.
When the Convent and School was ready in July Sr Hilary Lawliss arrived from the south.

Appointed Principal 1916–1919
Also arriving from the south in July 1916
Sr Teresa O’Connor

Had charge of the Boarders’ Refectory
In 1916, Sr Anthony Joseph O’Brien replaced Sr Ignatius Duhig at the Bulimba primary school.

Sr Anthony Joseph often took boarders' recreation and shared in the walks and in their games.
New pupils enrolled including Peggy Cullen, Molly Cruise, Marion Braham and Gert Hocking.
For the first few years the school uniform was a navy dress of any material and any style with white collar and cuffs.

Later when Grace and Lucille Duhig came from America in the 1920’s to board at Lourdes Hill, Peggy Cullen, their cousin, designed their dresses. It became the standard uniform.
In April, the Convent building was extended with the addition of a new wing consisting of the senior dormitory, above the boarders refectory and a reception parlour, c.1917
The Grotto was as near a replica to the original grotto at Lourdes, as was possible. The Grotto’s first Mass was offered by His Grace, Archbishop Duhig, on Our Lady of Lourdes Day, 11th February 1917. The practice continued for many years when His Grace, was available.
Assembly Hall built in 1918. It was dedicated by Archbishop Duhig on 8th December, 1918. Hall cost £7000 – Architect R.T. Hall

The Hall provided a teaching classroom, recreational areas and was the concert venue.
The Hall for Classes and Concerts
In 1918, His Grace decided it was time Lourdes Hill students had a badge. He walked into the senior classroom, wrote on the board the words –

“Respice Stellam, Voca Mariam”
Look to the Star and call upon Mary

A maxim of St Bernard, and no doubt intended as a delicate acknowledgement of Mother Bernard’s role as Superior.

He then drew a star with an inner circle, added palm leaves and the monogram A.M. and so was born our motto and our badge. The colours in the badge were those that became our school colours purple, mauve and silver.
CLASS PHOTOGRAPHS
SEPTEMBER 1919
The Chapel was on the river bend of the main building. The Sisters knelt in the stalls while the boarders were in the main part of the Church, c.1919.
First pupils to wear the badge when they sat for their Junior exam.

1919 FIRST JUNIOR SUCCESSES

Catherine (Kitty) Neville
Noni Donlevy
Maisie Gallagher
Peggy Cullen
Nyanza purchased in 1918 for boarding expansion.

Cost of Nyanza house and grounds £2,100
Sr Alphonsus Ligouri
Principal
1920 – 1924
Mary McKee and Georgina Wilkes, c.1921

In College uniform with their hat in hand
A procession featuring the Children of Mary with priests and Archbishop Duhig at the rear, early 1920s
Grounds and Hall.
Rotunda, tennis, basketball and circolos courts, c.1923
Our Lady of Lourdes Statue

Veronica and Lisa cleaning the statue of Our Lady in the drive, c.1920

Originally in the centre of the drive. Now has a permanent position in the alcove between buildings.
The Dual scene from "Diana or Christ" produced by the students in 1923.
Boarders Refectory on Lourdes Day, c.1923
City Skyline
SWIMMING BATHS

The Baths built in 1924 on the banks of the Brisbane River by M.R. Hornibrook Ltd for £1,200.

Advertised as “swimming baths of re-enforced concrete fitted with electric light and thirty-six dressing sheds and measuring 75 feet x 25 feet”. 
The Cottage was purchased from Captain Henderson for £2,500. His Grace had difficulty raising the money so the sale was held up for some months. It was ideal for music as there were some fine rooms for performances and smaller ones for practice. Later some rooms were used as dwellings for the cook and other staff.
Sr Teresa Joseph Bowers
Principal
1925–1930
College View

1925
Uniform

Basketball Team

1926
Edna Morton was one of three past students – Margaret Hegarty and Theo Rossler the other two – to graduate as first Lourdanians from Queensland University.
The Children of Mary Sodality was still a feature and attracted many girls to its ranks. A Senior student acted as President of the Sodality and she was assisted by the College Chaplain and a designated Sister.
Students in front of Archbishop’s Duhig's car, c.1930
Choir and Orchestra with His Grace, Archbishop James Duhig in the decorated Hall, c.1930
In 1934 Sr John Evangelist composed the Hymn to Our Lady of Lourdes. In setting the lyrics written by Brian O’Higgins to music, she left a beautiful legacy for all Lourdanians.

**Hymn to Our Lady of Lourdes**

Ave, Queen of the wide, wide world.
Hope of the human race,
Come to us out of the gathering gloom
Show us thy radiant face.

Speak to our souls
When the night comes down
As we drift on a dreary sea.

Lead us, O Lady of Lourdes, at last
To Jesus thy son and thee.

Lead us, O Lady to Lourdes at last,
To Jesus thy son and thee.

Ave, Ave Maria
Queen of the wide, wide world.

Lead us, O Lady of Lourdes, at last,
To Jesus, thy son and thee.
From hill onto lower terrace hall, school and chapel, c.1930
Gates leading into grotto, c.1930
Front entrance from Hawthorne Rd, looking up to rotunda, tennis court, hall, school, boarding and convent, c.1930