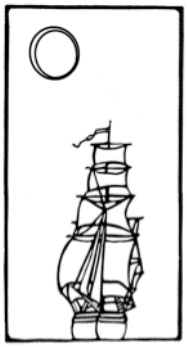

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Go Out To All the World: Mercy Foundresses

Sisters of Mercy Hermanas de la Misericordia

Dear Sisters, Associates, Companions and Friends of Mercy,

This issue "Go Out to All the World" owes its assembly of articles to Julia Upton, the subscriptions manager for *The MAST Journal*. She served as guest editor. It was her inspiration to feature the "next generation" of Catherine McAuley's sisters—those who carried the charism of Mercy out from Baggot Street in Dublin to the world—to England, Australia, New Zealand, Africa, South America, and beyond. In the United States, as she noted, we are familiar with Frances Warde, Baptist Russell, Austin Carroll and others who made the foundations in North America. Some have been featured in previous issues of *The MAST Journal*.

Julia wanted our readers to learn about the next generation of Catherine's community—her novices and contemporaries who brought the charism to the ends of the world. They have much to teach us. As she begins her own article, "Vincent Whitty: Mission to Queensland."

"Ever since I entered the Sisters of Mercy in 1981 I have been fascinated by two things: the extent to which Catherine McAuley's foundations circle the globe; and the similarity I have found among the sisters. Until recently I had to be content with reading about this, mostly through the Mercy International Association's website and the weekly Mercy eNews published there. A sabbatical year, however, enabled me to begin visiting with our sisters around the world—meeting the global Mercy community—an adventure about which I did a good bit of blogging throughout that year. On the first leg of my journey I met Mercy in the Pacific, which took me to New Zealand, Tonga, Australia, Guam and the Philippines. I visited many ministries and came to know many sisters along the way. This confirmed what I had long suspected—that the Sisters of Mercy thrive as a global community today, even without benefit of a central government or common constitution. Sisters of Mercy around the world do not have to *become* one to *be* one. In so many ways we already are one—daughters of Catherine McAuley, steeped in the charism of Mercy. Frances Warde was right, "It is a glorious thing to be a Sister of Mercy."

Mary Sullivan, R.S.M., on whom we rely for the definitive scholarship on our Foundress, frames this issue by offering an analysis and reflection on "Catherine McAuley's Methods of Leadership Development." She considers eight characteristics, more attitudes and qualities of Catherine's personality, through which she led the community, promoted the early ministries, and energized her first companions and novices to carry on after her death.

Janice Edwards, R.S.M., in her "Clare Moore: Trusting in God's Providence in the Crimean War," looks to the Bermondsey Annals—what a service, because how many of us have a copy ready at hand? Clare Moore knew and worked with Florence Nightingale in the British-led project to nurse wounded and sick soldiers in the Crimean War. Mercy women along with other nurses faced the task of caring for traumatized victims of war in appalling conditions in Turkey for two grueling years, 1854-1856.

Bernice Kerr, R.S.M., archivist, writes a spritely, energizing portrait of her local foundress in "Ursula Frayne: Works of Mercy in Australia." Ursula was the 11th woman to be professed under Catherine. She is associated with the Newfoundland foundation, and was the one called back to Dublin to care for Catherine as she was dying. She was the first to set foot on Australian soil to carry on Catherine's charism. The web-site called "Frayneworks" is a reference to her founding spirit.

Marcienne Kirk, R.S.M., and her co-writer De Pazzi Hudner, R.S.M., pay tribute to their foundress in "Mary Cecilia Maher: Auckland, New Zealand." Like many foundresses, Mother Maher left Dublin for the mission a world away. And that is where she died. She oversaw the development of ministries to the indigenous Maoris,

and schools for the Catholic residents from Great Britain and Europe. Her long leadership laid a stable foundation for the building of convents, schools, hospitals, hospices and aged-care facilities. After her death, community members extended the ministries throughout New Zealand and Samoa.

Mary Kay Dobrovolny, R.S.M. in "Mother Clare Augustine Moore: The Artist and Foundress," most helpfully sorts out the confusion left in the early records by the fact that several women are called "Mary Clare." The Mary Clare of this article is the artist, illuminator and writer who lived in Dublin all her life, but for three years in Cork. What is the historical truth: That Mary Clare was a privileged friend of Catherine McAuley, or that the Foundress had mixed feelings toward her, notably some impatience with both her character and her work as an artist?

Grace Leggio Agate, R.S.M. shifts a century forward from the context of other articles to treat the woman associated with the foundation of the Mercy mission in Kenya, Africa. In "Sister Dolorosa Waldron: From Dublin to Kenya," she educates readers about the origins of the Kenya foundation in 1956. Dolorosa, a nurse, and her companions focused on the education of girls and building of hospitals. Grace uses stages of her own trip from New York to Nairobi as parallel with her account of Dolorosa's journey 60 years ago.

The final piece, "Daughters of the Second Wave" by Madeline Duckett, R.S.M. , reviews the out-flow of energy from Baggot Street in Dublin through Catherine's earliest companions and novices. They didn't stay put in Dublin after Catherine's death. The title of the article comes from Madeline's citation of a song composed by contemporary musician Judy Small.
(The performance of the song can be viewed on You-Tube). The artist didn't compose the song about Sisters of Mercy, but Madeline adopts it as the theme-song for this issue.

As Julia Upton would acknowledge, this particular assembly of writers does not include all the foundresses who went "out to all the world"–other regions of Africa, South America, and the U.S. itself. Hopefully, this issue will honor some foundresses after Catherine McAuley who are less well-known to a North American readership. Let this issue encourage archivists and historians from "the ends of the earth," that there is a place here in *The MAST Journal* to memorialize and celebrate all Mercy foundresses, who deserve to have their stories told and re-told.

Yours,

Eloise Rosenblatt, R.S.M.

Eloise Rosenblatt, R.S.M.
Editor, *The MAST Journal*

Catherine McAuley's Methods of Leadership Development

Mary Sullivan, R.S.M.

Spiritual leadership involves at least three efforts on the part of a religious or ecclesial leader:

- the *energizing* of a group around a worthwhile common purpose;
- the constant *evoking* of that new vision and dedication to that common purpose;
- and the daily *nurturing* of other leaders – the great "followers," if you will, of the original leader of their common purpose.

If leadership does not foster future leaders, it will not be lasting leadership such as we see in Jesus of Nazareth. Moreover, it will lack the energizing passion and empowerment that lead to ongoing commitment to a common purpose that is enduring and valuable in itself.

To speak of Catherine McAuley's methods of leadership development is to speak of attitudes and behaviors in her that do not sound like "methods" at all. You will not find them listed in any books on leadership development – except the most wise and thoughtful, whose authors understand how groups of good people are moved toward ends greater than themselves.

As she says in her "Spirit of the Institute" essay, "we should do first what we would induce others to do." That kind of leadership inspires and animates, guides and teaches in a lasting way.

But here is my short list of Catherine McAuley's methods of leadership development:

1. her own good example
2. her spoken and written words
3. her affection and love
4. her purity of intention
5. her willingness to initiate, to venture into the unknown
6. her trust in others' capacity to grow and develop
7. her emphasis on the community and its common purpose
8. her cheerfulness, sense of humor, and self-effacement

By these means Catherine nurtured the leadership of all the first Sisters of Mercy. From them, mostly young and relatively few though they were, have come all the works of mercy of all the congregations of the Sisters of Mercy in the world today, on many islands and nearly every continent.

Good Example

Catherine was convinced that we learn more by example than by precept or words, and that if we wish to *teach* something to others we must first *do* it ourselves. She felt strongly that this was the primary way that Jesus led his followers, and leads us. The four gospels are filled with the example of Jesus and with invitations to follow him. As she says in her "Spirit of the Institute" essay, "we should do first what we would induce others to do."[1] That kind of leadership inspires and animates, guides and teaches in a lasting way.

Catherine did not say "Follow me." She said, "[Bear] some resemblance to our Dear Redeemer"—"Be fashioned on His own model."[2] In her *Practical Sayings* compiled by Mary Clare Moore, Catherine says that Jesus "said and did" what he said and did, not that we should simply talk about it, but that we should "show Him in our lives, in our daily practice."[3] Therefore she taught the first Sisters of Mercy how to humbly and gently care for the sick by the way she did this herself – at Baggot Street and in the hovels of the poor. She taught them how to befriend little orphaned children by the tender way she did this herself. She inspired and encouraged her

sisters by her own care for the barefoot girls in the Baggot Street school, her own welcoming of homeless servant women, her own generosity and self-denial, and her own long, difficult travels to establish new works of mercy. She did not just organize the ministry of others; she rolled up her sleeves (perhaps literally) and did that ministry herself.

Spoken and Written Words

Catherine also developed the spiritual leadership of the first sisters by her spoken and written words. She recognized, in herself and in those she led, the need for ongoing learning, and she was willing to give time and attention to it. The Rule she composed, her "Spirit of the Institute" essay, her letters, and the biographical manuscripts written by her immediate contemporaries are all filled with her words of animating instruction, written and spoken. By these verbal means she constantly sought to form Mercy women and communities who would be future leaders, who would endure, zealously and faithfully, and who would continue to be, with God's help, some of the "fire Christ cast upon the earth—kindling."[4]

This was leadership development in Mercy spirituality and Mercy mission. And the earliest Sisters of Mercy seem never to have forgotten Catherine's encouraging, energizing words, as their own lives, writings, and future leadership show.

And the earliest Sisters of Mercy seem never to have forgotten Catherine's encouraging, energizing words, as their own lives, writings, and future leadership show.

Affection and Love

Probably the most effective, though un-programmed, feature of Catherine's leadership development efforts was simply her affection and love for those she led. Certainly in Catherine this was not contrived. It was, I believe, a key aspect of her charism, her gift from God as our first leader.

Catherine truly loved the first Sisters of Mercy and often told them so. They *knew* she loved them, individually and as a group. Her letters to them are filled with expressions like "my best love to all" and "my most affectionate love."[5] She calls herself "always your fondly attached M. C. McAuley," "your ever most affectionate M. C. McAuley," "your old comrade," and "your own old affectionate M. C. McAuley."[6] Ursula Frayne is "my own dearest child," Frances Warde is "my dearest old child," Clare Moore is "our beloved old companion," and the postulant Anna Maria Harnett is "my dearest darling youngest daughter."[7]

Catherine's love for her sisters was genuine and enabling. It was the love and affection she described in the chapter on "Union and Charity" in the Mercy Rule she composed:

> This [mutual union and love] they should study to maintain and cherish so perfectly amongst themselves as to live together as if they had but one heart and one soul in God. This love for one another should be such as to emulate the love and union of the Blessed in Heaven.[8]

Modern analysts of leadership come close to naming Catherine's gift for affectionate leadership, though in different words. Warren Bennis says of good leadership and its effects: "People feel significant. Everyone feels that . . . she makes a difference to the success of the organization," that they "are part of a community . . . a family, a unity" and that "what they do has meaning and significance."[9]

Purity of Intention

Having and showing genuine love for those one leads was not, in Catherine's view, a dispensable trait in a religious leader. Moreover, it was, for her, intimately related to another of her leadership qualities: her single-minded purity of intention.

For Catherine, there was only one thing necessary: pure-hearted devotion to the will of God on human behalf, that is, to the mission of God revealed in and by Jesus Christ. Nothing else mattered except in relation to this overriding and merciful purpose. As she said in the Rule she composed for the Sisters of Mercy: "God and God alone must be the principal motive of all their actions."[10] Everything else was subordinate to that—what they had to eat, whether or not she had a bed, whether or not she or they were understood or misunderstood by clergy or others.

Such purity of intention called for great humility before the will of God. Figuring out "God's will" in a given situation was rarely an easy discernment for Catherine. God's will was not all black and white, with neon lights flashing around it. Most of the time God called her through gray circumstances, and she could only pray and trust that God was leading her and her sisters, and that God was doing God's work in her and in them, noiselessly but unfailingly. She could only try to keep her grasp on the central word of the Gospel and on those the Gospel called her to serve, at whatever the cost to herself. This required great integrity and honesty with herself.

By the example of her own life, Catherine taught the first Sisters of Mercy to be open to new solutions to old problems, to prioritize human needs above possible risks, and to not be afraid to initiate.

Willingness to Initiate

Catherine's purity of heart blossomed into another of her great leadership qualities: her willingness to initiate, to go beyond the status quo, to venture into the unknown, for the sake of God's poor and suffering people.

In the years 1836 to 1841, Catherine went, sight unseen, to Tullamore, Charleville, Cork, Carlow, Limerick, London, Galway, Birr, and Birmingham—with women she could little afford to lose from Baggot Street, all of whom had volunteered to go. Several places promised only a small house to live in, with no regular income, but this did not stop her merciful outreach.

Earlier, when the community numbered only ten members in 1832, and when they were already running a poor school and a shelter, Catherine, along with her sisters, volunteered their daily help at the cholera hospital on Townsend Street during the epidemic in Dublin. This work lasted seven months. Catherine later started a public laundry at Baggot Street, as a means to support the House of Mercy, even though she knew very little about running a commercial laundry.

In 1835 she started a poor school in Kingstown with what turned out to be an unfulfilled financial promise on the part of the parish priest. For Catherine and the early Mercy community, voluntary material poverty and great simplicity of lifestyle were thus not simply religious ideals, but genuine necessities—if the community was to extend the works of mercy to more and more people in desperate need of material and spiritual help. When she said, "God knows I would rather be cold and hungry than the poor in Kingstown or elsewhere should be deprived of any consolation in our power to afford"—she *meant* it.[11]

Charles Cavanagh, Catherine's always helpful volunteer attorney and financial accountant, apparently never made, or urged her to make, risk-avoidance a priority. When she said in 1841, "We have ever confided largely in Divine Providence—and shall continue to do so," she meant this, not just in a spiritual sense, but in a purely economic sense as well.[12]

Yet Catherine was always willing to try new things: to hold public Bazaars and Charity Sermons to raise money for food and shelter for the sick poor; to add all-day employment training for the women sheltered in the House of Mercy; to affiliate with the

government system of national schools if that would provide books and other supplies for the poor girls in the Baggot Street school; to start a pension (tuition-paying) school at Baggot Street (which incidentally failed miserably); and to go into city hospitals to visit poor, sick Catholics—hospitals where Catholic ministers were generally not welcome.

Thus Catherine's leadership was creative and responsive to new needs, not wedded to "what-we-did-yesterday" -- and this, even at the cost of great self-sacrifice. By the example of her own life, Catherine taught the first Sisters of Mercy to be open to new solutions to old problems, to prioritize human needs above possible risks, and to not be afraid to initiate.

Trust in Others' Capacity to Grow

Catherine knew our initial instinct "to put our candles under a bushel," but she did not think this was a merciful posture.[13] So her whole method as a leader was patiently to encourage her companions' growth and development as leaders themselves, and to enlarge the space for their own initiative and creativity.

The superiors Catherine took to the new foundations were almost always timid and faint-hearted at first. Mary Ann Doyle was "retiring" and "could not bear to see strangers."[14] Angela Dunne was older than the rest, and circumstances in Charleville were so unfavorable at first that she was tempted to disband the community. In Cork, in July 1837, Clare Moore, only twenty-three at the time, was "full of fears and doubts."[15] In October, Catherine said of her: "She continues extremely timid and will not appear without me on the most trifling occasion—to visitors, etc., etc. She promises to overcome this."[16] And overcome it she did, in spectacular ways, especially as superior in Bermondsey for most of thirty-five hard years.

Similarly, in Limerick, Elizabeth Moore was fearful. As Catherine confided in 1838:

> We never sent forward such a faint-hearted soldier, now that she is in the field. She will do all interior & exterior work [for instance, mop floors or visit the sick and dying], but to meet on business—confer with the Bishop—conclude with a [new] Sister—you might as well send the child that opens the door. . . . She gets white as death—and her eyes like fever. She is greatly liked—and when the alarms are a little over, and a few in the House, I expect all will go on well.[17]

Even in Birmingham, Juliana Hardman was, at first, very reluctant to be superior. But Catherine felt "great consolation" in that choice, even though, as she told Juliana, the "only thing that embitters it a little is the recollection that it gave pain to you."[18]

Their future as Mercy leaders would need their ability to see new needs, to be alert to new calls of God, and to have the courage and confidence to embrace new opportunities for acting mercifully.

Catherine's method was always to appoint women whom she knew to be fundamentally the best-qualified, to believe in their capacity to grow and develop, and then patiently to assist that development—by her affection and advice, her supportive presence when possible, her encouraging letters, and her gratitude and praise for what they were accomplishing.

Sisters of Mercy are fond of remembering that Catherine frequently said: "Be careful not to make too many laws, for if you draw the string too tight it will break."[19] The whole point of her unwillingness "to give many positive directions about any duty," except those in the Rule, was her desire to leave open space for her sisters' own zeal, initiative, and leadership. Their future as Mercy leaders would need their ability to see new needs, to be alert to new calls of God, and to have the courage and confidence to embrace new opportunities for acting mercifully.

Emphasis on the Community and its Common Purpose

Catherine's seventh method of leadership development was intimately related to all the rest of her methods: she constantly put before the first Sisters of Mercy the overarching, communal purpose of the congregation.

In Catherine's view, the Sisters of Mercy were *together* engaged in the great and dual purpose of yielding to the union with God that God desired to create in them, and of collaborating in the works of mercifulness that God asked of them and would accomplish through them. It was not Catherine's work, or theirs individually, in its origin or achievement. It was God's work, and as she repeatedly said: "If we are humble and sincere, God will finish in us the work God has begun."[20]

Catherine taught the early sisters that the two works of God in them – their union with God and their works of mercy – were "so linked together by our rule . . . that they reciprocally help each other."[21] That is, the holiness God wished to create in them would shape and guide their works of mercy, and the works of mercy themselves would nurture the holiness God wished to create in them.

Catherine's cheerfulness was deeply related to her humility and self-effacement and to her own serenity and peace before the present gifts and future promises of God.

By her spoken and written words, her example, and her prayer, Catherine tried to lead the first sisters to this understanding of their two-fold communal purpose, their common vocation as Sisters of Mercy that was greater than the life or efforts of any one of them individually. It was God's "design," totally dependent on God's "guidance."[22] Her own role was simply to constantly energize them around this common purpose.

Cheerfulness and Self-Effacement

For Catherine, cheerfulness was the effect of conscious gratitude to God, and thankful acknowledgment of God's gifts and promises. She felt that when we mope around, appear gloomy, and present ourselves as cross-draggers and dismal burden-carriers, we have lost sight of the gifts of God in ourselves and others and can then be of little help to one another.

For Catherine, the great task of leadership was to animate others to be leaders, and to show them the joy of zealous leadership. For this, her own cheerfulness was needed if she wished to enliven, and invigorate other leaders.

Catherine's cheerfulness was deeply related to her humility and self-effacement and to her own serenity and peace before the present gifts and future promises of God. It was not a superficial display, but a deep conviction of faith which she tried to share with the first Sisters of Mercy -- to help them, too, to grasp this precious gift of the Spirit of God, this fruit of God's presence and love.

So in countless ways Catherine contributed to the happiness of the first Sisters—by her amusing remarks and anecdotes, her playful poems, her innocent teasing and mimicking, her proposing "nonsensical clubs" (in the novitiate, no less!), her singing humorous songs, and her cheerful, even joking acceptance of numerous inconveniences. There are, of course, many other ways of encouraging the happiness of those one leads, but they all require that one find deep within herself the faith, love, and gratitude that are the wellsprings of true joy.

Conclusion:

In the end, any leader who is committed to developing the leadership capacity of others, of those who will come after her, must make a conscious decision to gradually diminish her own role and influence. This quiet retreat to the sidelines enlarges even more the space for future leaders. It does not have to be dramatic or "announced." It just has to be

loving and cheerful, and fully trusting in those whose leadership ability one has long sought to develop.

That Catherine McAuley consciously entered this final phase of her leadership is clearly evident in the last months of her life. In the end, the culmination of all her leadership development efforts can be seen in her simple, trusting response to a question put to her on her deathbed. When she was "asked to name the Sister whom she would like to succeed her, she simply answered, 'The Constitutions give the Sisters liberty of choosing for themselves, and I will not interfere.' "[23]

Remarkable signs of the fruitfulness of Catherine's leadership development efforts can be seen in the lives, works, and worldwide spread of the Sisters of Mercy in the 175 years that followed her death, and particularly in the early Mercy women whose biographies and leadership are recounted in this issue of *The MAST Journal*. Catherine's guidance, often by her own wordless example and her loving, patient trust, let these women become the Mercy Leaders God wished them to be. Today we can have little doubt that somewhere in the full embrace of God's great Mercy, she is now gathered with them, still smiling, and once again saying to all the rest of us:

> I am delighted to find you are so happy – you never will be otherwise while the spirit of your religious vocation animates your actions. . .. As I am certain this is the course you follow, happiness must await you – even when you have much to deplore and many charges to make against yourself. . .. All unite in affectionate love to you. . .. Pray for me, your old comrade. . ..
>
> Your ever affectionate,
> M. C. McAuley[24] ◆

Endnotes

[1] Mary C. Sullivan, ed., *The Correspondence of Catherine McAuley, 1818-1841* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2004), 463. Hereafter cited as *CCMcA*.
[2] *CCMcA,* 385, 390.
[3] Mary Clare Moore, comp., *The Practical Sayings . . . of Catherine McAuley* (London: Burns, Oates, 1868). Reprint edition: Mary C. Sullivan, ed. (Rochester, N.Y.: Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, 2010), 25. Hereafter cited as *PS*.
[4] *CCMcA*, 270, 282.
[5] *Ibid*., 418, 205.
[6] *Ibid*., 275, 259, 362, 300.
[7] *Ibid*., 192, 369, 406, 83.
[8] Mary C. Sullivan, *Catherine McAuley and the Tradition of Mercy* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995, 2000), 304. Hereafter cited as *CMcATM*.
[9] Warren Bennis, *Why Leaders Can't Lead* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990), 23.
[10] *CMcATM*, 300.
[11] *CCMcA*, 104.
[12] *Ibid*., 439.
[13] *Ibid*., 346.
[14] *CMcATM*, 98.
[15] *CCMcA*, 92.
[16] *Ibid*., 94-95.
[17] *Ibid*., 159.
[18] *Ibid*., 444.
[19] *CMcATM*, 179.
[20] *PS,* 3.
[21] *CCMcA*, 458-59.
[22] *Ibid*., 179.
[23] *PS*, 29.
[24] *CCMcA*, 320, 362.

Clare Moore: Trusting God's Providence in the Crimean War

Janice Edwards, R.S.M.

Catherine McAuley attracted young, intelligent, strong, and visionary women to her arduous ministry with Ireland's impoverished people. Clare Moore, one of the first four sisters professed at Baggot Street, was one of these women. Mary Sullivan calls Clare "one of the outstanding co-founders of the Sisters of Mercy and a remarkable contributor to the mission of the Catholic Church in England in the nineteenth century."[1]

Clare founded a Mercy ministry in Cork when she was only twenty-three years old. She started up the work in the Bermondsey section of London when she was only twenty-five years old. But in 1854, at the age of forty, she and four other sisters accepted their greatest challenge–a call to nurse the wounded in the Crimean War. Fifteen Irish and three more Bermondsey Sisters of Mercy soon followed these five, and all of them cared for wounded and ill soldiers in various military hospitals. These women performed superhuman feats. Along with the soldiers, they endured great deprivation in disease-ridden filth, but their call to nurse terribly sick men always came before their own comfort and even their own health.

The vitality of our charism moves powerfully through history and into our own time. So as I wrote about Clare, I recalled Sisters of Mercy who take great risks on behalf of suffering people today.

How Clare Moore Describes the Nursing Work

These sisters nursed in different hospitals around the Black Sea for nearly one-and-a-half years, but the first few months stand out. I focus on Clare Moore's writing about the English sisters' early months of nursing in the Barrack Hospital in Scutari, Turkey.[2] By relying heavily on Clare's writing in the *Bermondsey Annals*, I let her tell this profound tale. Then I contemplate the women's trust in God's providence and their great risk-taking, some of this story's deeper dynamics.

The vitality of our charism moves powerfully through history and into our own time. So as I wrote about Clare, I recalled Sisters of Mercy who take great risks on behalf of suffering people today. These contemporary women, also trust God's providence and embrace perilous pursuits in our own time.

The Call

Late on Saturday, October 14, 1854, Thomas Grant, bishop of Southwark, England, visited the convent in Bermondsey to hear the sisters' confessions. His first words to Clare Moore, the superior of the convent, were, "I have plenty of work for the nuns now; to go and nurse the sick and wounded Soldiers." Initially, Clare doubted his seriousness. Though journalists were writing about the Crimean War and the soldiers' horrible suffering in the *Times*, the sisters paid little attention to "passing events" and hardly realized that England, France, and Turkey were at war with Russia over possession of the Crimea, a large peninsula in the northern section of the Black Sea.[3]

They were unaware of the public uproar about the war. Thomas Chenery, a special correspondent in Constantinople, wrote a letter in the *Times* about the treatment of the sick and wounded soldiers. On October 12, 1854, during their morning tea and toast, the British public had been shocked to learn that there were not enough surgeons or nurses for the wounded in the Battle of the Alma, one of the war's first battles. They even lacked sufficient linen to make bandages and the dressers to apply them.[4] The *Times* reported that sixty-two French Sisters of Charity were attached to France's field ambulances and hospitals, and that some were bearing "the hard life of the camp, without

any other shelter than a tent"[5] in the Crimea itself. The outcry for English nurses grew.

In the midst of the public protest, the Catholic Church in Britain took action. Bishop Grant knew the Sisters of Mercy cared for the sick in some of the worst parts of Bermondsey. They even ministered in Jacob's Island, a terribly overcrowded and squalid part of London. Stagnant sewage filled the ditches that surrounded and crossed through this section of town. Charles Dickens wrote that these ditches contained "every repulsive lineament of poverty, every loathsome indication of filth, rot, and garbage."[6]

Bishop Grant sensed that their experience in slums prepared them—somewhat—for nursing in the Crimea. As Grant described "the fearful state in which those poor men were reduced for want of care,"[7] Clare's doubt about his seriousness shifted. As a Sister of Mercy, she typically responded to the harshest suffering.

After he consulted with the sisters, Bishop Grant sought approval from the government to allow them to go as nurses into the Crimea. On Monday, October 16, the government accepted the bishop's recommendation, and he immediately told Sisters Anastasia, de Chantal, Gonzaga, Stanislaus, and Reverend Mother Clare Moore, all from the Bermondsey convent, to begin their journey to the Crimea at 8:10 the next morning, October 17. He left but said he would return.

"The Bishop came, as he had promised, in the evening and shared in the Sisters' grief at this unexpected and alarming separation from their Superior & Sisters whom they loved so much—his Lordship tried to encourage them to make the sacrifice willingly for Our Lord's sake."[8]

Clare and Thomas Grant had a close working relationship, so when he talked with the travelers and gave Clare money for the trip, she asked if he had any advice or directions to give her. "He seemed so deeply affected as to be scarcely able to speak; he only said these few words, 'Nothing, do the best you can.'"[9]

After the bishop left, the sisters had little time to deal with their emotions. Until midnight they collected and packed their necessities, including their prayer books, in one little bag. When the preparations were finished, they went to bed, "full of anxious thought: the separation from all so dear to them; their sisters, their beloved Convent; the complete uncertainty about the future—came painfully to their minds, but the chosen band rose cheerfully to accomplish God's holy will, and they tried to comfort and reassure those whom they were leaving in so much sorrow."[10] "The consternation and grief of the Community can scarcely be described, but there was no time then for the indulgence of their feelings."[11]

The women experienced deep joy because "their journey was to be made not only in simple and entire obedience, but in great poverty as they had scarcely necessaries, and besides, they did not know where or how they might be received & provided for."

After Mass and breakfast they blessed and embraced their sisters and began their journey. The Very Reverend Canon Collingridge accompanied them to London Bridge, purchased their tickets and said good-bye. They knew that their destination was Constantinople, but had few other details, so they prayed for the "protection of their good angels."[12] The women experienced deep joy because "their journey was to be made not only in simple and entire obedience, but in great poverty as they had scarcely necessaries, and besides, they did not know where or how they might be received & provided for."[13]

Because the sisters were unaccustomed to travel, the trip to Calais and then Paris was stressful for them. They arrived at the Hotel Maurice in Paris very late that night, and there was no room. "Their perplexity

was great" because their contact, Mr. Goldsmid, was asleep, and the concierge would not waken him. They had no idea where to go, until the porter led them to the Hotel Clarendon. They were treated kindly there and went to the nearest church the next morning. They thanked God for all his mercies and begged his continued aid and protection.

Mr. Goldsmid met them at breakfast with much brotherly affection. He brought a letter full of information and advice from Bishop Grant. The bishop told them to remain in Paris for one or two days, because many nurses would join them there. He forewarned them that some of the nurses would be rough and disagreeable. As superintendent of the nurses, Miss Florence Nightingale would accompany all of them to their final destination. Grant also told Clare that she had full power to dispense with fasting, abstinence, and any other religious duties, so the sisters could give their best care to the soldiers who badly needed it.[14]

In closing he commended them to "Our Dear Mother. You must ask her to make you such good nurses, that it may be seen how earnest & charitable Nuns are & how much they excel all other nurses. Tell the Sisters to throw their will into the work and not to be afraid of wounds & death, and to help the sick in every way. You will disarm prejudice by your zeal & charity, and you will help many to die in peace."[15]

Miss Nightingale

On October 22, 1854, Florence Nightingale visited the sisters in Paris. They were uneasy because of the new and trying position of relating to Protestants and nurses from public hospitals, but Florence's "simple demeanor and unaffected kindness" comforted them. She thanked them for their readiness to do whatever she asked of them in their work, because she foresaw that others would not be so responsive. Miss Nightingale told them that the journey would start on October 24.[16]

Bishop Grant sent another letter describing the agreement he and the government had made regarding the sisters. It contained three key points. Regarding their nursing responsibilities, Miss Nightingale was in charge of the sisters, but as nuns, Clare Moore was their superior. The contract also stressed that they could speak about religious matters only with Catholic prisoners. Finally, with the exception of travel expenses, the sisters would refuse recompense for their services. Religious, not financial, incentives motivated them.

They spent the next two days in Paris attending Mass, doing some sewing, and visiting medical institutions. They followed the advice of the Sisters of Charity at St. Roch's Hospital and purchased cases of surgical instruments that would be useful to the medical officers at Scutari.

> Their accommodations in the Barrack Hospital in Scutari shocked the sisters. "It is scarcely possible to describe the extreme desolation of these apartments. The room given to our Sisters had no furniture except an old chair without a back, which served them for a table.

Clare also wrote the following to her sisters in Bermondsey: "I have been thinking very much of you all, dearest Sisters & praying for you. I know you have all grieved much. . . You must pray that we may do everything very well & give great satisfaction. . . I have you all within my heart, and we say an 'Ave' for you all, three times a day. Keep peace all of you dearest Sisters & bear all things patiently for the love of God, and beg our dear Blessed Lady to be indeed your Mother and Superior, She will help you in all things."[17]

The Steamer *Vectis*

The Sisters traveled through France by railway and steamboat. After a night at Hotel D'Europe, Clare wrote, "This, like the former, was a large Commercial Inn & our Sisters had many mortifying inconveniences to submit to."[18] The party left Marseilles on October 27 on the paddle steamer *Vectis.* In order to deliver mail quickly, the boat was built for speed and had a

notorious reputation for rolling in high seas. Initially the government had a hard time finding a crew that would take it to Constantinople. Finally, when the crew had been hired, and everyone was aboard, the five sisters selected a very small cabin. Thus, they avoided living with the nurses. But it had no light and very little air. "When there was rough sea, the waves washed down into this wretched place, so that those who occupied the lower berths literally lay in water."[19]

On the second day, during gale winds on the Mediterranean, the steward's cabin and the galley were washed overboard.[20] The stormy weather caused much suffering, and "our Revd. Mother was so ill that the poor Sisters feared she would die before they reached Constantinople."[21] After a brief stop at Malta, more storms washed the deck cabins away. The vessel was "all but lost, while in this danger our Revd. Mother, full of grief for the Sisters whom she had left in Bermondsey and for those who were sharing her trials, had the good thought to promise five Masses for the Holy Souls if they arrived safely & were able to accomplish the designs of God."[22] After this the sea calmed, and they had a less perilous trip to Turkey.

The Barrack Hospital

The *Vectis* anchored at Constantinople on November 4, 1854. They crossed the Strait of Bosphorus in a smaller boat and finally reached Scutari, Turkey and the Barrack Hospital. Crowds of spectators gathered for this uncommon arrival, and the weary Sisters passed them "scarcely able to climb the steep hill from the landing place to the Barrack."[23] By evening the government assigned "apartments" to Miss Nightingale, the nurses, and the nuns.

Their accommodations in the Barrack Hospital in Scutari shocked the sisters.

> "It is scarcely possible to describe the extreme desolation of these apartments. The room given to our Sisters had no furniture except an old chair without a back, which served them for a table. The windows completely broken admitted the piercing air, for it was bitterly cold & there was no means of procuring a fire."[24]

The commandant sent them mattresses and meager bedding supplies, and the soldiers gave them rations, because no one had foreseen their need for food. By the end of their trip, the *Vectis*'s food supply was quite exhausted. They were feverish and needed something substantial to eat. Instead, they were given a can of warm water, a little tea, no milk or sugar, and a scanty portion of bread. This kind of privation "continued for many months."[25]

Soon Clare becomes more graphic.

> "It would be difficult to describe or even to imagine their many privations both temporal and spiritual."[26] "Their food was so bad & so sparing that they were often faint from hunger. The bread was sour & often moldy—the meat was of the worst description & divided in a manner only fit for animals."[27] "The want of water was a suffering greater than can be expressed; during the first weeks . . . they were parched with thirst occasioned by their feverish state after so trying a voyage."[28]
>
> "Even for washing so little water was to be had & so destitute were they of all conveniences that they were forced to wash in the same water, & in the same basin to wash also their linens."[29] They had been able to take only "one or two changes of under clothing and had no second Habits or veils, so that any who were caught in the rain, which fell in torrents, had no alternative but to remain in bed, while through the kindness of the Soldiers employed as Orderlies their clothes were dried at their own Kitchen fire. . .. In these and similar difficulties the Soldiers were truly devoted & attentive to alleviate the

…In these and similar difficulties the Soldiers were truly devoted & attentive to alleviate the hardships of the Sisters, and resented deeply the unpleasant treatment to which they saw them subjected from the Matron & others."[30]

hardships of the Sisters, and resented deeply the unpleasant treatment to which they saw them subjected from the Matron & others."[30]

Though Clare Moore uses the pronoun "I" only a few times in the war annals, the depth of her transparency astounds us. Her account of the first few months sounds terrible, but when we compare Clare's narratives with some historical realities, we see that she either avoided or had no time to record some even harsher details. Research reveals that the Barrack Hospital was built above a network of cesspools; the hospitals' sewage lines were clogged, causing the privies to overflow in the hallways. Because of the cold, wind, and rain, many windows throughout the hospital were closed and the stench from the sewers, privies, and stove smoke filled the air. "The water supply was visibly contaminated with organic matter. Not surprisingly, cholera, typhoid, and typhus added to the toll of illness and death."[31]

Contemplate Catherine McAuley and Clare Moore and watch how a spirit of mercy was unleashed as they trusted in God's providence and took great risks for poor and suffering people.

Further reading reveals one cruel irony. Before the sisters, nurses, and Florence Nightingale reached Scutari, arriving soldiers attempted to occupy the same barracks. But the interior was so dilapidated and filthy, and its water supply so polluted with dead rats, that they left the barracks within two days. They fled

"in horror at the insects, rats, and other vermin with which it was infested, as well as the stench from its overflowing sewers. Yet this hotbed of disease was to become within two weeks the British Army's major hospital for the war wounded."[32]

The Battle at Inkerman

On November 14, 1854, only ten days after the group had arrived, the wounded from the battle at Inkerman also arrived. Crossing the Black Sea from the Crimea to Scutari sometimes took several weeks, so the men arrived with untreated missing limbs, ragged clothing caked in blood, and lice everywhere. Their bandages had not been changed since they were wounded, so when the nurses removed them, the injuries were filled with maggots.[33] Sometimes when boots were removed from frostbitten legs, a foot came off with the boot.

Florence Nightingale wrote to a friend,

"We have now four miles of beds—and not eighteen inches apart. . .. These poor fellows have not had a clean shirt nor been washed for two months before they came here, and the state in which they arrive from the transport is literally crawling. I hope in a few days we shall establish a little cleanliness. But we have not a basin nor a towel nor a bit of soap nor a broom—I have ordered 300 scrubbing brushes."[34]

The lack of necessary supplies, food, and medical personnel plagued everyone connected with this war. The British government had not prepared for the war, and governmental bureaucracy prevented the proper care from reaching sick and wounded soldiers.

The hospital already held 1,715 casualties from previous battles, and now 570 more were coming. By this time Clare, Stanislaus, and de Chantal were nursing in the Barrack Hospital, and Gonzaga and Anastasia were caring for patients in the General Hospital, a strenuous walk from the Barrack Hospital. The men arrived in the

"worst stage of destitution. . . The Sisters were now almost overworked preparing the wards and beds, and according as the wounded arrived, helping them, dressing their wounds & comforting them. The want of changes of linen being one of the greatest miseries."[35]

Florence Nightingale gave Clare responsibility for the distribution of clean linens, clothing, and special diets to the thousands who passed through the Barrack

Hospital. Clare also went "round through the night to the wards & corridors."[36]

"Those employed for [the soldiers] in any way were covered with vermin."[37] These vermin added to the sisters' hardships. After nursing wounded and terribly sick soldiers "until a late hour," they stayed up until "near midnight to free themselves from the filth and insects which came on them among the poor sufferers—yet even when they lay down the rats which infested the place allowed them very little rest."[38]

Catherine and Clare

I have let Clare Moore tell her sisters' story, but now let us reflect on the deeper dimensions of this narrative. Contemplate Catherine McAuley and Clare Moore and watch how a spirit of mercy was unleashed as they trusted in God's providence and took great risks for poor and suffering people.

Clare had learned how to love and be loved, even in hardship, from Catherine McAuley, one of God's great lovers. Though thirty-six years of age separated them, they knew each other well. Catherine called Clare "our old beloved companion."[39] Then three years after Catherine died, Clare wrote to her sister, Clare Augustine Moore, "Tho' you know much about her, you did not know her as I knew her."[40] Twenty-one years after Catherine died, Clare gave Florence Nightingale some of Catherine's writings and then wrote to her friend Florence, "I am so glad you are pleased with our dear Revd. Mother—as I always call her, she seems to be living to me—her words & ways come so often before me."[41] It was Clare who most closely assisted Catherine in the preparation of the completed manuscript of the Rule and Constitution.[42] Because of this collaboration, Clare developed an especially keen sense of Catherine's merciful spirit.

God's Providence

The memoir that Clare wrote about Catherine highlights Catherine's trust in God's providence. Clare is the sister who tells us that John Murphy, the bishop of Cork, called Catherine the "Sister of Divine Providence."[43] When Catherine was experiencing doubt or difficulty, Clare says that she prayed "with *entire confidence* of obtaining what she asked." (The italicized emphasis is Clare's.)[44] When our founder's friend Rev. Edward Armstrong was dying, he said to Catherine, "Do not put your trust in any human being, but place all your confidence in God alone."[45]

When Clare tells this story, she adds that he told Catherine this "most emphatically, again and again." She ends her account of Armstrong's advice with the words, "She often told me this when oppressed with care."[46] When Clare amplifies commonly known information about Catherine, we appreciate her assimilation of and insight into our founder's spirit.

Risk-Taking

Our "outstanding co-founder" also tells us about some other traits that enabled Catherine to integrate daring with reliance on God. In her memoir of Catherine, she writes about our founder's risk-taking, including Catherine's care for cholera victims, and her request that the Duchess of Kent and Queen Victoria send some of their work for the sisters' bazaar.

She tells us that Catherine's spirit of mercy and compassion for the poor so consumed our founder that some of her plans for their relief seemed "beyond the limits of prudence. . .. But the success with which her undertakings were usually attended showed that she was guided by a heavenly wisdom."[47] Clare understood how Catherine's trust in "heavenly wisdom" and her consuming compassion for the poor unleashed God's mercy. It was this release of God's mercy that enabled Catherine to go "beyond the limits of prudence."

Contemplating Clare's Leaps of Faith

When it came to helping suffering and marginalized people, Clare Moore imbibed Catherine's ability to go "beyond the limits of prudence." Like her friend, Clare took leaps of faith when founding convents and ministries beyond Bermondsey. However, the Crimean narrative reveals her most perilous mission. Every aspect of the sisters'

war ministry spotlights Clare's trust in God's providence and her risk-taking on behalf of agonized soldiers. Packing one small bag, traveling without clear plans, having no place to sleep, being deathly sick on the *Vectis,* being "faint with hunger" and "parched with thirst" for months were high-risk ventures that demanded immense trust in God's mercy.

Like her friend Catherine, Clare experienced "anxious thought," sadness, confusion, grief, and desolation during her ministry, but, like Catherine, she prayed with "*entire confidence* of obtaining what she asked for."[48] Consider several of Clare's faith-filled undertakings and the profound confidence that enabled them. In narrating these challenges, Clare reveals her own and her sisters' spirituality.

After discussion with the government officials, it was agreed that the sisters would travel in their religious habit without the outer bonnet and cloak. These bonnets and cloaks covered their habit and resembled the outer garments worn in public by ordinary people of the day. They blended in with others when they walked the streets and visited the sick. Some planners involved in sending the nuns to nurse in the Crimea, thought the nuns should not wear bonnets and cloaks because then, their visibility as nuns would protect them on their journey and comfort those to whom they ministered.

However, as Clare recounts, traveling as nuns exposed them to "mortifying inconveniences" in the large commercial inns and to the prejudice of many people. Despite the inconveniences and the prejudice, the sisters experienced confidence because the Protestant government had "consented to employ poor Nuns as Nuns."[49] Later when Clare wrote that they experienced this as a "particular inspiration of Divine Providence,"[50] she was using Catherine's own words to describe the Bermondsey sisters' spirituality.

The cyclic process of taking risks and trusting God was the blueprint for their Crimean venture. As they left London, the sisters had "complete uncertainty about the future,"[51] but they hoped for the "protection of their good angels."[52] Though forewarned that this "hazardous enterprise" would expose them to "extraordinary difficulties," they decided on the way to Dover that, being five in number, they would entrust themselves and their safety to Christ's five "Sacred Wounds."[53]

Criticism and tension accompanied their ministry. The nurses, doctors, orderlies, and others complained about the lack of supplies, adequate food, and healthy accommodations. "Amidst the contending feelings of all around them our Sisters tried to pass on humbly and simply. They had undertaken the work expecting to find great difficulty & hardship & they knew it would be wrong to complain."[54]

In the midst of this agitation Clare wrote one striking sentence about their first Christmas in the Crimea. It reflects how nursing anguished soldiers and relying on God became a unified process for them, despite the horrific circumstances that surrounded them.

> "Their Christmas it is true was dreary—they assisted at Mass hurriedly—worked hard all day—and it was only when they got together late that night that they could commemorate the joyful festival kneeling before a little picture of the Divine Infant and with subdued voices singing the 'Adeste Fidelis.'"[55]

Sadness and joy, travail and trust, all in one day. Their Crimean enterprise was an astounding leap of faith. Though they sometimes doubted it, these women repeatedly experienced a strength that surpassed the peril. Horribly sick and suffering soldiers caused Clare, like Catherine, to move "beyond the limits of prudence" and, on a "dreary Christmas," rely on a "Divine Infant." What participation in and release of God's mercy!

Contemplating Risk and Trust—Now

Heart-stopping risk and awe-inspiring trust—their paradigm stirs our reliance on God and its accompanying risk-taking. Thankfully, only a few of us are called to trust God's mercy in such extreme circumstances. But relying on God's providence and choosing great ventures are entwined in our history

and spirituality. As you contemplate the courage of these Bermondsey sisters and some sisters that you know, what happens in you?

Our Crimeas may be different and hopefully less perilous than those of the Bermondsey sisters. Yet we are called to place our "*entire confidence*" in God and to follow the great challenges that spring from this confidence. When "oppressed with care," do we recall all that Clare wrote about Rev. Armstrong's words to Catherine? "Most emphatically, again and again" he told her to "place all your confidence in God alone." The power of Catherine and Clare's phenomenal trust and radical risk-taking still inspires us. Their love for us draws us into Love itself, and when we consciously connect with them, their Love and Mercy enable our grand leaps of faith today. ◆

Endnotes

[1] Mary Sullivan, *Catherine McAuley and the Tradition of Mercy* (Baltimore: Catholic University of America, 2004), 84. Hereafter cited *CMcATM*.
[2] Volume 1 (1839–1856) of the *Annals of the Convent of Our Lady of Mercy, Bermondsey*, London, England, also referred to as the *Bermondsey Annals.* This volume includes 112 pages (204–316) about the English sisters' war experience from the departure of the first group in October 1854 to the return of all eight sisters in the summer of 1856. Clare Moore wrote this section of the annals after she returned from the Crimean War. In this article I rely heavily on pages 210 to 247.
[3] *Ibid.*, 210–11.
[4] Helen Rappaport, *No Place for Ladies: The Untold Story of Women in the Crimean War* (London: Aurum Press, 2007), 94–95.
[5] *Ibid.*, 99.
[6] David Saxby, "Digging Jacob's Island: A New Chapter for *Oliver Twist*," *Current Archaeology* 22, no. 264 (March 2012): 12-17.
[7] *Bermondsey Annals,* 211.
[8] *Ibid.*, 213.
[9] *Ibid.*, 214.
[10] *Ibid.*, 215.
[11] *Ibid.*, 214–15.
[12] *Ibid.*, 214.
[13] *Ibid.*, 215.
[14] *Ibid.*, 217.
[15] *Ibid.*, 218–19.
[16] *Ibid.*, 219.
[17] *Ibid.*, 222–23.
[18] *Ibid.*, 223.
[19] *Ibid.*, 224.
[20] Barbara Montgomery Dossey, *Florence Nightingale, Mystic, Visionary, Healer* (Philadelphia: F. A. Davis, 2010), 120.
[21] *Bermondsey Annals*, 224.
[22] *Ibid.*, 225.
[23] *Ibid.*, 226.
[24] *Ibid.*, 226–27.
[25] *Ibid.*, 227.
[26] *Ibid.*, 228.
[27] *Ibid.*, 228–29.
[28] *Ibid.*, 229.
[29] *Ibid.*, 229
[30] *Ibid.*, 229–30.
[31] Dossey, *Florence Nightingale: Mystic, Visionary, Healer,* 126.
[32] Rappaport, *No Place for Ladies*, 46.
[33] *Ibid.*, 113–14.
[34] Dossey, *Florence Nightingale: Mystic, Visionary, Healer*, 125.
[35] *Bermondsey Annals*, 228.
[36] *Ibid.*
[37] *Ibid.*, 228.
[38] *Ibid.*, 249.
[39] Mary C. Sullivan, *The Correspondence of Catherine McAuley, 1818-1841* (Baltimore: Catholic University of America, 2004), 404.
[40] Sullivan, CMcATM*,* 93.
[41] Mary C. Sullivan, *The Friendship of Florence Nightingale and Mary Clare Moore* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 18.
[42] Sullivan, *CMcATM,* 77.
[43] *Ibid.*, 115.
[44] *Ibid.*, 93.
[45] *Ibid.*, 92.
[46] *Ibid.*
[47] *Ibid.*, 112.
[48] *Ibid.,* 93.
[49] *Bermondsey Annals*, 223.
[50] *Ibid.*, 215.
[51] *Ibid.*
[52] *Ibid.*, 214.
[53] *Ibid.*, 215.
[54] *Ibid.*, 247.
[55] *Ibid.*

Ursula Frayne: Works of Mercy in Australia

Berenice Kerr, R.S.M.

In the archives of the Mercy International Centre in Baggot Street, Dublin is a series of pen and ink illustrations sketched by "A Sister of the Religious Order of Our Lady of Mercy" in 1840 during her visit to several of the Irish convents. Copies of the originals can be found in many Mercy institutions and places of living. The sketches illustrate the early Sisters of Mercy engaged in ministry, more specifically in performing the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. They depict the sisters teaching, caring for the sick and dying, visiting the poor in their homes or in prison. While the drawings are certainly not portraits, it is obvious that they are modelled on situations taken from real life. It is possible, even probable, that the author had witnessed some of the scenes she sketched in Booterstown, a branch house of Baggot Street situated about seven kilometers to the south.

Thus It was that 170 years ago the sisters arrived in Australia, the most precious item in their luggage being the good news of God's mercy interpreted in the charism of Catherine McAuley.

We now know that the sketches are those of Mary Clare Agnew and we also know that the superior of Booterstown in 1840 was Clara Frayne-- Sister Ursula Frayne. Is it too big a leap of logic to conclude that amid the sketches there is at least one depicting Ursula Frayne carrying out the Works of Mercy? We will never be sure but it is a tantalizing thought!

In Australia Ursula Frayne is honored as the first Mercy Sister to set foot on our soil. On January 7 1846, she and seven companions – three professed sisters, three novices and an intending postulant– impelled by Mercy, waded ashore at Fremantle, Western Australia.

Important though this be, Ursula had played a part in the Mercy story prior to her Australian mission. She was the eleventh woman to be professed by Catherine McAuley and, having received the entirety of her religious training from her, without doubt took her as a role model.[1] As postulant and novice, as trainee teacher and friend, then as nurse and carer, Ursula formed a bond with Catherine and absorbed her ideals. She was named as one of the sisters charged with preserving the spirit of the young Institute.[2] It was Ursula who was called to Baggot Street late in 1841 to care for the ailing Catherine, and it was she who informed the communities about her death.[3]

The following year Ursula led a foundation to Newfoundland where, before too long, she was called to put into practice Catherine's injunction to preserve the spirit of the Institute. Rather than sanction episcopal interference in matters of the Rule, she returned to Dublin. In 1845, John Brady, the newly appointed Bishop of Perth, which comprised all of Western Australia, arrived at Baggot Street to recruit sisters. Ursula was an outstanding candidate for the position of leader of the foundation, the lack of a good reference notwithstanding.[4]

Thus it was that 170 years ago the sisters arrived in Australia, the most precious item in their luggage being the good news of God's mercy interpreted in the charism of Catherine McAuley.[5]

As to her arrival, two stories have embedded themselves in Mercy folklore. The first is Ursula's impression of the two Aborigines she saw on the banks of the Swan River— "perfectly erect, very tall and most majestic in appearance, as if they felt they were the lords of the soil… They seem to be remarkably intelligent." [6] Ursula was subsequently to carry out a rewarding ministry to the Aboriginal people, one built on the respect evident in that statement.

Relations with the Bishop

The other story concerns the discovery that the Bishop had made no arrangements for the sisters' accommodation in Perth. In fact, no one in the colony had any inkling of their arrival. Her assessment of it all was this: "We stood in the wilds of Australia… and we could truly say with our Divine Model, 'We have nowhere to rest our heads'." [7]

Let us pause for a moment to examine the context into which those pioneer sisters had arrived. In Dublin, when making his plea to the superior of Baggot Street, Bishop Brady depicted a town where, in seven schools, four thousand pupils awaited instruction. In addition, he referred to a neglected indigenous population for whom he intended to open schools where they could be brought to Christianity. Some of what the bishop stated was indeed true; much was pure fantasy.

He wanted the sisters to obey him in all matters, and Ursula, schooled in Catherine's teaching, was not inclined to give him absolute authority.

The Swan River colony had been founded in 1829, two decades before the sisters' arrival. It was a vast area, sparsely populated. Its early years were characterized by slow economic growth with only a few residents managing to become wealthy. The Catholic population comprised mainly laborers or indentured servants. John Brady had established a mission there in 1843, and, two years later, was named its first bishop, largely on the basis of his report to Rome that there were 8,000 Catholics in the colony and two million indigenous people.

In the light of the official Census of 1848, which reported the total number of Europeans in the colony as 4,622 of whom 337 were Catholic, we can safely conclude that accuracy was not Brady's strong point.[8] Neither, it seems, was administration, although he did have a strong pastoral sense.

What became apparent quite early is that Brady gave little importance to the agreement he signed in Dublin, to uphold the duty of "obedience of the Superioress in Australia to the Rev. Mother Superioress of St Catherine's [Dublin] in all matters regarding Constitutions, Rules, Duties, Practices, etc." [9] He wanted the sisters to obey him in all matters, and Ursula, schooled in Catherine's teaching, was not inclined to give him absolute authority.

This set the scene for the relationship between Ursula as superior and Brady as bishop. In November 1846, Ursula reported to Cecilia Marmion that the bishop was insisting that she obtain his permission for any persons to come to the convent, the doctor included. Then he tried to pressure her to allow the novice Sister Baptist O'Donnell to be finally professed nine months early.[10]

Ursula's refusals and her reminders about the agreement he signed in Dublin met with rage, formal interdict, and threat of excommunication.[11] Later, in response to a perceived insult, Brady refused to admit two young women as postulants. This time, Ursula threatened to abandon the mission and return to Ireland—indeed, Cecilia Marmion had previously sent the wherewithal for her to do so.[12] Eventually Bishop Brady consented, but what little trust there had been between them had been seriously eroded.

Replacement of Bishop Brady

The misunderstandings between Ursula and the bishop were played out on a larger stage, however. Within the Perth diocese mismanagement had escalated to momentous proportions and financial ruin was imminent. One writer speaks of leadership problems having "spiraled out of control and created a chain of discontent." [13] Joseph Serra, a Spanish Benedictine from the Abbey of New Norcia to the north of Perth, was appointed the Coadjutor Bishop in 1849 with a mandate to fix the finances. The following year in the wake of a very public and acerbic quarrel, Bishop Brady was ordered to resign and Serra was made diocesan administrator, retaining this position until 1862. The politics behind these decisions were complex and the fallout bitter. Although he left his

diocese in 1852 following continued disputes with Serra, Brady never resigned and died in Europe in 1871, still officially Bishop of Perth.

Against this disturbing backdrop Ursula and her sisters continued to carry out the mission of mercy: opening schools, instructing in the faith, caring for orphans, visiting prisons and raising money to support these ventures because, more often than not, the diocesan coffers were empty. But try as they might, they could not avoid being caught up in the "chain of discontent." Ursula took the position of strict neutrality and she advised those around her to follow her example.[14] However, her ingenuity and her resourcefulness continually met with hostility. Prepared to endure Brady's humiliations when she was the only one affected, she became uncompromising when those in her charge were attacked.[15]

Those in charge of the diocese of Perth in the first two decades of its existence could not abide women who could make their own decisions and whose executive capacity was at least as good as their own.

This was the Ursula with whom those in authority could not cope. Bishop Serra, in charge of the diocese from 1850, expected the sisters to live a cloistered life similar to that of Spanish orders of female religious.[16] The active ministry of the "walking nuns" of Catherine McAuley depicted in Clare Agnew's sketches was incomprehensible to him. So when he began to make demands which seemed to her to be overstepping the limits of his authority, she became assertive, refusing to comply.

Ursula Frayne's Dealings with Churchmen

Did she have a problem with authority? Could it be that she was in some way responsible for provoking the ire of bishops, coadjutors and vicars general? Was it utterly impossible to work collaboratively with her? Did she deliberately set out to antagonize? These questions merit some examination.

Ursula Frayne, it must be said, was a feisty woman. She could never have merited Catherine's epithet of "creep-mouse"! When it came to the mission, she had the soul of a zealot. When it came to carrying out the spiritual and corporal works of mercy she was indefatigable. When it came to obedience to the Rule and Constitutions in which she had been trained by Catherine, she was uncompromising. When it came to blocking interference in the internal affairs of the sisters, she was adamant.

It was inevitable, therefore, that she would clash with those who considered themselves entitled to her absolute and unquestioning obedience. Those in charge of the diocese of Perth in the first two decades of its existence could not abide women who could make their own decisions and whose executive capacity was at least as good as their own. Serra was difficult. He has been described as authoritarian, vain, imperious, bad-tempered and touchy, suffering from what today would be termed a persecution complex.[17] He reported Ursula and her sisters to Rome describing them as "contumacious malcontents" and the "Guildford Rebels." [18] Vicar General Urquhart,[19] obviously in a fit of pique, wrote to Vincent Whitty, then superior of Baggot Street with the following complaint:

> I have been considered not worthy of trust and confidence by the great, independent, self-willed and master-minded Madam Mary Ursula Frayne who acted with so much secrecy, trickery and legerdemain.[20]

These accusations do not sit well in the record of one schooled in the way of Mercy by Catherine McAuley.

There must be some reason why there was such dissension and discord in the Perth Diocese during its early days.[21] Actually there are many and, in all fairness, neither Ursula nor her sisters was responsible. The frontier needs of the Swan River colony in the mid-nineteenth century demanded competent leaders and administrators. The behavior of the men in authority in the Perth Diocese during the first two decades showed them to be inept, imprudent and

belligerent; discord among them caused great damage. Ursula in particular was unfortunately caught in the cross-fire, along with her sisters. [22]

Ursula Frayne's New Mission

Ursula was what we would today call an "ecclesial woman." She was conscious of her role in the church and, despite its imperfections, tried desperately not to cause scandal or to promote disunity. She was not unreflective, nor was she reluctant to seek advice. During the quarrels with Brady, for example, she questioned if she were "over-scrupulous with regard to the Rules and Customs of Baggot Street." [23] In need of advice during Serra's time, she wrote asking counsel and guidance from Cardinal Cullen in Dublin.[24]

Ursula was what we would today call an "ecclesial" woman.

In 1856, an invitation from James Goold, Archbishop of Melbourne, provided Ursula the opportunity to leave the bitter disputes in the West and start afresh in his diocese. For three months during 1856 Ursula and some of her sisters had been confined to a house in Guildford under a sentence of excommunication. Once the ban was lifted, it was clear to Ursula that if the work of God were to flourish in the West it would be better if she went somewhere else. Goold's request seemed to indicate the will of God for her. In January 1857, she departed from Fremantle, bound for Melbourne.

Ursula's Accomplishments in Western Australia

Before we allow Ursula to leave Perth and Western Australia, let us pause to assess her contribution there. Let us consider if it was all worthwhile. It is important to remember that in the eleven years she spent in the West, no native-born Australians entered the Order. The entire workforce had to be recruited from overseas – principally Ireland. The demands of the harvest always exceeded the capacity of the laborers. And money was always scarce, forcing her to use every imaginable means to raise a few shillings to support the ministry.

Despite these constraints, Ursula can be credited with opening the first Mercy school in Australia.[25] She introduced secondary education into Western Australia and founded the first permanent school there.[26] She cared for orphaned children; she established relationships of respect and mutuality with the Indigenous people, providing shelter and education for their children. And this in a remote and poor colony where church relationships were at best incompetent, at worst scandalous. Faithfully she had fulfilled the request of Bishop Brady for sisters to "break the bread of instruction" for the Catholic population and minister to the needs of the Indigenous people.[27]

New Mission in Melbourne

The Melbourne to which she arrived was vastly different. It was an established city with a population of more than 450,000 and a reputation for elegance and culture. But it was not all polish and opulence. Cycles of the gold rush had brought wealth to some, but had left many families deserted and destitute. Shanty towns had sprung up in the less salubrious areas. There the underprivileged --mostly women and children-- tried to live, beset by all the problems of urban poverty.

Into this city stepped Ursula Frayne, anxious to begin her mercy mission. Goold had secured a property for the sisters in Fitzroy. There, six weeks after their arrival, Ursula and her two companions opened the first Catholic secondary school in Victoria, the precursor of the Academy of Mary Immaculate, which still occupies the site. Her initial plan of establishing a school for the poor had been modified by the bishop. He suggested that she turn her attention to educating "the poor rich," which in his estimation had a greater need. Ursula complied with his wishes. Additions to the property soon enabled her to add boarding facilities for additional students. Young ladies studying at Mary Immaculate were taught the traditional curriculum for pension schools, but they were also instilled with a strong sense of faith-inspired

social justice. Once she was satisfied she had fulfilled the bishop's request, she turned to what was closer to her heart – a school for needy children, subsidized by the fees paid at the pension school. More followed.

Shelter for Girls at Risk

Ursula's ministry in Melbourne was not confined to education, however. As early as 1860 she had established in Nicholson Street Fitzroy a House of Mercy for unprotected girls of good character, in particular, Irish immigrants with no means of support. Each week the Sisters would go to the wharves to find girls in need of a place to stay. They would offer them accommodation and training in the skills necessary to enter domestic service. In her first ten years in Melbourne, Ursula is said to have assisted more than three hundred "girls at risk" to find employment in "respectable" establishments.[28]

She described in a letter how the sisters visited Bridget, instructed her and were a comforting presence on the night before her execution.

Orphanages Established

In 1861, in response to a request from the bishop, the sisters commenced ministry in an orphanage for boys and in another for girls, children orphaned or neglected as a result of their parents following the dream of making a fortune in the gold fields. Ursula was the official administrator of both for more than ten years.

During that period, there were two government inquiries and numerous state inspections. All of them noted the high quality of the care the children received. The cleanliness of the buildings was publicly acknowledged. During the measles and scarlet fever epidemics of 1861-1876, there were few deaths at the orphanages – directly attributed to the competent care of the Sisters of Mercy.

Prison Ministry

A traditional work of Sisters of Mercy is visiting those in prison. It goes without saying that Ursula and her sisters carried out this ministry in both Perth and Melbourne. Amongst the many inmates visited by the sisters, the stories of two are remarkable.

The infamous "Hurford" case in Western Australia involved a Catholic woman, Bridget Hurford, who was convicted of murder and hanged outside Perth jail in 1855. Since Ursula was in Guildford when it all took place, she was not directly involved. Nevertheless, the arrest, trial, sentencing and execution had a profound effect on her. She described in a letter how the sisters visited Bridget, instructed her and were a comforting presence on the night before her execution. Written many years later, the letter is palpable testimony to Ursula's empathy for a suffering woman.[29]

The second story concerns a more notorious prisoner, the bushranger Ned Kelly. Following his trial and sentence Ned requested a visit from the Sisters of Mercy to "receive instruction and consolation." Ursula's formal request to visit Ned was refused. However, there is evidence to suggest that in the weeks prior to his execution, Ned's sisters Kitty and Margaret stayed with the sisters in Fitzroy and were thus able to spend time with him. Mercy will find a way.[30]

Paying Off the Mortgage in Melbourne

Ursula's years in Melbourne stand in stark contrast to those in the West. There are no indications of quarrels between herself and Goold. In fact, it is said that she "never expressed any dissatisfaction with him in the twenty-eight years he was her bishop." [31] When she arrived in Melbourne and found she had to pay off the mortgage on the Fitzroy property --£2600-- she must have wondered for a moment if the financial struggles of the West were revisiting her.

She was satisfied with the bishop's explanation, and with her customary vigor, she set out on foot seeking interest-free loans to enable her to pay the first installment of the mortgage. Having perfected in Perth the art of fundraising, she wore out many a pair of shoes raising money for her building projects. She

was blessed as well to have had many local girls join the ranks of the sisters. In her first ten years, twenty-three postulants entered, eleven of whom persevered.

Ursula's Other Relationships

Ursula was not perfect, however. She found it difficult to cope with the illness and death of her assistant, Sister Catherine Gogarty. The stress and grief had an adverse effect on her own health.[32] Her quarrel with Xavier Maguire, a "first generation" Sister of Mercy and the leader of the Mercy foundation in Geelong, indicates, at the very least, a certain stubbornness.[33] After the falling out, neither sister, it seemed, was inclined to repair the damage. It was left to Vincent Whitty, another of Catherine's novices, visiting Melbourne en route to her new foundation in Brisbane, to restore good relations. Xavier subsequently wrote to Baggot Street:

> I am rejoicing to tell you … I am friends in Melbourne again. I am so happy about it for besides the disedification given by our coldness it is to me a great comfort to be able to speak to dear M. Ursula. She will be a great help...[34]

Who knows where the fault lay in this squabble? Was it a case of "sibling rivalry"? Whoever was responsible, the maintenance of bad blood does point to an incapacity to "bear wrongs patiently," perhaps in both of them.

Ursula must have counted it a blessing when, in 1883 she was visited by a man who claimed to be Willie, the long-lost nephew of Catherine McAuley. In Geelong, Willie had made several attempts to contact Xavier Maguire who seemed to doubt his story. Not so Ursula. Overjoyed, she made him welcome, giving him the address of another of Catherine's novices, Frances Warde, now in the United States, and urging him to write to her.[35] Little did she know that within ten years, one of Willie's daughters, Frances, would join the Sisters of Mercy and exercise a long and fruitful ministry in Kyneton, a Victorian country town.[36]

Ursula died in June 1885. She had been ill for some time beforehand, but illness had not diminished her zeal. She was buried in the grounds of Nicholson Street, Fitzroy, and later reinterred in a chapel built on the site. At the time of her death there were thirty-eight sisters in the Melbourne community.

Ursula's Legacy

As Mercy people celebrate 170 years since Ursula's arrival in Australia, we can only guess at the number of children and young girls who, thanks to her, received an education. How great was the number of orphans and neglected children who were cared for and given skills to equip them for later life? How many young women were sheltered at the House of Mercy and found suitable employment? We can only guess at the number of people she visited, the sick she comforted, and the dying she consoled.

And her impact? Perhaps it is the generations of women who, following her, brought the message of God's mercy to Australia, be it to the East or the West of the continent, in foundations from Ireland, England, New Zealand or Argentina and who attracted Australian women to join in their mission. Perhaps it is evident in young people in Mercy Schools who strive for justice, who carry out the works of mercy in various aspects of their lives. Perhaps it is the many faith-filled mercy women and men who work alongside sisters and who find their inspiration and fulfillment in Catherine McAuley's particular interpretation of mercy.

Perhaps it is the many faith-filled mercy women and men who work alongside sisters and who find their inspiration and fulfillment in Catherine McAuley's particular interpretation of mercy.

In St George's Terrace, Perth, a bronze plaque honors Ursula for her contribution to education. In that same city a diocesan school is named after her. In Mercy institutions there are buildings named after her. There are Ursula Frayne scholarships, foundations,

debating competitions, and mental health centers, to name only some.

I believe that Ursula would not be particularly interested in any of these. She would urge us to look beyond her. She would say quite emphatically that this was not about her. It was about the mission of God as it was refracted through the Mercy lens of Catherine McAuley.

2015 was named by Pope Francis as the Year of Consecrated Life. The pope called on all religious to "wake up the world." Ursula Frayne woke up her world. She woke it up and demanded that it recognize its obligation in justice to pay attention to the needs of the underprivileged. This was Catherine's legacy to her and it is her legacy to us.

Were Mary Clare Agnew, a "Sister of the Religious Order of Our Lady of Mercy," to visit convents or places of mercy ministry in Australia in 2016, she would see the same things she sketched in 1840—Sisters of Mercy engaged in the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. And Mary Clare Agnew, sketch-artist, would observe a remarkable expansion if she made her observations in 2016. She would see mercy women and men engaged in those same works of mercy, having been inspired by Catherine's vision as well. On the surface, her sketches might differ in 2016 from those she made in 1840, but in essence they would illustrate the same reality.

Among Mercy people engaged in Mercy ministries in Perth and in Melbourne, she would discern a direct and affectionate link to Ursula Frayne. She would find, however, that the link went beyond Ursula. She would perceive that it was a link to Catherine and through Catherine to God who is infinite Mercy.◆

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Endnotes

[1] She received the habit on January 20 1835 and was professed January 25,1837. Clare Augustine Moore, one of Ursula's contemporaries renowned for her artistic ability, illuminated Ursula's details in the register of entry and profession with a painting of Saint Ursula, cf. C. K. Killerby, Ursula *Frayne, a Biography* (Fremantle: University of Notre Dame Australia, 1996), 21.

[2] A number of Sisters were named in a codicil to Catherine's will and were given this charge. See Killerby , 46.

[3] "Our dear and much beloved Reverend Mother is gone to receive the reward of her good works. She departed this life after receiving the last sacraments between the hours of 7 and 8 yesterday evening. May almighty God

strengthen us all and enable us to submit with calm resignation to His hold will in this heavy affliction." M. C. Sullivan, *Catherine McAuley and the Tradition of Mercy* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1995), 25.

[4] The diocese of Perth was erected in 1845 and John Brady consecrated as its first bishop on May 9 of that year.

[5] According to the local newspaper the missionary party comprised

[T]he Rev. Dr. Brady … accompanied by six Sisters of the Order of Mercy, and by a numerous body of Priests and Assistants, whose mission, we believe, has reference, not only to the spiritual wants of our Roman Catholic brethren, but has been directed also for the conversion and improvement of the Aboriginal tribes." *The Inquirer*: January 14 1846, http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/65770165 accessed 1/19/16.

[6] Ursula Frayne to Cecilia Marmion, 10 January 1846, quoted in Killerby, 111.

[7] Ursula Frayne, *Sketches of Conventual Life in the Bush, letter Seventh*, quoted in *Killerby.,* 113.

[8] See Odhran O'Brien, *Martin Griver Unearthed* (Strathfield, 2014), 48-50 for a discussion of the state of affairs in the colony mid-nineteenth century.

[9] Killerby, 95.

[10] His motive, it seems, was to obtain the 200 pounds Baptist's brother had promised to the sisters on her profession. *Killerby,* 150.

[11] See: Ursula Frayne to Cecilia Marmion, November 1846, quoted in Killerby, 150

[12] *Ibid*.

[13] This is explored in C. O'Dowd, "Bickering Bishops at the Swan River," *The Record,* 8/10/13, http://www.therecord.com.au/news/in-depth/bickering-bishops-at-the-swan-river/, accessed 1/19/16.

[14] See Killerby, 189. "It is now the duty of the Sisters of Mercy in Perth to remain quite neutral, taking no part in the matter and the people will do well to follow their example."

[15] Killerby, 151.

[16] O'Brien,.94.

[17] O'Dowd *loc.cit*., and O'Brien, *loc.cit*.

[18] Quoted in Killerby, 215, 218.

[19] Urquhart was an Irish Cistercian monk recruited by Serra whom Brady appointed as his vicar general in 1850. Urquhart's *modus operandi* was such that officials at Propaganda Fidei had seen cause to warn Serra against employing him on account of his being spiteful and divisive– a warning which had arrived too late. See Killerby, *op.cit.,* p.149. Another source describes him as "mentally unstable." O'Dowd, *loc.cit*.

[20] Dominic Urquhart to Vincent Whitty, July 1850. Quoted in Killerby, 176.

[21] O'Dowd, *loc.cit*.

[22] See Killerby, 189-191; 201-211.

[23] *Ibid.,* 151.

[24] *Ibid.,* 203.

[25] The Sisters of Charity had arrived in NSW in 1838 and engaged for the most part in social work. Their first permanent school was opened in 1858. Ursula was the first to establish a system of education which had been devised by Catherine.

[26] By August 1846 – a mere 8 months after the sisters' arrival, there were 100 girls enrolled in the school. Killerby, 128

[27] Ibid

[28] A. Walsh, *A Woman of Mercy* (Melbourne, 1997), 47.

[29] *Ibid.,* 25.

[30] *Ibid.,* 27.

[31] See Killerby, 225.

[32] *Ibid.,*122.

[33] In 1859 Bishop Goold obtained a second group of sisters from Baggot Street into his diocese. Led by Mother Xavier Maguire, they settled in Geelong.

[34] *Ibid.,* 239-240.

[35] Prior to her appointment to Booterstown, Ursula had spent some time in Carlow with Frances Warde. While there she perhaps absorbed some of Frances' zeal for God's mission.

[36] Frances McAuley was professed in Kyneton on April 17 1894. At reception she was given the name: Sister Mary Catherine. She died on September 11, 1952.

Vincent Whitty: Visit to Queensland

Julia Upton, R.S.M.

Ever since I entered the Sisters of Mercy in 1981 I have been fascinated by two things: the extent to which Catherine McAuley's foundations circle the globe; and the similarity I have found among the sisters. Until recently I had to be content with reading about this, mostly through the Mercy International Association's website and the weekly Mercy eNews published there. A sabbatical year, however, enabled me to begin visiting with our sisters around the world—meeting the global Mercy community—an adventure about which I did a good bit of blogging throughout that year. [1]

On the first leg of my journey I met Mercy in the Pacific, which took me to New Zealand, Tonga, Australia, Guam and the Philippines. I visited many ministries and came to know many sisters along the way. This confirmed what I had long suspected—that the Sisters of Mercy thrive as a global community today, even without benefit of a central government or common constitution. Sisters of Mercy around the world do not have to *become* one to *be* one. In so many ways we already are one—daughters of Catherine McAuley, steeped in the charism of Mercy. Frances Warde was right, "It is a glorious thing to be a Sister of Mercy." [2]

Healthcare and Laundry in Brisbane, Australia

All along the journey I found myself fascinated by the women who made the original foundations to far-off lands, wondering what they were like and what were the sources of their wisdom, courage and conviction. That was especially true for me when I visited Brisbane in Australia's Queensland. Sister Mary Tinney was my host and guide during my week there, and we visited many of the Mercy ministries. We made several visits to the Mater both to help one of the sisters who was hospitalized and for me to interview the Mater's sustainability[3] coordinator about his work on that issue of particular interest to me. Each time we drove to the Mater campus I was struck by its huge complex and vast array of services. The large building with the sign announcing *Mater Medical Research Institute* particularly grabbed my attention. It is well within our tradition to care for the sick, but establishing a research institute goes beyond the concerns of today and focuses time and resources on the needs of tomorrow. That was a scholar's delight!

It is well within our tradition to care for the sick, but establishing a research institute goes beyond the concerns of today and focuses time and resources on the needs of tomorrow. That was a scholar's delight!

The medical campus buildings include the original convent and hospital along with ultra-modern facilities incorporating the Mater Mothers' Hospital, the Mater Children's Hospital, as well as the Mater Private Hospital, a 320-bed facility with a broad range of services that is one of Australia's leading acute medical and surgical private hospitals, offering services, as well, to the poor and needy without discrimination. Again and again at every turn I wondered, "How did this all begin?"

As we drove by Holy Cross Laundry, Mary explained that it was established by the Sisters of Mercy in 1889, and today is a leading commercial linen and laundry service for medical, surgical, health, and aged care organizations. In addition to serving those specialized clients, particularly the Mater hospitals, Holy Cross also provides the disadvantaged with skills, training and employment opportunities in a merciful environment where their dignity and gifts are celebrated and encouraged. Yes, I certainly saw the hand and spirit of Catherine McAuley in action.

But it was only when we arrived at All Hallows School that my appetite for understanding the origins really began to be satisfied.

All Hallows School

Situated on the banks of the Brisbane River, like the Mater, All Hallows incorporates the beautiful original buildings along with more recent construction, and provides education for about 1500 girls in grades 5 through 12. There, in addition to an excellent academic and athletic program, this diverse student body is immersed in an environment that is culturally rich, mercy centered, and justice oriented.[4] "Girls are encouraged to enter into, and reflect upon, the problems confronting humanity in their world, and are given opportunities to deepen their spirituality and to live out the values associated with mercy in practical Christian service."[5] The students we met were warm and friendly and it is difficult to imagine that any could be stressed in such a beautiful environment.

Within the original building, All Hallows Convent, lay even greater treasure. The historic chapel is in pristine condition and is still used by the students today. Within the structure is also a fine museum, described as "a social history museum . . . preserving the history and legacy of the Sisters of Mercy Brisbane." In 26 exhibits spread across two floors of the convent, it shows the history of the Mercy Congregation and its principal ministries.[6] The exhibits include a stage coach, mannequins dressed in the attire of the times, model rooms, and much else that you would expect from such a museum. Its focus on the ministries of the Sisters of Mercy, however, was particularly interesting, and a quote from the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea on one of the walls continues to inspire and energize me:

> Sisters of Mercy are educators, theologians, scripture scholars, writers, publishers, researchers, historians, musicians, artists, bioethicists, ecumenists, canon lawyers, lawyers. Some are working in interfaith relations, with media and communications technology, while others are environmentalists and ecologists. Many continue to administer institutions and others offer hospitality in a variety of ways. Where we no longer do the work ourselves, the mission of Mercy continues through the skill, energy and commitment of our ministry partners – men and women who are our dedicated co-workers, board members and volunteers.

Sisters of Mercy are educators, theologians, scripture scholars, writers, publishers, researchers, historians, musicians, artists, bioethicists, ecumenists, canon lawyers, lawyers.

Yes, we are all there!

Sources for a History of Mother Vincent Whitty

In one of the display cases nearby I saw a book, *The Correspondence of Mother Vincent Whitty 1839 to 1892* compiled by Anne Hetherington and Pauline Smoothy. Because it was behind glass I couldn't thumb through it, but it certainly attracted me and at least answered one question I had about the Brisbane foundation.

It was led by Mother Vincent Whitty whose name was familiar to me from my study of Mary Sullivan's works. Although I could have purchased a copy of the book in the shop, the idea of carrying it on the rest of my travels discouraged that thought, although I did take a picture of it for future reference. Once back in the United States, I found it on Amazon and began to assemble other resources needed to begin to answer my questions about Mother Vincent Whitty: What she was like and what were the sources of her wisdom, courage and conviction?

As mentioned earlier, I was familiar with the name Vincent Whitty from reading Mary Sullivan's work. From Mary I learned that Vincent was the youngest and the first to leave us a written record of her observations about Catherine McAuley, particularly her last days. At that time, Mary Cecilia Marmion, the mistress of novices at Baggot Street, was in Birmingham, England, to assist with that new

foundation. In her place, the recently professed Vincent was looking after the novices as well as assisting with Catherine's physical needs. In a series of five exceptionally descriptive letters from November 7 to 16, 1841, Vincent wrote to Mary Cecilia Marmion detailing Catherine's final days.[7]

Not an historian myself, I am always hesitant to engage in that discipline. A colleague recently wrote about seeing "the scholar's craft as creative, for the historian's world is not just there for everyone to see: someone must call it into being out of the amorphous mists of the past."[8] Mary Sullivan is the definitive scholar of all things related to Catherine McAuley and those early days of the congregation. But she admitted when she was writing *Tradition*, she only had access to the Introduction and first chapter of O'Donoghue's biography[9] of Mother Vincent. Similarly, since the *Correspondence* wasn't published more than a decade later, she wouldn't have had access to Hetherington and Smoothy's work either. However, they have all helped me in my quest to know more about Mother Vincent and to reverence her memory deeply.

A student at the academy of Miss Finn in Dublin, Ellen had never seen nuns in Wexford, so she was surprised to see "Sisters of Mercy walking through the lanes with baskets of food and clothing."

Ellen Whitty Who Became Mother Vincent

Ellen Whitty was born on March 1, 1819 near Enniscorthy in County Wexford, Ireland, the 5th of seven children (four boys and three girls).[10] Her younger sister Anne (Sister Mary Agnes) also became a Sister of Mercy, served as a nurse in the Crimea and was part of the foundation to Buenos Aires in 1856. Ellen first learned of the Sisters of Mercy from her brother Robert, a student at Maynooth[11] who later became a Jesuit. A student at the academy of Miss Finn in Dublin, Ellen had never seen nuns in Wexford, so she was surprised to see "Sisters of Mercy walking through the lanes with baskets of food and clothing." When Robert told her about the House of Mercy where other young women helped a few hours a day, she was drawn to join them, but as more than just a volunteer.

On January 6, 1839 she met with Catherine McAuley and asked for permission to join the community. She entered the Baggot Street House on January 15, 1839, spending almost her entire novitiate (2 years and 9 months) under Catherine McAuley.[12]

O'Donoghue describes Vincent graphically. "Of medium build, she moved with energy and grace. One noticed immediately her serene expression, her kind hazel eyes, the olive-tinted cheeks, the wide firm mouth."[13] Catherine McAuley noticed that Vincent possessed leadership skills as well, and appointed her to serve as assistant in the novitiate while she and Mary Cecilia were assisting with the foundation in Birmingham. Always interested in going on a mission herself, Vincent was pleased to be chosen for the Liverpool foundation in 1843.[14] Shortly after, however, she was recalled to Dublin where she was made Mother Bursar, in which "her contacts widened with men and women in all walks of life."[15] In 1844 she was appointed Mistress of Novices by the newly elected Reverend Mother Mary Cecilia Marmion. She succeeded Mary Cecilia as Reverend Mother in 1849. After serving in that capacity for the two three-year terms permitted by the Constitutions, she was named assistant to her successor, Mary Xavier Maguire, and later named Mistress of Novices as well.

Summarizing the impact of her years in leadership of the community in Dublin, Mary Sullivan noted

> her sustained influence over novitiate training . . . her missionary spirit . . . in sending Sisters of Mercy to Perth, Australia (1845), New York (1846), and Buenos Aires (1856); . . . her daring in purchasing land on Eccles Street in 1851 and beginning the development of Mater Misericordiae Hospital which opened in 1861; her wisdom in sending sisters to France to study the structure and operation of large-scale hospitals for the poor; her acceptance in 1854... of the responsibility

> of managing the old Jervis Street Hospital; and during the Crimean war, her energy and skill, in late 1854, in quickly assembling fifteen Irish and English Sisters of Mercy . . . to nurse with Mary Stanley in the British military hospitals in Koulali and Balaklava.[16]

Her work reminds me of the call of Abraham late in life. At a time when anyone else might want to sit back and relax after all those years in leadership, it was finally Vincent's turn to go out to all the world. Queensland's newly consecrated Bishop James Quinn asked her to accompany him to make a foundation in Brisbane, Australia. In seeking permission from the Reverend Mother Mary of Mercy Norris, in a letter of November 15, 1840 Vincent wrote that her "wish for a Mission is not the feeling of a moment, but the steady desire of twenty years."[17] Permission was not easily given; it was only granted after an appeal was made to Archbishop Paul Cullen. The mission group finally left aboard the *Donald McKay* from the Liverpool Dock on December 8, 1860, reaching Brisbane on May 10, 1861.

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Mother Vincent in Brisbane

Despite Mother Vincent's strong leadership skills, difficulties lay ahead in Brisbane. O'Donoghue summarizes these as "four great challenges to her individual responsibility and freedom of action" which developed over the course of years: "state domination of education; the vastness, isolation and poverty of pioneering Queensland; Episcopal control; and the threat to the Mercy ideal within her own religious community as well as in the wider society."[18]

She quickly responded to the needs she found there, and although she was deposed as Reverend Mother by Bishop Quinn in 1865, that did not stop her from being instrumental in establishing a network of Mercy schools and social institutions. Surprisingly, her correspondence does not give any evidence of the difficulties with Quinn. While these tensions could have destroyed her foundations or forced another person to withdraw, her "profound spirituality" gave her the strength to persevere. At her death, 26 Mercy schools had 222 sisters with 7000 pupils. A Mercy Training College for teachers had been established in Nudgee, and the secondary school All Hallows was opened fifty years before the state entered that field. "She duplicated in Brisbane the types of social work she had pioneered in Dublin," and organized the beginnings of the Mater in Brisbane as she had in Dublin.[19]

After celebrating her golden jubilee in August 19, 1891, Mother Vincent's health began to fail and she died on March 9, 1892. Hetherington and Smoothy's compilation of her correspondence concludes with a collection of letters of condolence—tributes, actually—written to Mother Vincent's friend Sister Mary Claver Mullany. Mother Mary Walburga Grace, Assistant Reverend Mother at Baggot Street wrote that when the community there received the news of Mother Vincent's death, they gathered in prayer and "felt her spirit near us during our prayers. Her work for God has truly been a glorious one, and she was so humble and holy amidst it all. One cannot but feel Our Divine Lord now gives her the reward of immediate union with him in the Kingdom of His glory."[20]

Sister M. Gonzaga Rafter from Rockhampton wrote, "I wish I could write and let the world know of what the quiet humble looking MV could do in her own easy way. Twenty years ago, there she was toiling away in Europe for the Australian mission … not a thought of self. Oh, how she did work those days without food or rest and then the lovely sweet face of her in the evening."[21] And Sister M. Benigna Desmond from Townsville wrote, "Nothing struck me more in Mother Vincent than the directness and simplicity with which she went to God and made one do it too.—giving no loophole for the proposed God. .

. . May we all profit by her shining example and follow in her blessed footsteps until we arrive at the desired end."[22] Sister M. Margaret M. Quirke wrote from Stanthorpe, "Her end was like to her life—calm and peace rested on her soul. It was a privilege to be near her. . . . For no one could be near Mother and not learn to love and reverence her."[23] From Mother M. Ignatius Murphy in Albury, "What a life of good works was hers! And then her example as a Religious leading everyone to God—by word and example. The gentle mother, the kind word she found—Is it not wonderful all the ties she formed in God's service after serving such dear ones leaving the old home. You will always feel such a consolation when you have been with MMV to the end."[24] ◆

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Endnotes

[1] See https://stjohns.digication.com/julia_upton_rsm/My_Travels accessed 1/23/16.

[2] Frances Warde, Letter to Sr. Mary Gonzaga O'Brien, 1879, "Descriptions of Catherine by Some Who Knew Her,"p.3. http://www.mercyworld.org/_uploads/_cknw/files/Descriptions%20of%20Catherine-REVISED.pdf. Accessed 2/7/16.

[3] See http://www.mater.org.au/Home/About/Environmental-sustainability accessed 1/23/16.

[4] See *All Hallows' School Report 2014* (https://www.ahs.qld.edu.au/images/stories/2014%20School%20Report%20inc%20Next%20Step%20150901.pdf) accessed 1/23/16.

[5] The All Hallows' Story (https://www.ahs.qld.edu.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=100&Itemid=122) accessed 1/23/16.

[6] See https://www.ahs.qld.edu.au/images/stories/2014%20School%20Report%20inc%20Next%20Step%20150901.pdf. accessed 1/23/16.

[7] Mary C. Sullivan, *Catherine McAuley and the Tradition of Mercy* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 235-246. Hereafter *CMcATM.*

[8] Robert F. Taft, S.J., "*Worship* at Ninety: The Journal and the Worship It Studies," *Worship* 90 (January 2016): 28-44; here 31.

[9] Sullivan, *CMcATM,* 384-5 (n. 7).

[10] Anne Hetherington and Pauline Smoothy, eds., *The Correspondence of Mother Vincent Whitty 1839-1892* (St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 2011), 12. Hereafter cited as *Correspondence*.

[11] Founded in 1795, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth is the National Catholic Seminary of Ireland.

[12] Frances O'Donoghue, *Mother Vincent Whitty: Woman and Educator in a Masculine Society* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1972), 6-7. Hereafter cited as *MVW*.

[13] Frances O'Donoghue, *Beyond Our Dreams: A Century of the Works of Mercy in Queensland* (Brisbane: Jacaranda Press, 1961), 1.
[14] O'Donoghue, *MVW*, 16.
[15] Ibid., 17.
[16] Sullivan, *CMcATM,* 236-237.
[17] *Correspondence*, 118.
[18] O'Donoghue, *MVW*, 2.
[19] Eileen M. O'Donoghue, "Whitty, Ellen (1819-1892)," *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University. http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/whitty-ellen-4845. accessed 1/24/16.
[20] *Correspondence*, 355.
[21] Ibid., 358.
[22] Ibid., 362.
[23] Ibid., 368.
[24] Ibid., 372.

Mary Cecilia Maher: The Foundation in Auckland, New Zealand

Marcienne Kirk, R.S.M. and dePazzi Hudner, R.S.M.

Ellen Maher, later Sister Mary Cecilia, was born in Freshford, County Kilkenny, Ireland, on September 13, 1799. Her father, John Maher, was a prosperous farmer of the district. Her mother died young and there is little information about her.

Early in life, Ellen felt God's call to be a religious sister, but she remained with her father after her mother's death. When John Maher remarried, Ellen sacrificed her longings in order to help bring up the five children of this marriage. She was 39 years old by the time she felt free to enter religion. Her family loved her deeply, especially since their deceased mother had been extremely strict with them. Later, her sister Jane, who became Sister M. Pauline, described Ellen as *a mother to them*. (Four of her step-sisters later became Sisters of Mercy. Two, Fanny and Jane, went to America.)

Ellen and her half-sister, Eliza, entered St. Leo's Convent of Mercy, Carlow, on September 8, 1838. The Superior and Novice Mistress there was Mother Frances Xavier Warde, their cousin. She was to have a strong influence on Cecilia, especially in her spiritual formation. Mother Frances was probably the person closest to Mother Catherine McAuley, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy, and is clearly the link between Mother Catherine and Ellen Maher.

Ellen Maher, now Sister Mary Cecilia took her religious vows on January 8, 1840, and such was her maturity – she was 41 years old – that Mother Frances appointed her Novice Mistress in 1842. The following year, Cecilia succeeded Frances as Superior of the Carlow Community. She and her community had already been approached by Bishop Jean Baptiste Francois Pompallier, Vicar Apostolic of Western Oceania, and first Catholic Bishop of Auckland, who was looking for Sisters to work on his New Zealand mission. Cecilia felt a call to go on this mission.

After much prayer and consideration, Cecilia volunteered. At first she encountered opposition from the local bishop, Bishop Haly, and from sisters in her community. Finally, they affirmed her call to work in New Zealand. Cecilia and six others formed the group that left Carlow on August 8, 1849. The others were Sisters Mary Xavier Franklin, Mary Philomena Dwyer, Mary Aloysius Devereux, Mary Brigid Maher,[1] Mary Josephine Slattery, and Mary Catherine Hughes. They were joined by a postulant in Dublin who became Sister Mary Liguori Taylor, and another in Sydney. In all, nine Sisters of Mercy eventually arrived in Auckland.[2]

In a letter to Carlow at another stage of the voyage, Mother Cecilia wrote: "I do not know how anyone could undertake such a journey except for God."

The Journey

One of these, Sister Mary Philomena, kept a diary of the long voyage to Auckland. This tiny, hand-written, very delicate journal recorded the hardships and the joys of the voyage which ended on April 8, 1850 in Auckland, New Zealand. In a letter to Carlow in 1849, Mother Cecilia described one of their prayer times with the Bishop. "Fancy us, seated around the Bishop, with a beautiful sky spangled with stars above, the splendid sea rolling beneath, the fine ship with its sails unfurled … he says a short fervent prayer and tells us some of his adventures." [3]

In a letter to Carlow at another stage of the voyage, Mother Cecilia wrote: "I do not know how anyone could undertake such a journey except for God." [4] Some of the time on board was spent learning the customs of the Maori and their language from Bishop Pompallier. At least three of the Sisters eventually became fluent in the language.

Establishing the Mission

Pompallier's appeal to the Sisters of Mercy had been to help the Maori people of his diocese, and from the beginning, Mother Cecilia and her Sisters related well to them. However, the needs of the European settlers were also great. Once they had settled into St Patrick's Convent, the Sisters immediately launched into teaching, giving religious instruction, caring for orphans and visiting the sick and imprisoned. In the years that followed, Mother Cecilia participated in all of these works, as well as holding the offices of Superior and Novice Mistress for much of the time. She was kind, compassionate and firm, leading the way and never asking of others what she had not undertaken herself. Gauged by the life-expectancy of those days, she was an elderly woman when she came to Auckland. Even at that, she labored as hard and as consistently as the younger members until her health started to decline.

Often there were few sisters, and scarce financial resources, but she maintained an extraordinary level of faith in God, a cheerfulness and optimism that were remarkable.

She had the ability to inspire others to carry out enterprises of great difficulty and personal challenge. She was an astute business woman and enjoyed good relationships with the officials of the colony, as well as most of the clerics. She was responsible, as time went on, for the building of St Mary's Convent in Ponsonby which became the Motherhouse of the Sisters of Mercy in Auckland. She founded the school on the same site, St Mary's College. She founded new branches, convents and schools–to Parnell in 1862, [5] to Onehunga in 1864, to Otahuhu in 1866,[6] and to Thames in 1874. [7] The excellence of these schools had a beneficial influence on the development of the colony.

She established a refuge where Maori women could stay when they came to the city. She allowed Maori girls and orphans to live in the Convent. She frequently expressed her admiration for their intelligence, prayerfulness and courage, and was full of hope that they would become fervent and dedicated to their faith. The outbreak of the Land Wars between Europeans and Maori in the 1860s, however, drove most of the Maori away from the centers of European settlement. Afterwards, the Sisters had much less contact with them. At the same time, their commitment to the European settlers steadily increased.

Community Relationships

Mother Cecilia's relationships with the Sisters were characterized by great warmth and affection. Her heart was wrung by the early deaths of so many of them, and by the frailty of others. She nursed the sick herself and stayed at their bedside until death claimed them. She could be firm and demanding of her young companions, but never harsh or condemnatory.

She helped her sisters make the most of the poor convents they lived in, and to bear up under the hard unrelenting work they undertook. She never ceased to raise their spirits by her own example and to inspire them with the reasons they'd become Sisters of Mercy. Often there were few sisters, and scarce financial resources, but she maintained an extraordinary level of faith in God, a cheerfulness and optimism that were remarkable. An example of this is the building of St Mary's Convent, Ponsonby, in 1861, which was undertaken at a time of political unrest.

Writing to Carlow in 1864 she expresses her trust in God, "We are very uneasy here about the war, but we are in the hands of our Heavenly Savior and of our dearest Mother Mary. Our beloved and excellent Bishop is increasing his efforts to promote peace. Pray for us and remember us at the altar of God." (St Mary's Convent. 1864).[8]

Her relationships with Bishop Pompallier and later, Bishop Croke, were professional yet warm. Both bishops appreciated her talents. They respected her as a leader, who at the same time could yet be guided by the expertise of others. She missed Pompallier deeply

after his resignation and return to France in 1869, but she accepted Croke with sincere good will. His letters to her, like Pompallier's, express his true and mutual respect for her.

The Decision-Maker

As Superior, Mother Cecilia was the chief decision-maker for the Auckland Congregation. She was in office from 1850 to 1867, and again from 1870 to 1878, the year of her death. This long stretch of office was not really her choice. The community lacked experienced professed Sisters, and Philomena Dwyer, who had been designated as Cecilia's assistant and eventual successor, was chronically ill. Under these circumstances, Mother Cecilia remained the constant figure in leadership in the Congregation, but her letters reveal that she would have most willingly relinquished that position.

They respected her as a leader, who at the same time could yet be guided by the expertise of others.

As Mistress of Novices, Cecilia was responsible for the spiritual training of the young Sisters. She did not write very often about this explicitly, but her own spiritual strength is evident in her letters, and must have been communicated daily to the novices. The achievements of the Sisters were a result of her training and personal inspiration. What holiness she also inspired and encouraged can only be conjectured. She carried herself with dignity and composure in all sorts of company, from the Governor and Bishop down to the condemned prisoner. She was gracious, kind and deeply interested in all the people she encountered. Her compassion found excuses for others' failings, but she was very strict about her own.

Last Days

Mother Cecilia's health declined noticeably during her last term of office. She became very stooped and her eyesight began to fail. Her final illness was aggravated by her determination not to disappoint the Sisters and children by failing to appear at an end-of-school-year pageant. She enjoyed the production but caught a severe chill. The illness that followed led to her death. She died in the community room of St Mary's Convent, surrounded by her Sisters, most of them her spiritual "children." "Each of us," wrote Sister Mary Borgia Tyrrell, "had the happiness of receiving a parting word of advice from her." [9]

In the letter Cecilia wrote to her community at Carlow before she left for New Zealand, she had said, "Though separated entirely, our hearts will all be united, and after this dream of life, we shall, please God, meet–from Pittsburgh, Ireland, New Zealand–we shall be together, please God, in Heaven." [10] After her death, the "Act of Consecration" she composed was found among her papers:

> Adorable Trinity, I offer you my heart in thanksgiving for my creation, preservation and redemption. For my baptism and my vocation, for all the graces of my life, O my God. I ask of You pardon of my sins, grace for all I love, and a great love of God. May I come to You in peace and happiness at the hour of my death. Amen.[11]

Mother Cecilia's "dream of life" ended far from her Irish home, but she had fulfilled a greater dream. In her life and works in Auckland, New Zealand, she had made a major contribution to the development of her adopted country, to the universal Church, and to her beloved Congregation of Sisters of Mercy. "I fear you will think me sorrowful. No! No! I am generally at our beautiful Convent, St Mary's, amongst evergreens, flowers, a splendid view of harbor, sea and city, two oratories before the front of the Convent, cemetery a little behind, such a nice Church–so what should make me sad? Our Divine Lord is in his tabernacle!" [12] (St Mary's Convent. 1878).

Mother Cecilia's Legacy

In the years following Mother Cecilia's death, the Sisters of Mercy continued her works. In 1896 an urgent request for assistance was made by the Coromandel Hospital Board for assistance.[13] Two Sisters started work immediately, followed later by others. One of Mother Cecilia's greatest dreams had been to establish a hospital. This dream was realized

by the founding of the Mater Misericordiae Hospital in Epsom, Auckland in 1900. In one of her letters to Ireland, Mother Cecilia had commented that some of the Sisters were not suited to teaching and that this nursing apostolate was one that she dearly wanted to establish.

In 1927 Mother Josephine Kenny, Mother Superior of the Auckland Community–another Irish Sister of Mercy–felt a call to renew the mission to the Maori People. She was responsible for setting up a convent and school in the isolated Maori community of Pawarenga in the far North of the North Island. Although the Sisters left in 1990, this continues to be a flourishing Mercy institution.

As the city of Auckland grew, so too did the need for Catholic Schools. Mother Cecilia Maher's successors were active in working with the Bishops of Auckland to establish convents and diocesan schools in the suburbs of the city and its environs. By 2015 there were twenty-two primary schools and three colleges in Auckland inspired by the Mercy charism.

In 1972 the Sisters of Mercy (Auckland) established Paul VI College and Clinic in Apia, Samoa. In subsequent years a group of Samoan women joined the Auckland Congregation to work in the ministries of education and childcare.

In response to a request from Bishop Viard of Wellington, Mother Cecilia Maher had appointed Mother Bernard Dickson (a veteran of nursing in the Crimean War), Sister Mary Augustine Maxwell and Sister Marie Deloncle, a French postulant, to establish St. Mary's Convent in Wellington in 1861. In subsequent years, Mercy Foundations were set up in the other main centers in New Zealand. Mother Mary Clare Molony and associates went to Christ Church in 1878, and Mother Mary Kostka Kirby with her group went to Dunedin in the same year.

In subsequent years a group of Samoan women joined the Auckland Congregation to work in the ministries of education and childcare.

Mercy Today

The work that was started in 1850 in Auckland, New Zealand, by Mother Cecilia Maher and her Sisters continues in many diverse areas-- in hospitals, hospices, aged-care facilities, and in care centers for disadvantaged women and children. Increasingly, the environment and social justice are areas of active concern for the Sisters and their Associates. In all of these ministries the inspiration of Mother Cecilia is still evident.

Mother Cecilia and those who established the Mercy Foundation in New Zealand in 1850 were responding to a need. So too do the Sisters and their associates today respond to the changing needs of the 21st century.

Reflection

Almost twenty years passed between the foundation of the Sisters of Mercy in Dublin, 1831, and the establishment of the Sisters of Mercy in Auckland in 1850. The more I reflect on the two foundresses, the more I am impressed by the likenesses between them.

Both came from the Irish upper-middle class, were well-educated, cultured and deeply spiritual women. Both spent years caring for family, and in Catherine's case, foster parents, before becoming Religious. They were both mature women when they embarked on novitiate training. Their love of the poor and underprivileged led them to devote themselves to apostolates in which education and social concern played significant parts, but which allowed for flexibility and adaptation to the needs of the time and place.

Their vital missionary spirit led them to make new foundations at an age when most women would consider retiring. They both attracted young women of talent and holiness prepared to make great personal sacrifices to extend Mercy to those in need. Their long-held positions of Mistress of Novices and Superior enabled them to guide in a unique way the Sisters who would take the Mercy apostolate into the

future. Through numerous letters to their Sisters, they kept the bonds of love and service strong and vibrant.

Death came to both Mother Catherine and Mother Cecilia when their work was still only beginning. Such was their trust in God's providence and Mary's protection that they never doubted the durability of their legacy of Mercy.

The Old St. Mary's Chapel in Ponsonby, Auckland was opened in 1866 to serve the Sisters, community, parish and school. 150 years later, it is still a spiritual center for the Sisters, and for past and present pupils of St. Mary's College. It is a constant reminder of the vision of Mother Cecilia Maher and the founding Sisters.◆

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Endnotes

[1] Sister Brigid Maher was no relation to Mother Cecilia Maher.

[2] The postulant from Sydney, Australia, Miss Connolly, did not persevere.

[3] Archives in Auckland.

[4] Archives in Auckland.

[5] Parnell was a small suburb of Auckland.

[6] Onehunga and Otahuhu were further south and known as Fencible settlements, that is, they had a defensive force who were part-time settlers.

[7] Thames was a gold mining town 45 miles from Auckland where a considerable number of miners were Irish and Catholic. In 1874 Mother Cecilia set up a convent dedicated to St Thomas Aquinas so that the Sisters could teach in the school. The journey involved a day's travel by boat down the coast and a trip across land by coach so that it was quite an intensive undertaking for Mother Cecilia.

[8] Mother Cecilia Maher's letter to the Carlow Community in 1864.

[9] Memoir of Mother Cecilia Maher by Mother Borgia Tyrrell. (circa 1880)

[10] Archives in Auckland.

[11] Adapted from the Original.

[12] St. Mary's Convent, 1878.

[13] Coromandel was another of the early gold mining towns on the isolated east coast of the North Island of New Zealand.

Mother Clare Augustine Moore: The Artist and the Foundress[1]

Mary Kay Dobrovolny, R.S.M.

In some respects, Clare Augustine Moore is an unusual choice for an issue entitled "Go Out to All the World." This woman was born and raised in Dublin, Ireland; entered the Sisters of Mercy at Baggot Street in Dublin; and spent all of her ministerial career in Dublin apart from three years in Cork. Yet Clare Augustine has left Mercy tradition with a wonderful legacy both through her writing and through her art, especially her illuminations. Her writing is foundational, for she was the first to begin writing a biography of Catherine, "Memoir of the Foundress of the Sisters of Mercy in Ireland."[2] Her art and her biography of Catherine have reached international audiences down the generations of Mercy. She belongs in this collection of stories about Catherine's followers who carried the charism of Mercy to the ends of the world.

Biography of Clare Augustine Moore

Clare Augustine was born on August 1, 1808, the first child of Protestant parents,[3] George and Catherine. They named her Mary Clare Moore. She had at least two siblings: a sister and a brother. The date of her brother's birth is unknown, but her sister Georgiana was born on March 20, 1814, when Mary Clare was five and a half years old.

When Mary Clare was nine, her father died (1817). Six years later (1823), her mother converted to Catholicism along with the children.[4] In September 1828, Mary Clare's younger sister Georgiana (aged 14) became the governess to Catherine McAuley's 9 year-old niece Catherine, and Catherine's 7 year-old cousin and god-child Teresa Byrn. Young Georgiana was proficient in reading French and Latin. We do not know how either Mary Clare or Georgiana were educated, or how Mary Clare developed her talent for art.

Her art and her biography of Catherine have reached international audiences down the generations of Mercy.

Mary Clare met Catherine McAuley in 1829. Years later, reflecting on her first meeting of Catherine, Mary Clare provided a detailed account of Catherine. Here is an excerpt, focused on a description of her eyes:

> Her eyes were light blue and remarkably round with the brows and lashes colorless but they spoke. In repose they had a melancholy beseeching look; then it would light up expressive of really hearty fun, or if she disapproved of anything they could tell that too. Sometimes they had that strange expression of reading your thoughts, which made you feel that even your mind was in her power, and that you could not hide anything from her.[5]

Blood Sisters Take Each Other's Names in Religion

There is a gap in what we know of Mary Clare's life from this first meeting of Catherine until her entrance into the Sisters of Mercy eight and a half years later (August 8, 1837). In the intervening years, Mary Clare's sister Georgiana remained at Baggot Street while Catherine, Anna Maria Doyle and Elizabeth Harley were in the novitiate at George's Hill. Her sister Georgiana, along with six others, were "the first flock" received into the Sisters of Mercy on January 23, 1832. After Georgiana entered the Sisters of Mercy, the women's names get confusing. Georgiana takes her sister's name – Mary Clare Moore – to be her name in religion. When Mary Clare entered the Sisters of Mercy, she took the name Clare Augustine Moore, but Catherine and her sister frequently called her Sister Mary Clare. Fortunately, the two sisters' lives were quite diverse, so it is

generally easy to discern, when Sister Mary Clare is mentioned, which blood sister is intended.

At the time that Mary Clare, now Clare Augustine, entered the Sisters of Mercy, her younger sister Georgiana, now Clare, had already gone to Cork as the first superior of this foundation. For the majority of their lives, the two blood sisters lived in separate cities, with Clare (Georgiana) ministering in Cork, Bermondsey and the Crimea, while Clare Augustine remained almost exclusively in Dublin. The only time they lived in the same city was the year of Catherine McAuley's death – 1841 – when for six months they both lived in Cork.

Within Catherine's life-time, Clare Augustine was fully engaged in the ministerial endeavors of the Mercy community – ministering to the sick poor in Dublin and teaching in a school in Cork. In hours of recreation and during lectures, Clare Augustine worked on the First Register of the Baggot Street community, and a few other artistic projects.[6]

Clare Augustine's Artistic Work

After Catherine's death, Clare Augustine was given more time and material resources to engage in her art, while she continued to be involved in additional ministries. These included teaching women who were completing prison sentences how to paint on china, so that they would have a skill and source of income.

By 1854, Clare Augustine had acquired renown as an artist. In that year, the Bishops of Ireland asked her to illuminate an address to Pope Pius IX, congratulating him on the decree of the Immaculate Conception.[7] After her death in 1880, Mercy historians recognized that Clare Augustine was unparalleled in her talent for art.[8] Art talent not-with-standing, Clare Augustine is more frequently mentioned by historians for her un-illuminated biography of Catherine than for her art. This "Memoir of the Foundress of the Sisters of Mercy in Ireland" was the first biography of Catherine, and was written over a twenty-year period from 1844 until 1864 or later. Its sources are reminiscences and letters which Clare Augustine solicited from Catherine's friends, relatives, and fellow sisters.

Art talent not-with-standing, Clare Augustine is more frequently mentioned by historians for her un-illuminated biography of Catherine than for her art. This "Memoir of the Foundress of the Sisters of Mercy in Ireland" was the first biography of Catherine, and was written over a twenty-year period from 1844 until 1864 or later.

Relationship with Catherine McAuley

Clare Augustine's relationship with Catherine is interesting, because Catherine is critical of Clare Augustine, while Clare Augustine admires Catherine. Most of Catherine's opinions about Clare Augustine come from Catherine's letters to her friend and confidante Frances Warde, who at the time of the letter writing was the superior of the Mercy house in Carlow. In Catherine's letters over a three-year period, we see that she is frustrated by the slow progress of Clare Augustine's artistic work. Catherine views Clare Augustine to be strong-willed, a person who does not bend to the wishes and desires of others. Catherine is only moderately patient with Clare Augustine's tendency to expound on points of artistic style. Some examples of these sentiments:

- During her novitiate period, Clare Augustine was asked to do some work on the Carlow Register. In late February to March, 1838, Catherine wrote to Frances Warde:

> The Register ordered by Revd. Mr. Maher has been here two months, waiting for Sister Moore who prints beautifully in every type to write the title page. She has been constantly employed, and now Bazaar work engages all their time. I

> constantly spoke of your book – for a long time, indeed, a cut finger prevented her.[9]

In this example, Catherine recognizes Clare Augustine's talent. She also acknowledges that the artistic project is not Clare Augustine's sole pursuit. We hear impatience, "I constantly spoke of your book." There may also be some sarcasm as Catherine mentions Clare Augustine's cut finger. For those of us who have examined the intricate detail of Clare Augustine's work, we can appreciate how a cut finger might interfere with the exactness demanded by Clare Augustine's task, and how she might be reluctant to do work she didn't consider her best on the Carlow Register. If this was Catherine's only comment on Clare Augustine's slowness, then we could conclude that Catherine was legitimately providing an excuse for the inattention Carlow's register has received. But it was not her only comment.

- Within the same month, in another letter to Frances, Catherine wrote:

> She [Cecilia Marmion] would have printed your Register long since – but knowing there was one could do it more fancifully, she was quite anxious to get it done so. *That one* [Clare Augustine] has more of her own ways yet than of ours – and it is not very easy to fix her to a point. She finds the duties sufficient to fill up her time, and as her constitution is strong, she is much employed in outdoor work. Sister Cecilia will bring our Register and print for you Friday, Saturday & Sunday.[10]

In this letter, Catherine's frustration with Clare Augustine is much more evident: "*That one* has more of her own ways yet than of ours – and it is not very easy to fix her to a point." Ouch! Admittedly, the twenty-nine-year-old Clare Augustine had only been in the community for seven months, and she hasn't professed vows. Thus, she is early in her commitment, still trying to learn the ways of vowed religious life. Yet I hope my community leader never had cause to say that of me when I was in the novitiate! If I'm honest, likely she did, so here too we can "forgive" Catherine of her impatience and frustration with the learning curve for a new member.

On the positive side, Catherine recognizes that Clare Augustine is contributing to other work, saying "she is much employed in outdoor work." This "outdoor work" is likely the visitation of the sick poor.[11] Still, Catherine's frustration and impatience are palpable. Catherine has given up waiting for Clare Augustine to finish this task, and has handed on the project to Cecilia Marmion, whom she trusts to complete the work in a timely fashion.

- A year later, while Clare Augustine continues her novitiate, Catherine wrote in another letter to Frances:

> The invitation is very nicely done. I think the printing remarkably good. The *Judge* thinks the etching would be exceedingly good if not so heavy, which she says gives it the appearance of a print – but I do not mind half what she says on these scientific points, which she delights in unfolding to the fools that will hearken to her. She will do anything in the Register you wish, but what is mentioned. She calls three weeks' work – and she could not give that time until the bazaar is over. She is very slow.[12]

Catherine seems quite impatient with Clare Augustine's personality as well as the progress of her work.

- Probably the most telling example of Catherine's impatience comes in her letter to Frances dated March 5, 1841:

> Sr. Mary Clare Moore is a character – not suited to my taste or my ability to govern –

> though possessing many very estimable points. She teased and perplexed me so much about the difficulty of copying the two pages, that I was really obliged to give up – unwilling to command lest it should produce disedifying consequences. She said it would take the entire Lent – indeed you can have no idea how little she does in a week – as to a day's work, it is laughable to look at it. She will shew me 3 leaves, saying, I finished these today – 3 rose or lily leaves.[13]

Strong words – "a character not suited to my taste or ability to govern...." Likely there was one instance when Catherine's impatience was expressed directly to Clare Augustine, and in the presence of others. Clare Augustine's sister Clare describes an incident with a sister who likely was her own blood sister Clare Augustine:

> [Catherine] had spoken, as she thought, rather sharply to [a sister], and a few hours after she went to the Sister and asked her did she remember who had been present at the time.... they were summoned, and when all assembled our dear Reverend Mother humbly knelt down, and begged her forgiveness for the manner in which she had spoken to her that morning.[14]

Those of us who have been privy to Catherine's inner thoughts and feelings expressed to her good friend and confidante Frances Warde know that Catherine struggled to be patient and tolerant of Clare Augustine. Catherine, though, monitored these attitudes and sought to treat Clare Augustine with respect and regard. On one occasion, when her frustration got the better of her and she expressed her exasperation, Catherine was quick to rectify the situation and publicly showed her regret and sought forgiveness. In this way, Catherine embodies the words she wrote to Elizabeth Moore reflecting on the founding of the Sisters of Mercy, "One thing is remarkable, that no breach of Charity ever occurred amongst us. The sun never, I believe, went down on our anger."[15]

The story suggests that Clare Augustine wants to present herself in good light, but the telling reveals an ironic deviation from that picture.

Clare Augustine's View of Catherine

It seems that Catherine was rather successful in hiding her impatience and frustration from Clare Augustine and others. In Clare Augustine's biography of Catherine, we see only Clare Augustine's admiration of the woman she calls "the Foundress." In addition, we get a window into Clare Augustine's perception of her own relationship with Catherine. Clare Augustine portrays herself as a confidante of Catherine, and gives the impression that she is someone with whom Catherine genuinely enjoyed spending time. Clare Augustine never reveals any tension in their relationship.

In terms of Clare Augustine's admiration of Catherine, she portrays Catherine as a woman with many positive qualities:

- "who was always inclined to look at the sunny side of things and show it to others;"[16]
- who treated all in the community as valued decision-makers: "the business of the convent was talked of as freely as if it were a Chapter of Discreets. She was with us precisely as my own mother was with her family, or rather we used less ceremony than was used at home;"[17]
- who loved her sisters: "I believe the greatest trial of all to her were the frequent deaths of the Sisters.... she never saw the approach of a Sister's death or spoke of one who had died without great emotion. She had a really tender affection for us."[18]
- who was patient and indulgent of trials and the wrong-doing of others: "She endured ingratitude and even insolence so sweetly that those who behaved ill towards her never felt they were doing wrong."[19]

As we review Clare Augustine's portrayal of her relationship with Catherine, it appears that Clare Augustine was not aware of Catherine's impatience with her. Clare Augustine remarks that Catherine "moved about the room" during recreation but that she herself "had a trick for keeping her." She says, "[Catherine] liked to look at me drawing or working and I always contrived an empty chair I could reach without standing up and by drawing it to her I have often got her to sit half an hour at the end of the table."[20]

Clare Augustine also presents herself as Catherine's occasional confidante. For example, when Catherine is struggling with the wayward conduct of her nephews, Clare Augustine says, "[H]ow much she grieved for their errors few knew so well as I."[21] Catherine sought Clare Augustine's advice when a sister in the community became melancholy, not only asking Clare Augustine what ailed this sister, but also following the advice Clare Augustine gave her to indulge the sister with her need for more private attention from Catherine.

Was There a Breach of Trust?

Clare Augustine's admiring portrayal of her relationship with Catherine is a contrast with the critical tone of Catherine's private confidences to her friend Frances Warde. In her biography of the Foundress, Clare Augustine seems oblivious to Catherine's impatience with her temperament and the pace of her work.

There is one story that makes me suspicious of Clare Augustine's self presentation as a person Catherine held in favor. The story suggests that Clare Augustine wants to present herself in good light, but the telling reveals an ironic deviation from that picture. In the second to last paragraph of the biography, Clare Augustine portrays herself as virtuous and unwilling to "approve of a breach of trust under any circumstance." However, she divulges the details of a story which, contrary to her self-presentation, constitutes a breach of trust. Here's the story:

> Revd. Mother then called [Teresa Carton] back to her bedside and showing her a packet she had wrapped in the brown paper and tied up most curiously told her she was to go to the kitchen, stir up the fire, and when it blazed strong to put the parcel in it and turning her back to it remain till it was quite consumed, "but", she continued, "I forbid you under obedience to attempt to open this parcel or look at it while it is burning." The Sister did not stir. ... Revd. Mother then said, "Would you be afraid, dear?" "Oh, Revd. Mother, I would be afraid I might look." "Well, call Sister M. Vincent." Sr. M. Vincent [Whitty] was awakened, came down and received the same injunction and solemn prohibition, with the further direction that when she put the parcel in the fire she was to draw red coals over it. She burned the parcel but disobeyed that prohibition. She hinted to me of a haircloth, but as I could not approve of a breach of trust under any circumstance, asked her no questions. She told Fr. Vincent, the Passionist, she saw a discipline. However that be, she returned to the infirmary, was asked if she had done as she was required, answered in the affirmative, and received the thanks of her dying Superior.[22]

It seems likely that Clare Augustine was aware of times when her beloved Foundress looked upon her with disapproving eyes. And yet, Clare Augustine's bond of love, affection and admiration of Catherine seems genuine and strong.

Clare Augustine's choice to include this story with more detail than other accounts of Catherine's final day is curious. One who could not ask any questions, as she could not approve of a breach of trust under any circumstance, chose to publish the full detail of the breach of trust and the offending person's lie about it to their beloved dying Foundress. Clare Augustine seems intent on portraying herself as virtuous, but the inclusion of the detail of the story is not quite so virtuous.

This makes me suspicious. If Clare Augustine wanted readers to believe she was the one with whom Catherine most wanted to spend time at recreation, then she likely would not have revealed the story. She might have said, "I cannot reveal what I heard, because our Foundress trusted me, and I cannot betray that trust." On the other hand, the details about Catherine's final requests, which no one else would report, seemed too significant for Clare Augustine to conceal. As expression of her commitment and loyalty, she portrays herself in a good light, and in a close relationship with her beloved Foundress.

We can return to Clare Augustine's earlier description of Catherine's eyes -- "if she disproved of anything they could tell that too." It seems likely that Clare Augustine was aware of times when her beloved Foundress looked upon her with disapproving eyes. And yet, Clare Augustine's bond of love, affection and admiration of Catherine seems genuine and strong. "One thing is remarkable, that no breach of Charity ever occurred amongst us. The sun never, I believe, went down on our anger." May we all be able to say the same, even when tested with personalities not suited to our tastes.◆

Endnote

[1] Parts of this article were presented at the Anglo-Irish Mercy Archives Conference (Dublin: Mercy International Centre, July 2015).

[2] More commonly known as "Dublin Manuscript." Full text found in Mary C. Sullivan R.S.M., *Catherine McAuley and the Tradition of Mercy* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 193-216. Hereafter cited as *CMcATM*.

[3] Mary Austin Carroll, *Leaves of the Annals of the Sisters of Mercy. Volume 2: Containing Sketches of the Order in England, at the Crimea, in Scotland, Australia and New Zealand* (New York: Catholic Publication Society, 1883), 2:37.

[4] *Ibid*. Clare Augustine in her letter to Mary Camillus Dempsey indicates that her sister Georgiana was Protestant until age 9. Letter in Mary C. Sullivan, ed., *The Friendship of Florence Nightingale and Mary Clare Moore* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 27-28.

[5] Sullivan, *CMcATM* 7.

[6] *Ibid*., 193.

[7] Mary Nathy O'Hara RSM, *Catherine McAuley, Mercy Foundress* (Dublin: Veritas, 1979), 26.

[8] Mary Austin Carroll (1835-1909) named Moore the finest illuminator in Europe of her time (*Leaves of the Annals of the Sisters of Mercy. Volume I: Ireland* [New York: Catholic Publication Society, 1881], 229); and Mary Nathy O'Hara (1902-1990) called her "an artist of much merit" (*Mercy Foundress*, 26).

[9] Mary C. Sullivan, editor, *The Correspondence of Catherine McAuley 1818-1841* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2004), 126-127. Hereafter cited as *CCMcA*.

[10] Letter dated March 13, 1838; *Ibid*., 128.

[11] *Ibid*., 127, n. 40.

[12] Letter dated January 25-27, 1839; *Ibid*., 182.

[13] *Ibid*., 368.

[14] Sullivan, Bermondsey Manuscript, *CMcATM*, 119.

[15] Letter dated January 13, 1839; Sullivan, *CCMcA*, 180.

[16] Sullivan, *CMcATM*, 201.

[17] *Ibid*., 206.

[18] *Ibid*., 209.

[19] *Ibid*., 211.

[20] *Ibid*., 206.

[21] *Ibid*., 211.

[22] *Ibid*., 216.

Sister Dolorosa Waldron: From Dublin to Kenya

Grace Leggio Agate, R.S.M.

Why would a fifty-eight-year-old Sister of Mercy leave her home and beloved hospital ministry in Dublin in 1956 to go to Kenya-- a country she didn't know, whose language, Swahili[1], she had never heard, and didn't speak? Why does any Sister of Mercy leave behind one beloved ministry to go to another one that's unknown? *Hurumu* – Mercy, *Huruma* – Compassion, *Ukarimu* – Hospitality. These impulses lead us to people and places beyond our knowing, but we go. "We have one solid comfort amidst this tripping about, our hearts can always be in the same place, centered in God, for whom alone we go forward or stay back."[2]

Dolorosa Waldron, Foundress of the Sisters of Mercy in Kenya, centered in God, moved forward with three companions to become the first Sisters of Mercy to relieve the suffering of those on the margins-- the sick poor and uneducated girls. As Pope Francis has said, "Mercy: the fundamental law that dwells in the heart of every person who looks sincerely into the eyes of … brothers and sisters on the path of life."[3] Dolorosa has been described as a woman "who had a big heart, great vision and courage."[4] She showed care of her sisters by insisting they enjoy a yearly vacation. She also arranged their return home to Ireland every five years. She enjoyed cooking and shared her culinary delights with her sisters, often sending cakes to celebrate feast days. She had great devotion to the Infant of Prague, and it was to him she turned when burdened with financial difficulties.[5]

Dolorosa has been described as a woman "who had a big heart, great vision and courage."

***Habari* – Hello**

"Hurray for foundations, makes the old young and the young merry."[6] This quote came to mind as I sat at a feast-day meal listening to accents of Ireland and Kenya, along with my own Brooklyn accent added to the mix. As I looked at my sisters I thought that Catherine McAuley would be proud. It was September 24, 2012 and I was celebrating the feast of Our Lady of Mercy at the Villa Maria, Nairobi, Kenya. Before we sat down to the feast we sang Catherine's Suscipe. It was quite a moving experience. How did we come to meet at this table of Mercy?

***Mwaliko* – Invitation**

Dolorosa has been described as a woman "who had a big heart, great vision and courage."[7] I had been invited by Fr. Nicholas Onyack, a member of the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope and a native Kenyan, to train leaders in two of the parishes staffed by the community in a version of the At Home Retreat I was doing as a Pastoral Associate at Mary Immaculate Parish in Bellport, New York. Fr. Nick had been coming to the parish for many summers and knew the effect the retreat had on parishioners. After prayerful consideration and the clearing of parish responsibilities with the pastor, I would be able to leave and spend twenty-five days in Kenya. A month before leaving for Kenya, I contacted the Mercy Provincial there, Sister Liz Fletcher, explaining that I would be visiting Kenya. I asked that if it were possible, I would like to visit the community there. She suggested that I contact her when I arrived in Kenya.

Why They Went to Kenya

I began to wonder how and why the Sisters of Mercy first went to Kenya. I learned that they went in1956 at the invitation of the Archbishop of Nairobi at the time, Dr. J. J. McCarthy, C.S.S.P. Knowing that the Sisters of Mercy had experience in hospital administration, he wanted the sisters to open a Catholic hospital in Nairobi that would be open to all people. He also wanted young girls to be educated.

Kenya was still a British Colony at that time, but interracial hospitals and education of girls were far from the norm. The invitation from the Archbishop was accepted by Mother M. Imelda Collins, the Dublin Superior General at the time. The four sisters chosen to go to Kenya were from the Carysfort Park community: M. Dolorosa Waldron and Gerard Stack, both nurses, along with Therese Noel and Consolata O'Keefe, both teachers.[7]

My Own Journey to Kenya

Preparing for my own journey to Kenya involved finding flights for my visit, seeking medical advice for the needed shots, learning the basics of Swahili vocabulary, and gathering gifts to give away to all those I would be meeting. Fr. Nick had explained that gift-giving is an expected sign of hospitality. Besides the necessary bug spray and sun screen, I began gathering pencils, pens, markers, post it notes, back-packs, rosaries and scarves. Once gathered, I put the gifts, along with my clothes, into my one and only suitcase.

The first leg of my journey began on Sunday, September 21, 2012. I left from JFK airport in New York at 4:15 p.m. for an eight-hour flight to Amsterdam, arriving there on Monday, September 22 at 6:00 a.m. Due to a plane delay, I did not leave Amsterdam until 2:30 p.m., pushing my arrival time in Nairobi to 10:30 pm. After going through customs, I was met by Fr. Nick and Br. Joseph, and we arrived at their motherhouse at midnight. I spent my first days in Nairobi at the Motherhouse/Seminary of the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope, a young religious community in East Africa. It took me awhile to adjust to the eight-hour time difference, as well as the altitude and the food.

This made me wonder about those first sisters leaving Ireland, and traveling to Kenya. What did they take with them and what was their journey like?

Their Journey

They began their journey on the night of March 6, 1956, leaving Dun Laoghaire for Holyhead. Having made that crossing myself a few years ago, I wondered if their crossing of the Irish Sea was as choppy as mine had been. From Holyhead they traveled by train to London where they boarded *The Warwick Castle* bound for Cape Town, South Africa, via Mombasa. The journey to Mombasa, via the Suez Canal, took twenty-four days. (And I thought the twenty-nine hours I had traveled was a long journey.) Forty-six crates of luggage included almost everything they would need to set up a home and a hospital – blankets, sheets, crockery, light hospital equipment, medicines, fifty First Communion dresses, and a harmonium (a keyboard). as well as each sister's personal luggage. Meeting the sisters in Mombasa on Holy Thursday, March 30, were Holy Ghost Fathers, Irish Loreto Sisters and Dr. Keating, a former medical student of Dolorosa.

We were welcomed by Sr. Liz Fletcher and several of the sisters from the Villa Maria local community. Their Mercy hospitality made me feel immediately at home and the afternoon tea made conversation even warmer.

After attending Holy Thursday services, the sisters stayed overnight with the Loreto community. The next morning, they began their eighteen-hour overnight train ride to Nairobi. Upon their arrival, welcomed by the Archbishop, Dolorosa exclaimed, "We alighted from the train; my heart was nearly in my mouth; it was thumping; we made for His Grace." A storeroom converted into a convent at St. Mary's School in Nairobi was to be the first of many temporary homes.[8]

***Kazi innaanza* – Work Begins**

On my way to Holy Eucharist Parish in Nairobi, where I would begin the first of my three-day workshops, Fr. Nick and I stopped to have a cup of tea with the Sisters of Mercy at Villa Maria in Nairobi. We were welcomed by Sr. Liz Fletcher and several of the sisters from the Villa Maria local community. Their Mercy hospitality made me feel immediately at home and the afternoon tea made conversation even warmer. We made arrangements

that I'd return the next day to celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy.

Once the workshop in Nairobi was completed, Fr. Nick and I began our way to St. John the Apostle in Kisumu where I would present the second workshop. Within two hours of our seven-hour bus ride, the paved roads disappeared and I had the sense that the bus was actually making the road as we traveled. The lush green countryside eventually gave way to dry land with very little vegetation. The absence of trees, ordinarily a source of firewood, only made the land seem more barren. Water was scarce. Any water that I did see was being used not only by humans for drinking and bathing, but by livestock as well. I came face to face with the necessity "to reverence Earth and work more effectively toward the sustainability of life and toward universal recognition of the fundamental right to water."[9] As the bus climbed higher and higher I saw many women sitting by the roadside, usually with young children on their laps. They were all selling the same vegetables with a very short distance between them. Once again my thoughts turned to Catherine McAuley and her emphasis on the education of girls.

I came face to face with the necessity "to reverence Earth and work more effectively toward the sustainability of life and toward universal recognition of the fundamental right to water."

They Educated Girls and Cared for the Sick

On May 5, 1956, Therese and Consolata opened Our Lady of Mercy School with an enrollment of three hundred girls. It was the first all-girls African primary school to open in Nairobi.[10] "To continue to embrace our particular concern for women,"[11] was alive in the actions of Therese and Consolata. In the meantime, Dolorosa and Gerard began tending to the sick poor. On the advice of the Archbishop they began serving the sick by opening mobile clinics.

They had to overcome prejudice and suspicion as the people did not immediately trust the sisters. Was the distrust due to the sisters being *Mzumtu – white person*? As Fr. Nick and I traveled to Kisumu, he warned me that I would be the first white person many of the children had ever met and that some would be afraid of me. This did happen one day when I offered a little boy some candy. Rather than taking the candy, he stared at me and cried. In his eyes I was strange and different.

As Dolorosa and Gerard healed many of the sick children, trust followed. In between clinic work, both sisters taught the women how to sew, just as Catherine McAuley had done in Ireland, so women would have a skill and might be able to work to support themselves and their families. The more the seemed to be. One need gave rise to another. The growth of ministry in Kenya is reminiscent of how Catherine and our early sisters responded to the needs of the poor in Ireland. It became evident that "there is an amount of work here waiting to be done; we could easily have four or five convents – we will not have enough." Sisters traveled from Dublin to Kenya to children for education. Between 1958 and 1968, schools for girls on the primary and the secondary level opened. The Sisters of Mercy Commercial College provided girls marketable secretarial skills, and a women's Teacher Training College prepared women to become educators. [12]

Building a Hospital

As medical care expanded, there a rise in mobile and permanent clinics to better serve the needs of the poor. What of the hospital that was supposed to be established? One of the primary reasons Dolorosa came to Kenya was to set up a multi-racial Catholic hospital in Nairobi. However, she had to wait six years to see the fulfillment of her original purpose. The problem seems to have been lack of communication. The sisters' impression had been that the hospital would be built for them. This, however, was not the understanding of the Archbishop. If a

hospital was going to exist, it would have to be built by the Sisters of Mercy.

While the Archbishop was able to provide some funds (£ 12,500), that was only a fraction of what would be needed to build the hospital, an estimated £275,000. Motivated by the needs of the sick poor, Dolorosa embarked on a campaign to raise the needed funds. Procuring grants and loans, she was able eventually to raise the necessary funds.[13]

Initially, Dolorosa had been given a twenty-five-acre plot by the Archbishop in the Westlands area, an affluent section of Nairobi. When she applied to the planning permission to build a multi-racial hospital in that European area, however, she was initially refused. Nevertheless, eventually the land the Archbishop offered is where the hospital was eventually built. Mater Misericordia Hospital, Nairobi, a sixty bed hospital, was blessed and opened by Archbishop McCarthy on May 5, 1962.[14]

While my purpose in going to Kenya was to train parish leaders, I was given the unexpected gift of meeting my sisters in Kenya who continue the work begun by Catherine McAuley and then Dolorosa Waldron.

As needs continued to grow, so did Dolorosa's response. A free fourteen bed orthopedic ward for poor, physically- disabled children was opened with surgeons donating their services. In November, 1967, Dolorosa traveled to the United States seeking funding. She made history as the first woman to address some church congregations from pulpits in the United States. The needed funds enabled the hospital to open a maternity wing as well as a school of midwifery.[15]

Dolorosa's Death in 1970 and Her Legacy

In July 1968 Dolorosa officially became the first Regional Superior in Kenya. After handing over the administration of the hospital, she began looking for space for what would become the regional office. She purchased the Villa Maria property, which still houses the provincial offices, as well as a local community housed in a separate building. In June 1970 Dolorosa became ill with cancer and had to return to Dublin. She died there on August 14, 1970. Her pioneering spirit of Mercy continues to bear fruit, as I learned when I returned to the Villa my last weekend in Kenya.

During that weekend, Liz took me on an extensive tour. She showed me St. Bakhita Primary School and St. Michael's Secondary School. The buildings were made of tin, and although the schools were closed, I was able to see inside one of the rooms. There were many desks side by side with learning taking place mostly by rote. Illustrations painted on the exterior of the school detailed specific lessons. One of the illustrations was of the kidney, showing in colorful detail all the parts of the kidney. I was also able to see the Mater Hospital building, which celebrated it's fiftieth anniversary while I was in Kenya. It was a thrill to see the sign *Catherine McAuley School of Nursing.* My tour ended with visiting the very first convent of the Sisters of Mercy in East Africa whose cornerstone was laid on September 24, 1958.

We returned to the Villa where I met Sister Maria Ngui and Sister Teresia Njonge, both members of the Provincial Team at that time. Maria is also Director of Nursing at Mater and Teresia is a university professor. In the evening we prayed Evening Prayer using *Morning and Evening Prayer of The Sisters of Mercy.* There I was, praying with my sisters on a continent far from where I live, using the same prayer book I use at home. It brought home to me just how wide, how global we are as Sisters of Mercy. When I pray Morning and Evening prayer now, I remember that I have sisters on other continents who pray with me and I with them.

While my purpose in going to Kenya was to train parish leaders, I was given the unexpected gift of

meeting my sisters in Kenya who continue the work begun by Catherine McAuley and then Dolorosa Waldron.

***Baraka* – Blessing**

Currently, the Mercy Sisters minister in sixteen communities throughout Kenya. Individual dioceses from Ireland set up missions in dioceses there after the first group went out from Dublin in 1956. Now they are united in a single provincial structure. More than two-thirds of the sisters are Kenyan born. Dolorosa left a heritage and her spirit lives on in the Mercy mission. "Enabling people to be self-sufficient, providing for basic health care and helping educate the young population as well as engaging in catechesis and providing training in a number of areas continue as the focus of our diverse works." [16]

Asanti – thank you**.** *Asanti sana* – thank you very much, Dolorosa Waldron. ◆

Endnotes

[1] All Swahili words uses are taken from www.wordhippo.com (accessed 1/13/16).
[2] Mary C. Sullivan, *The Correspondence of Catherine McAuley, 1818-1841. (Dublin. Ireland. Four Corner Press, 2004), 332.* Hereafter cited as *CCMcA*.
[3] Pope Francis, *Misericordiae Vultus*, par. 2.
[4] Patricia Moran, RSM, "Sister M. Dolorosa Waldron"http://www.mercyworld.or/heritage/tmplt-foundresstory.cfm?loadref=193,:8 (accessed 1/13/16).
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] *CCMcA, 343.*
[7] Moran, op.cit.
[8] *Ibid.*
[9] *Critical Concerns* of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Fourth General Chapter, 2005.
[10] Moran, *op. cit*.
[11] *Critical Concerns*
[12] Moran, *op. cit*.
[13] *Ibid.*
[14] *Ibid.*
[15] *Ibid.*
[16] "The Sisters of Mercy in Kenya – Our Story" http://sistersofmercy.ie/kenya (accessed 1/13/16).

Daughters of the Second Wave

Madeline Duckett, R.S.M.

God's mercy expresses itself in countless ways. Once experienced, it becomes an urge within oneself to reach out in mercy to others. Catherine McAuley knew this urge, and the urge developed into a small dream she kept within, until pressed to share it.[1] It evolved considerably after she became heiress to a small fortune and had the means to build a larger expression of that dream. The house we know on Baggot Street, Dublin embodied her enlarged dream. Little did she realize in the early 1800s that, beyond the bricks and mortar, she was building an energetic powerhouse of mercy that would bring relief to thousands suffering the effects of poverty and disease. She probably had no concept that this powerhouse would fuel a fire in countless other hearts as well.

> They carried the fire of the Mercy charism to places very different from their own. It was this inner fire that enabled them to grapple with the challenges of geographical and cultural contexts utterly foreign to them.

The women who gathered around her caught this fire. It did not let them rest until any suffering they could address was relieved in whatever way was possible. It was the fire Jesus came to cast upon the earth (Lk 12:45). Catherine caught it. Her immediate companions caught it and it led to action. But they could not have envisaged that the Spirit-fuelled energy released from who they were and what they were doing would eventually affect lives far beyond the House of Mercy on Baggot Street.

After Catherine's death, her work was taken up by her earliest companions and novices, and then carried far beyond Dublin. [2]

- Mary Ann Doyle founded a community in Kells and assisted in founding one in Derry, from which a community was sent to Dundee, Scotland.
- Angela Dunne remained in Charleville and sent sisters from her community to nurse in the Crimean War. After her death, sisters from Charleville went to Bathurst, Australia.
- Frances Warde founded a community in Westport, then led Mercy communities to Pittsburgh, Chicago, Providence, Rhode Island, Rochester, New York, Manchester, New Hampshire, Portland, Maine and elsewhere in the United States.
- Clare Moore founded at least eight more Mercy communities in England and served as a nurse in the Crimean War.
- Elizabeth Moore founded twelve houses from Limerick, including one in Glasgow and one in Edinburgh.
- Juliana Hardman, from Birmingham, founded at least nine new communities for the works of Mercy.
- Josephine Warde, superior in Cork, founded with the Cork community, a community in Sunderland, England, as well as Mercy Hospital in Cork, the first Mercy-sponsored hospital in Ireland, and a new, enlarged House of Mercy.
- Mary de Pazzi Delany, superior after Catherine's death, sent a community to Newfoundland and accompanied the foundation to Liverpool.
- Vincent Witty, superior of Baggot Street, initiated the building of the Mater Misericordia Hospital in Dublin, and later founded the Sisters of Mercy in Brisbane, Australia.
- Ursula Frayne went to Newfoundland on the first foundation, and two years later, went to

Perth as founding superior of the first community in the Southern Hemisphere. Eleven years later, she founded a community in Melbourne.

These and other early Mercy women were pioneers of the second wave of Mercy that spread far beyond their then-known world. They carried the fire of the Mercy charism to places very different from their own. It was this inner fire that enabled them to grapple with the challenges of geographical and cultural contexts utterly foreign to them.

A Song for Women Who Carry on the Legacy

Some years ago, Judy Small, an Australian singer and songwriter, composed a piece entitled, "Daughters of the Second Wave." It was written for a woman who was a young relative of a great feminist and human rights activist; it was written also for other young women who continued the legacy of their forebears. The song speaks to those who carry on the legacy of the great Mercy women who blazed a trail before us in the often difficult terrain where we now live. We live from their initiative as we continue to walk in new times and in ways our founding sisters might not recognize if they were here today. As you read the names of the women mentioned in the song, you could substitute your own name or the names of those you know who carry the Mercy legacy forward today.

We live from their initiative as we continue to walk in new times and in ways our founding sisters might not recognize if they were here today.

Daughters of the Second Wave.[3]

You never met her face to face, she died before your time,
But you carry her name in the family,
And you'll carry it down the line.
You're eighteen now, and you wonder how
you can ever bear that load,
But keep your eye on the women who've travelled down this road.

And remember no-one expects you to take her place.
It's a different world you face,
But remember you've inherited her courage and her grace Jessie, Jessie.
So carry her name with your head held high,
Carve yourself your own piece of sky,
Keep that gleam of justice in your eye, Jessie.

You've heard the people talking and you've seen just how she's loved.
A woman who hit the heights and she has nothing left to prove.
So it's no surprise that in your eyes is the fear that you might fall,
But Kate you know you're not alone, read the writing on the wall.

And remember no-one expects the world of you,
From where you stand it's a different view,
But look to her and you just can't lose, Katie, Katie.
No-one expects you to fill her shoes,
The whole point is you get to choose,
But already she's so proud of you, Katie.

Oh the daughters of the women of the second wave
Nobody's mistress, nobody's slave
Looking to your mothers, looking at yourselves,
Carrying it down the line.

So stride into the future with your head held high,
Carve yourself your own piece of sky,
And keep that gleam of justice in your eye, Amy, Naomi.

No-one expects you to fill our shoes
The whole point is that you get to choose
But already we're so proud of you
Jessie, Katie, Amy, Naomi, Jenny, and Emma,
Lucy, Natasha….

Example of Ursula Frayne

Catherine's immediate "daughters" courageously left Ireland and England to travel across vast oceans to carry the Mercy flame to new places where need was calling. In those days their leaving would have felt like "a forever goodbye." In the film about the first Australian Foundress, "Ursula Frayne: A Woman of Mercy, " there is a powerful scene dramatized from Ursula's diaries.[4] She is portrayed as standing on the deck of the boat she had just boarded to take her to the west coast of Australia and, looking towards the endless waters, she says to herself: "What am I doing leaving everything I know and love? How will I ever cope with the emptiness in my heart?" She then descends to her cabin and writes in her journal: "God of Mercy, I go with a sense of your call. Let it be true, and give me strength for the journey." Can we imagine each of our foundresses saying or feeling something similar as she left her homeland? It was the fire of mercy burning within them that urged them, often at a very young age (Ursula was 29), to leave everything behind and travel in faith because need was beckoning.

We share a communion of spirit which grows stronger as we exercise it. MIC can be seen as a central hub for deepening the consciousness of the power of the original story and charism to shape action.

In her keynote address at a seminar celebrating the 150th anniversary of Ursula Frayne's arrival in Melbourne, Deidre Mullin R.S.M. asked some pertinent questions and shared valuable insights:

> What is it that makes a group of women leave family and home, and come to a land at the end of the earth? What God had seized Ursula Frayne [and here we can substitute the name of each of our own founding women] and her companions on the inside and gave them courage and conviction that they could make a difference in this new land? The early sisters who walked on these shores [and on the shores of each of our countries] knew themselves as ecclesial women in the best sense and knew that the call of the Gospel means involvement in the pain of the world…. They knew that *discipleship* casts every fragile new community in tension with the times in which it grows. This discipleship demands very concrete presence; it takes great courage, unending fortitude and clear public posture. Somehow it knows that following Christ is not an excursion into the intellectual, but is real and immediate and cosmic.[5]

International Developments and Teilhard de Chardin's Inbuilt Dynamic of Life

According to the well-known priest, scientist and mystic Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, there is an inbuilt dynamic in all life, from the minutest particle to the most complex system. This dynamic of life unfolding is a process of attraction-connection-complexity-consciousness.[6] In the spread of the mercy that Catherine McAuley initiated we see this inbuilt dynamic at work. The works of the early Mercy women attracted others similarly motivated. Those who were attracted connected with a particular foundation, and wanted to join in the works they saw. As numbers grew and calls came to establish foundations in more places, a complexification occurred in the organization of the developing groups. New communities formed from the original house, became independent of the "mother community," yet remained connected by their charism and purpose.

Slowly, consciousness grew that they were becoming a larger whole. Catherine herself was the "glue" that held them together and kept them connected. They learned better ways to go about the works of mercy and of responding to calls for Sisters

to establish houses in places further and further afield.

The communities we know today, in lands far from the shores of Ireland and England, are the result of this attraction, growth and complexification dynamic. The process continues as we grapple with the issues and demands of being Mercy in an increasingly globalized world with "whale-sized problems." [7] Through ongoing attraction to our story and charism, through the transformation of the original House of Mercy into Mercy International Centre (MIC), and through the development of Mercy International Association's (MIA) processes for information and inspiration sharing, we are potentially becoming a more unified, complexified, global Mercy whole, being drawn towards more united action. We share a communion of spirit which grows stronger as we exercise it. MIC can be seen as a central hub for deepening the consciousness of the power of the original story and charism to shape action. Drawing upon the wide experience and expertise of the body's many members and associates, MIA is facilitating the development of a greater consciousness of need and of our capacity to address this need on a larger scale.

This is the story of the grain of wheat which must die to bear greater fruit. It is the story of the Mercy seed planted by Catherine and which, after her death grew into something beyond her imagining.

Morphogenic Field of Mercy

Today, as we grow towards a more scientific and cosmic view of the world and universe, we could say that spiritually and energetically Catherine McAuley initiated a new morphogenic field[8] of mercy. It was a particular expression of God's mercy in the world around her. Those who resonated with what she did were attracted to join the work and so the "field" grew, gathering strength and momentum. The primary purpose and gift of this field of Mercy was to enable what was fractured, broken, incomplete, sick, hurt or ignorant to come into its potential and become more whole. This was what Jesus did in his life, and so did Catherine and the women who followed after her. Their response was generous and courageous. Our "grandmothers" in Mercy set off from the shores of their own homelands to carry the dream and, unbeknown to them, the new "field" of Mercy to foreign lands. These women inspired others to dare to follow where they led. We, the daughters of that second wave, are taking up the challenge and carrying the flame we have inherited as we face the new issues of our day.

As we grow in consciousness of the slow unfolding of life, the workings of the cosmos and of our deep interconnectedness, we can bring another lens of perception to our Mercy story. Theologically we can see that in the Paschal mystery of death and resurrection, there is a profound dynamic at work, of death leading to new and renewed life and wholeness. As Ilia Delio says in the conclusion of a recent book on the subject:

> Death is integral to the ongoing process of creation…. Every whole must eventually give way to something more than itself.... [At death] finite life is released from its limits to become part of something that is more than itself, a new whole. Death appears as final only until we realize it is the only way we can evolve…[to something more than we are now!][9]

This is the story of the grain of wheat which must die to bear greater fruit. It is the story of the Mercy seed planted by Catherine and which, after her death grew into something beyond her imagining. Today we see that what Catherine began is evolving further, into a huge network or morphogenic field that has grown beyond just the Sisters of Mercy. It now encompasses women and men in Mercy institutions, in Associate groups, in volunteer situations of every kind, all on fire with that flame

that was passed on through the early Mercy women in successive waves.

In the largest of all perspectives we can sense an enormous power at work. That power is the pulsating power of Trinitarian love—a love poured out and embodied in Jesus and his compassionate dealings with others. Through his Spirit, it is now being poured out in and through us. This love pushes us and our world forward to become more than we are now. It urges us through our deepest desires, the longing of our hearts and the fire we have inherited from our forebears to be more and to give more in order that others might be more than they are.

Spirituality of the Future

As the daughters of the second wave of Mercy Sisters who "went out to all the world" we have inherited the capacity to call forth the *more* we see in what lies around us. Our gift to the forward thrust of Trinitarian love in the world is our Mercy charism being brought to expression in new ways for this new time. Today, more than ever, through the massive communication systems available to us, we have a means of marshalling the enormous resources and diverse gifts of the whole Mercy body. Each person's particular gift is important to the worldwide Mercy mission to relieve suffering wherever we can. Like Paul's image in 1 Corinthians Chapter 12, we can see ourselves increasingly as one body united in purpose, differentiated in works, but all focused on the relief of suffering and the greater emergence of God's love through mercy in the world.

This global consciousness of the communion we share within and beyond our individual works at local level, in our own countries and across the world, is a strength that we are learning to utilize increasingly. It is here that diversity of action becomes powered by union of purpose in the one Source. The Jubilee Year of Mercy provides an impetus for this to happen as we endeavor to unite in a variety of ways. One such way is MIA's invitation to unite in awareness and prayer between twelve and two each day. This is a communion in prayer, consciousness and works that can advance the field of Mercy in a powerful way.

As the Sisters themselves—the "daughters of the second wave"— slowly let go into a growing group of lay colleagues and associates in Mercy, we can be excited by the memory of the grain of wheat of Jesus and the Mercy seed planted by Catherine and left for us to tend, nurture and grow. Like Catherine who gave away her resources piece by piece—her original dream of a society of ladies who, without making vows, would offer safe lodging to poor working females[10]; her inheritance; her most treasured companions as leaders[11] of new houses outside of Dublin—so too her descendants have given away much. From the perspective of cosmic unfolding towards the fullness of love, we can ask ourselves what new manifestations of mercy will be released into the world through this letting go?

One such way is MIA's invitation to unite in awareness and prayer between twelve and two each day. This is a communion in prayer, consciousness and works that can advance the field of Mercy in a powerful way.

New life in Mercy is growing through increasing networking across great distances to facilitate skilled hands-on work on the ground. It is emerging through the consciousness of our communion with each other in the field of Mercy we share. It is happening in prayer as those who are aware of their potential to affect change at a distance sit in contemplation to help hold the Mercy "frequency," and support practical works "at the coal face." Many today, are feeling called to do this, including elderly people who now have the time and the power of soul that comes from years of spiritual development and growing union with Christ.

At this moment we can see that the international community of Mercy may well be poised for another leap forward in the intentional and conscious use of worldwide Mercy resources. Potentially this could be the third wave of Mercy "going out to all the world." This wave draws on common resources we share in order to harness the energies held within them, and release them in creative ways to serve a common larger purpose.

Catherine McAuley is still working in our midst. Her spirit now united with the Spirit of the Christ she so loved and worked for over her days among us, is now able to do so much more than she might previously have thought or imagined (Eph. 3:20). The fire that we have inherited from her and her "daughters" is being kindled anew in our times to bring light, warmth and relief to those most in need in a globalized world. If we can take up the challenge of becoming a conscious world Mercy body, utilizing the compassion-potential of our vast networks of larger works, our smaller ministries and those on the prophetic edge, and if we consciously hold our unifying spirit of communion, who knows what can be accomplished to embody Gospel mercy more fully in the world?

The third wave of Mercy is rising…◆

Endnotes

[1] Mary Ann Doyle, "Letter to Mary Clare Augustine Moore, 1844" in *Catherine McAuley and the Tradition of Mercy* ed. Mary C. Sullivan (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 41.

[2] The following summary is based on, but not exhaustive of the Epilogue of Mary C. Sullivan, in *The Path of Mercy* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2012), 368 – 372.

[3] Judy Small, "Daughters of the Second Wave", *Second Wind* CMM 008 CD, 1992. Compact-disc. Words, Judy Small; music David Bates and Judy Small. Used with permission.

[4] *Ursula Frayne: A Woman of Mercy,* Directed by Adele Howard R.S.M. (Melbourne: Fraynework Multimedia, 1996), DVD.

[5] Deidre Mullin RSM, "Journey to the Heart," *Listen: Journal of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Australia,* Vol 25 No 1 (2007): 6-8.

[6] In his book *Teilhard de Chardin: The Divine Milieu Explained,* (Paulist Press: NY, 2007), Louis Savary speaks of two premises of Teilhard's thought. This inbuilt dynamic is one of these premises. Savary writes, "It should be noted that, although Teilhard usually referred to this law in a shorthand way, calling it complexity-consciousness, it is clear from his other writings that the first two stages of attraction and connection were really just as integral to it as the last two, for without attraction and connection it would be difficult to fully understand the emergence of complexity and consciousness." 29.

[7] Judy Cannato, *Field of Compassion: How the New Cosmology Is Transforming Spiritual Life, (*Notre Dame: Sorin Books*,* 2012*), 3.*

[8] Ibid., 30. A morphogenic field is "a non-material region of influence within and around a particular form…. It holds the energy, keeping it coherent…. [I]t has a different feel, a unique presence… its own customs and beliefs and values."

[9] Ilia Delio*, The Unbearable Wholeness of Being: God, Evolution, and the Power of Love,* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2014), 201.

[10] Mary Ann Doyle, "Letter to Mary Clare Augustine Moore…", 41.

[11] Catherine McAuley, "Letter 94, To M. Frances Warde, August 23, 1838," in *The Correspondence of Catherine McAuley* ed. Mary C. Sullivan (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004), 151.

Discussion Questions

(**Agate**) Grace Agate narrates the story of Dolorosa Waldron traveling from New York to Kenya, Africa in 1956 by reflecting on her own trip there. Even if you have not personally traveled to Africa, what have you discovered about yourself and an historical figure when you made a pilgrimage "in the footsteps" of that admired person, e.g. "In the footsteps of Jesus," In the footsteps of St. Paul," or "In the way of St. James of Compostela"?

(**Dobrovolny)** "*One who could not ask any questions, as she could not approve of a breach of trust under any circumstance, chose to publish the full detail of the breach of trust and the offending person's lie about it to their beloved dying foundress*."

Do you think Clare Augustine Moore should be thanked or scolded for disclosing facts that other members of the community thought should be kept secret?

(**Duckett**) "Daughters of the Second Wave" describes women who came immediately after Catherine McAuley and carried on her legacy. What legacy of what influential relative, teacher, woman religious, or historical person do you feel you are carrying on? For whom are you a "daughter of the second wave"?

(**Edwards**) A section of the Bermondsey Annals written by Clare Moore—relied upon in this article–describes the horrific physical conditions in which Sisters of Mercy cared for wounded and sick soldiers at Barrack Hospital in Scutari, Turkey, during the Crimean War. What was most appalling to you about the challenges the sisters faced? In your own ministerial history, have you ever had to contend with sub-standard, unsanitary, and physically demanding settings that threatened your own health?

(**Kerr**) "*Bishop Serra, in charge of the diocese from 1850, expected the sisters to live a cloistered life…The active ministry of the 'walking nuns' of Catherine McAuley…was incomprehensible to him. When he began making demands which seemed to her to be overstepping the limits of his authority, she (Ursula Frayne) became assertive, refusing to comply."*

Sisters of Mercy, and other women religious, have had similar experiences of conflict with their local bishop for generations. What is the inner "line in the sand" that you sense women religious draw? When do they resist and why? When do they surrender?

(**Kirk and Hudner**) "*She was in office from 1850 to 1867 and again from 1870 to 1878, the year of her death. This long stretch of office was not really her choice…under these circumstances, Mother Cecilia remained the constant figure in leadership in the [Auckland] Congregation."*

In your own life-time, who is a woman in your congregation who represents the "constant figure in leadership"—the one whose stability gave strength to the internal life of the community, who sustained and developed the ministries, and who was the guiding hand for the community through crisis times?

(**Sullivan**) "*To speak of Catherine McAuley's methods of leadership development is to speak of attitudes and behaviors in her that do not sound like 'methods' at all. You will not find them listed in any books on leadership development."*

Mary Sullivan lists eight attitudes of Catherine McAuley in her role as leader. Which ones, in your experience, have the greatest effect on co-workers in an institutional environment— e.g., good example, a way of speaking and writing, purity of intention, willingness to initiate, to venture into the unknown….?

(**Upton**) Mother Vincent Whitty was "the youngest and the first to leave us a written record of her observations about Catherine McAuley, particularly her last days." She took on various roles of community responsibility–as Mistress of Novices, Mother Bursar, community superior, educator, hospital administrator, and emergency responder to the Crimean War nursing crisis. How would each of these responsibilities have shaped her? What new knowledge would she have had to acquire, and what qualities did she have to develop in herself, to carry out each of these responsibilities effectively?

Contributors

Grace Leggio Agate, R.S.M. (Mid-Atlantic) is presently ministering as the Workplace Spirituality Coordinator at St. Joseph/Candler Hospital in Savannah, Georgia. She previously served in parish work as a pastoral associate, as incorporation Minister for the Sisters of Mercy, and as an educator on the elementary and secondary levels. She taught scripture at Holy Trinity High School for twelve years. She received her M.S. in Education and her M.A. in Theology from St. John's University, Queens, New York. She obtained certification as a spiritual director from the Center of Peace and Justice in the Bronx, NY. One of her interests is providing retreats for women.

Mary Kay Dobrovolny, R.S.M. (West-Midwest) holds a Ph.D. in New Testament and Early Christian Origins from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, and an M.A. in Biblical Studies from Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, Illinois. Native of Nebraska, Mary Kay has, since 2009, lived in Dublin, Ireland, serving as assistant director of spirituality and heritage for Mercy International Association. Her prior ministries include teaching theology at College of Saint Mary (Omaha, Nebraska), and community developer for Mercy Housing, Inc. (Denver, Colorado). She has published articles in The *Bible Today*, Mercy E-News, *New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, *Review for Religious*, Viva Mercy!, *Vocations & Prayer*, and *The MAST Journal*.

Madeline Duckett, R.S.M. (Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea, Community South B, Ballarat) has a background in education and spirituality. Currently she works as a spiritual director and retreat facilitator throughout Australia and overseas. Her publishing includes Secret *Places, Sacred Paths*–on prayer and environmental themes; *The Mystical Heart of Catherine McAuley*—reflections on the life and spirituality of Catherine McAuley; and most recently, *Boots, Cracked Pots and a Place at The Table–Mercy in a World Becoming*--reflections on living a spirituality of mercy in an unfolding universe.

Janice Edwards, R.S.M. (Mid-Atlantic) holds a D.Min. from Weston Jesuit School of Theology and the Center for Religious Development in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her M.Div. is from Princeton Theological Seminary. She was a member of the leadership team of the Sisters of Mercy of New Jersey just prior to the establishment of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas. Janice has taught courses in spirituality and spiritual direction in colleges, universities, and spirituality centers, and has coordinated training programs in spiritual direction. She was part of the team that initiated and taught graduate programs in Holistic Spirituality and Spiritual Direction at Chestnut Hill College in Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania. A spiritual director for over forty years, she has authored several articles, and recently published a book on spirituality, *Wild Dancing: Embraced by Untamed Love.*

Mary de Pazzi Hudner, R.S.M., was professed in 1950 as a Sister of Mercy in the former Auckland Congregation, following a job as a secretary in a big furniture business. She taught business courses in Mercy schools in both the Auckland region and in Samoa. She served on the inaugural staff of McAuley High School, a diocesan school in a poor area. Following her service in the diocesan Marriage Tribunal as a notary, Sr. Mary de Pazzi worked as congregational Secretary in the 1990's. In her semi-retirement, she has devoted herself to research in the Archives, as well as their conservation and maintenance. She collaborated with Sister Marcienne Kirk in the book *Valley of Faith,* and has done typing and proof-reading of Sr. Marcienne's other books and articles.

Berenice Kerr, R.S.M. (Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea), was raised on the north coast of New South Wales. There she was educated by Sisters of Mercy, and joined them in 1964. She worked in education for several decades. In 2012 she was elected Leader of Community in South Ballarat, situated in western Victoria, Australia. Berenice studied Medieval History at the University of Oxford, earning her doctorate in 1995 with a study of the English foundations of the Order of Fontevraud. (*Religious Life for Women c. 1100 - c. 1350: Fontevraud in England* [1999]). She has several publications to her credit, the most recent being The *Congregational School: Its History and Significance in New South Wales and Australia*, [2009] and *The Land That I Will Show You: A History of the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia, 1981-2011*. [2011].

Marcienne Kirk, R.S.M., professed in the Auckland, New Zealand Congregation in 1951–now *Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa* Sisters of Mercy New Zealand. She holds an M.A. in history from the University of Auckland. Her secondary school ministry involved teaching history, English, Latin, and German in Mercy schools in the Auckland area. At Chanel Institute in Auckland, she taught biblical history, mainly to religious in formation. After retiring from full-time teaching, she assisted refugees in literacy programs. Since 1990, she has worked in the Auckland community's archives, mainly as a researcher. She is the author of three books: *Remembering Your Mercy-The Life of Cecilia Maher*; Legacy–*The History of St Mary's College Ponsonby*, and *Valley of Faith–The History of the Sisters of Mercy in Pawarenga.* This last book was written in collaboration with Sr. Mary de Pazzi Hudner and Mrs. Lyn Ryan. Although her eyesight is severely compromised, Sister Marcienne still gives talks to groups visiting the Auckland Archives.

Mary C. Sullivan, R.S.M. (NyPPaW) is professor emerita of language and literature, and dean emerita of the College of Liberal Arts, at the Rochester Institute of Technology. She is the author of numerous works, including the *Correspondence of Catherine McAuley, 1818-1841* (Catholic University of America Press), *The Path of Mercy: The Life of Catherine McAuley* (Four Courts and Catholic University of America), Catherine *McAuley and the Tradition of Mercy* (*University of Notre Dame Press*), and *The Friendship of Florence Nightingale and Mary Clare Moore* (University of Pennsylvania Press).

Julia Upton, R.S.M. (Mid-Atlantic) is Provost Emerita and Distinguished Professor of Theology at St. John's University in New York where she has taught since 1979. She holds a Ph.D. in Theology from Fordham University and is presently Professor in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at St. John's University (New York). She is well-published in the areas of sacramental theology and spirituality. Her most recent book, *Worship in Spirit and Truth: The Life and Legacy of H. A. Reinhold*, was published by Liturgical Press in 2009. She is now working on a biography of liturgical artist and social activist Adé Bethune who is best known for her wood-cut illustrations and graphics in *The Catholic Worker*.

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MERCY ASSOCIATION IN SCRIPTURE AND THEOLOGY

MAST, The Mercy Association in Scripture and Theology, met for the first time in June 1987 at Gwynedd-Mercy College in Gwynedd Valley, Pennsylvania. Called together by Eloise Rosenblatt, R.S.M. and Mary Ann Getty, twenty Mercy theologians and Scripture scholars from fourteen regional communities formally established the organization to provide a forum for dialogue and cooperation among Sisters of Mercy and associates. The stated purpose of the organization is to promote studies and research in Scripture, theology and related fields; to support its members in scholarly pursuits through study, writing, teaching and administration; and to provide a means for members to address issues within the context of their related disciplines.

MAST has been meeting annually since then, and the organization now numbers fifty, with members living and working in Australia, Canada, the Caribbean, Central and South America, as well as in the United States. Aline Paris, R.S.M., currently serves as MAST'S Executive Director. MAST will hold its next Annual Meeting at **St. Raphaela Center, Haverford, PA, June 17-20, 2016.** Members act as theologians in the Church and carry on theological work in their respective disciplines and ministries. They also seek to be of service to the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas by providing a forum for ongoing theological education.

For information on becoming a member and being added to MAST's mailing list, contact the association's Executive Director, Aline Paris, R.S.M. by e-mail at aparis@csm.edu or by mail at College of St. Mary, 7000 Mercy Road, Omaha, NE, 68016.

Dues can be paid by check, payable to MAST and sent to association Treasurer, Marilyn King, R.S.M., The Laura, 1995 Sam Browning Road, Lebanon, KY, 40033-9162. E-mail mheleneking@windstream.net.

Since 1991, *The MAST Journal* has been published three times a year. Members of the organization serve on the journal's editorial board on a rotating basis, and several members have, over the years, taken on responsibility to edit individual issues. Maryanne Stevens, R.S.M., was the founding editor of the journal, and Eloise Rosenblatt, R.S.M., currently serves in that capacity.

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