

The Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy (Ireland) was formed in 1994. This congregation resulted from the union of twenty-six Mercy congregations in Ireland with the Sisters of Mercy of South Africa.

Currently the congregation consists of four provinces in Ireland, a South African province, and a United States province. Kenya is a vice province; Canada, Nigeria, Peru and Zambia are regions; while Brazil, Dundee (S.A), Peru and Rwanda are further Mission Areas.

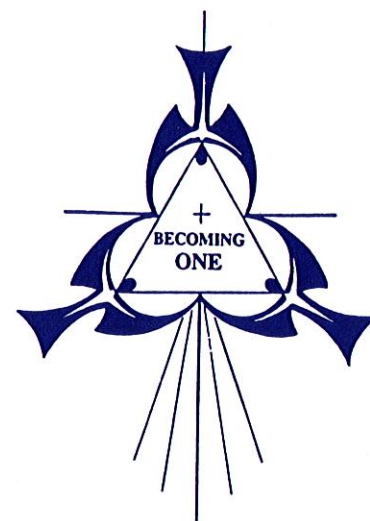
IRELAND

The Sisters of Mercy have been in Ireland since Catherine McAuley founded the congregation in Dublin in 1831. By the time of her death, eleven other Convents of Mercy had been established in Ireland: Kingstown, Tullamore, Charleville, Carlow, Cork, Booterstown, Limerick, Naas, Galway, Wexford, and Birr. Today the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy (Ireland) number 3,631 professed members with twenty candidates and novices. These women serve in Ireland, South Africa, United States, Kenya, Canada, Brazil, England, Nigeria, Peru, Rwanda and Zambia. Lives of prayer, community and service embody Catherine McAuley's hope of offering some relief to the poor, sick and ignorant of our world.



The Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy (Ireland)

Who are we ?



We are a group of 3.600 Mercy women ministering in Ireland, South Africa, United States, Kenya, Nigeria, Zambia, Brazil, Canada, England, Peru, and Rwanda, newly united for mission.

As far back as 1973 the Sisters of Mercy in Ireland desired closer bonds with each other at national level, and in their missionary outreaches. It was in that year that a Mercy Association was formed and we began looking at ways and means of being mutually supportive in our response to present-day needs of our world. This relationship grew through

the normal maturing phases until in 1994 we celebrated what might be called a coming-of-age. All along the way «rebirthing» was a recurring theme - a growing desire to be renewed in and through our service of God's people.

At the same time the Sisters of Mercy of South Africa were engaged in a similar search which ultimately lead to a merger with the Irish Sisters. In the context of our joint Refounding Liturgy, July 14th, 1994 the following Declaration was proclaimed as a formal statement of who we wanted to be:

DECLARATION

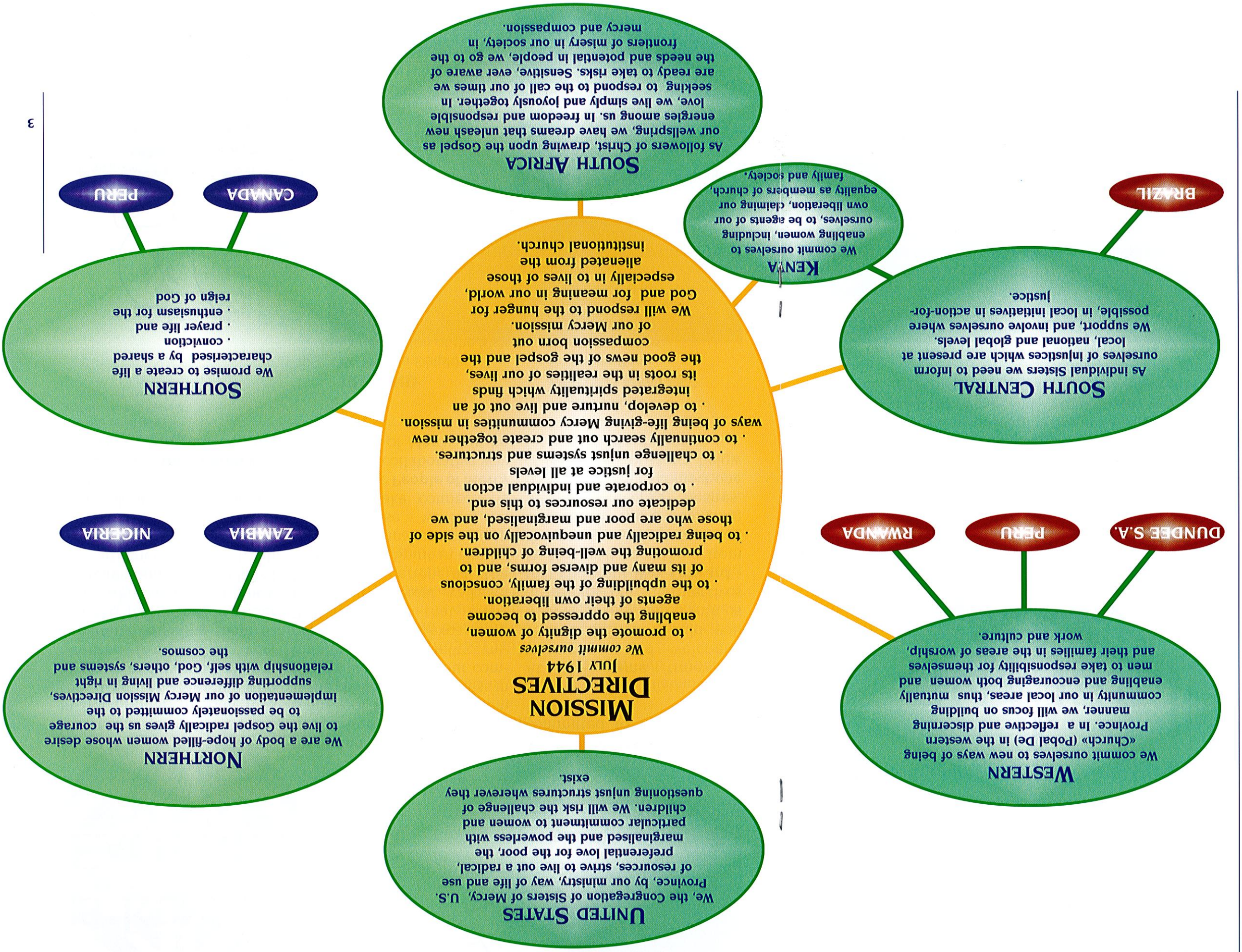
*We are Sisters of Mercy.
We gather today
To celebrate a Creative Moment
In our Mercy Story.
We are people who have heard
The same music,
Through the call of God,
The charism of Catherine
And the lives of Mercy women
gone before us.
Aware of our woundedness
And need for conversion
We draw daily from the wells of
God's Mercy.*

*We women of Mercy
Called and gifted by God
and each other,
Today formalise new bonds
And new relationships among us,
Enlivening and strengthening us
for mission.*

*Out of the vibrant waters
of our time
The pain of humanity calls us
To be bridge-builders
in a broken world.
And so*

*We commit ourselves anew
To serve the Poor,
the Sick and Needy
To work for Justice and Peace
And to further the dream of God
for our world.*

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Just what the Refounding "Declaration" would mean in lived reality was further discerned and is expressed here in our Mission Directives. Subsequently, the newly-formed provinces, - Northern, Western, South Central, Southern, (in Ireland), South Africa; United States; and a vice-province in Kenya - articulated their own identity in the light of the congregation's directives. The missionary outreaches from the Irish Provinces are also indicated