

**Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy in Kenya
The First Fifty Years
(1956-2006)**

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Forward

The following is a very brief account of the first fifty years of the congregation of the Sisters of Mercy in Kenya, 1956 -2006. It is hoped that a more comprehensive record will be compiled later. When the earlier sisters came to Kenya from Ireland, they came from different independent congregations. Hence the references to different areas in Ireland in this short account.

Also my sincere thanks to all who have contributed in any way to the compilation of this Golden Jubilee booklet.

*Sister Patricia Moran
Provincial Archivist
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Nairobi*

**Message from Sr. Breege O'Neill
Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy**

“You should declare the 50th year sacred please. It shall be a year of Jubilee for you”. (Lev 25)

Dear friends,

it is with great joy that I write an introduction to this little book to mark the Golden Jubilee of the arrival of the Sisters of Mercy in Kenya in 1956. Within its pages are accounts, memories and reminiscences that weave together the strands of the mercy story in Kenya over the course of the past 50 years. It is the story of joy, achievement, sacrifice and courage. The milestone of 50 years is an opportunity to pause and in the biblical spirit of Jubilee, to remember, to celebrate, to reconcile and to renew our trust and dependence on God.

Jubilee is a time to remember and celebrate. In recalling fifty years of Mercy life and mission in Kenya, we remember and celebrate all that has been accomplished. We celebrate what the presence of the Sisters of Mercy has meant for the people of Kenya among whom they have lived, with whom they have shared life, for fifty years. We thank God for the first groups of pioneering Sisters of Mercy who set out from Ireland in the fifties, sixties and onwards, letting go of homeland, loved ones and all that was familiar, to carry the spirit and charism of Catherine McAuley to a new country. We rejoice that a vibrant lay Mercy Association, and an active network of sponsors and supporters of Mercy mission, are thriving within the Kenyan Province.

Justice is a time to reconcile and forgive. At the heart of our Mercy charism is a call to reconciliation and forgiveness. In encountering differences in culture, language, history and geography. It is inevitable that hurt happen that we sometimes experience failure. In this year of Golden Jubilee, it is important to acknowledge our need to forgive and to be forgiven for our limitations and shortcomings over the course of the Mercy journey in Kenya.

Jubilee is a time to renew our trust and dependence on God. The stories in this booklet all bear witness to “that most marked Providential guidance” which has sustained the work of Mercy in Kenya over fifty years. We glorify our God and say “what great things have been done by God and for God in Kenya !”. We remember the past in order to gather our energies to re-commit to the mission in Kenya for the future. The mission in Kenya is expressed through education and health care, through home visitation and faith formation, through care of orphans and youth ministry, through skills training and development, through work for justice and peace.

The Sisters of Mercy in a Kenya have been greatly blessed for fifty years. May those blessings continue and bear fruit in years ahead.

*Sr. Breege O’Neill
Congregational Leader
April 2006*

Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy in Kenya 2006

From Dublin, Ireland, to Nairobi and Beyond 1956

Mercy in Kenya 1956 to 2006. It is hope that a more comprehensive record will be later compiled. When the earlier sisters came to Kenya from Ireland, they came from different independent congregations hence the references to different areas in Ireland in this short account.

It all began in 1955 when Archbishop J.J. McCarthy, CSSp, of Nairobi, wanted sisters to set up a Catholic hospital in Nairobi city. He mentioned his wish to Archbishop J. K Knox, Apostolic Delegate to Africa, who in turn discussed it with Archbishop John C McQuaid, CSSp, of Dublin. Archbishop McQuaid approached the Dublin Sisters of Mercy wide experience in Hospital administration in Dublin city for help. in 1955 Archbishop McCarthy received an offer of a Nairobi City Council Primary School at Shauri Moyo, Eastlands, as a possibility for an African girl's school.

The Dublin Sisters of Mercy accepted the challenge to come to Nairobi. The four pioneer sisters to Kenya, Srs. Dolorosa Waldron, Gerard Stack, Therese Noel Gallagher and Consolata O'Keefe arrived at Nairobi railway station from Mombasa at 11 a.m. on Holy Saturday morning 1st of April 1956. They had come by boat from Dublin to Mombasa, reaching Mombasa on Holy Thursday, the 29th of April 1956.

They were first accommodated in a renovated storeroom in St. Mary's School, Msongari, Nairobi, but the scene of their services was in Eastlands, Nairobi. Sr Consolata was the only one among them who could drive, but Dolorosa and Therese Noel were soon also behind the wheel. They commuted daily across the city to their work base until they eventually moved to the first Convent of Mercy in Kenya, at Makadara, Eastlands, on 12th March 1959.

They had first to identify the location of their own house and then get it built. Dolorosa and Gerard were the two nursing sisters. There was no hospital ready for them. They were undaunted. They immediately got to help the sick of the very densely populated double barbed wire fence area of Shauri Moyo. They opened the first clinic in a disused City Council clinic at Shauri Moyo on the 1st of May 1956. At first, sisters being European, were viewed with suspicion, but soon when the people saw their babies being cured all prejudice was broken down and the Sisters were fully accepted. The sisters also held weekly mobile clinics at Kiserian and Ngong in Massiland, at Biberoni, Kereita and Ngarariga in

Kikuyuland, and at Eastleigh, in the room where the Legionary, Edel Quinn, died.

Later, in 1959, they opened a very busy clinic behind the convent garage at Makadara. Other Sisters replaced the pioneers over the years. Sisters of Mercy Dispensary, Makadara, moved from its congested facilities behind the convent garage, in 1988, to its present spacious premises which Sr Magdalen Rafferty got built, a little further away still on the convent compound. From 1993 Makadara dispensary operated an outreach clinic in the new developing area of Kayole, Naoibi. This outreach was handed over to the Sisters of Our Lady of the Rosary, Kayole Parish, on the 14th February 2004. Makadara Dispensary continues to serve the people of Makadara and beyond to the present day. Meanwhile the two teaching Sisters, Srs. Consolata and Therese Noel, admitted their first African girls, approximately 300 of them, on the 5th of May 1956, into Our Lady of Mercy Primary School, Shauri Moyo. At that time in the history of Kenya, very few African girls were sent to school; the parents could only afford to give formal education to the boys, while the daughters remained at home to look after the younger ones; the girls would soon be married and be mothers and formal schooling was not considered necessary for that. The school excelled in both academic and cultural activities. They won a cup in the Kenya Music Festival on their first entry! This gave all great encouragement. Sisters of Mercy remained on the staff of the school up to 1994. For more online information on Our Lady of Mercy Primary School, Shauri Moyo , [click here](#)

The Dublin Sisters of Mercy did not confine their services to Nairobi City alone; they also went out into 'bush' areas as the need arose. Srs. Albertus McHugh and Gerard Stack arrived at the top of Mbooni Hill, approximately 120 kilometres southeast of Nairobi, on the 2nd of June 1958 to set up a Women's Primary Teacher Training College, and to provide medical services for the people. The Sisters first stayed in the not fully completed priest's house until they built their own house on Mercy Hill in 1961.

However, Albertus started Our Lady of Mercy Training College, Mbooni, in two mud and wattle huts a short distance down from the priest's house. She soon got permanent buildings put up. The first intake of students, some already mothers, had only completed Primary schooling, and were expected to graduate as qualified primary school teachers after two years in Mbooni, and graduate they did! Later admission qualifications were raised to those who had completed 2 years in secondary school.

Other improvements also followed as different sister's helped Albertus in her ministry.

While Albertus was busy sorting out the Training College, Gerard Stack started treating the sick, and set up Mbooni Clinic and Mobiles. Sometimes those on the mobile clinics could get cut off from base or be confined to base, due to flash flooding of riverbeds in the rainy season. However, by 1974 government and other private clinics had opened in many of the places visited by the sisters, so it was decided that the Sisters Clinic at Mbooni would discontinue as from the 31st of March 1975.

Meanwhile, by 1966 the new Kenyan Government decided to amalgamate many of the smaller Teacher Training Colleges in more central areas.

Thus Mbooni Girls Secondary School closed its doors as a primary teacher training college in December 1971. However, earlier in 1965 the local chief approached the Sisters to start a local girls secondary school.

Thus as the training college was being phased out, it's facilities became the nucleus of Mbooni Girls Secondary School which admitted its first intake of students in January 1970.

The first headmistress, a lay woman, soon got married and moved elsewhere, so Sr. Stella Mc Cormack became headmistress for some years.

The school has developed since then and is still among the top secondary schools of the area in national examinations.

When Albertus retired from government service in 1973, she helped set up Mbooni Home Economics Center at Kikima Market, for the training of local women. The Sisters of Mercy withdrew from Mbooni in April 1979 having given 21 years of dedicated service especially to women. Sr. Eileen Hughes was the last Sister Headmistress in Mbooni Girls.

In 1957 the Colonial government gave a grant towards the construction of a primary school at Nairobi South. Srs. Joseph Dunne and Therese Noel Gallagher went there in January 1958 and admitted the first students to the 'Goan School', Our Lady of Mercy, School, Nairobi South, but very soon the school became interracial and interdenominational. Further classrooms were required and built by savings from the teaching Sisters' salaries such as they were then.

There was no secondary school for girls in that expanding area, so 1962, a secondary section was added to the existing Primary School. In 1966 the primary and secondary sections became separate entities.

The two schools were in the same building until 1989 when the secondary school moved to its present site. Both schools were administered by different

Sisters of Mercy until 1999 when lay principals were appointed. Currently Sr. Agnes Kariuki, a Kenyan Sister of Mercy is the Deputy Principal of the triple stream Primary School. For more online information on Our Lady of Mercy Primary School, South B [Click here](#)

For more online information Our Lady of Mercy Secondary School, South B [Click here](#)

Archbishop McCarthy of Nairobi again approached the Dublin Sisters of Mercy in 1958 to staff a small maternity hospital, which was being built in Miguta, Kiambu, approximately 30km northeast of Nairobi. Two nursing sisters, Srs. Therese Martin Crowley and De La Salle Norton, recently arrived from Dublin, Ireland, went there on the 3rd of January 1959. There was no Convent ready for them only a large priest's house on the compound where the Sisters stayed. But this time the priest's house became the Convent.

Therese Martin also did mobile clinics in the area. The maternity hospital was closed in 1969 as many of the mothers needed more specialized treatment than the Sisters could provide. The mobile clinics continued until 1974, when they too were discontinued due to the shortage of Sister personnel.

Sr. De la Salle, the second nursing sister who went to Miguta, first taught for a term at Miguta Primary School which was also on the compound. Sr. Maire Ryan, a qualified teacher, replaced her in second term. Only boys had been enrolled in the school, but Sr Maire soon got some girls admitted. As early as 1965, the sisters felt the urgent need for a commercial college in Miguta to give secretarial and bookkeeping skills to the many young girls who could not get admission into the few secondary schools in the area. Funds and buildings had to be got.

Sisters of Mercy Commercial College Miguta, admitted its first students in January 1969, the Sisters having withdrawn from the primary school at the end of 1968. Miguta Commercial College still flourishes today with many students holding key position in both the public and private sectors.

For more information on Miguta Commercial College [Click here](#)

In 1976, Sr. Rumold Moroney arrived in Kenya from Ireland to set up a Skills Training Centre in the former maternity hospital building at Miguta for the local women and young girls who could not avail of secondary or commercial education. A new Centre was built in 1986. The demand for dressmaking skills seems to have waned, so presently, Sr Teresia Rugiri runs entrepreneurial courses for local women and girls at the Centre

Also, from 1976 to 1982, Miguta Convent was the home of the Sisters of Mercy Initial Formation program. Currently the PrePostulancy stage of initial formation under Directress, Sr Joyce Olouch, is based in the community there.

In 1960 Sr. Eileen Byrne went as Headmistress, to the newly built St. Anne's Primary School, approximately a kilometre away from Shauri Moyo. Our Lady, Shauri Moyo, was unable to accommodate all the girls seeking admission there; hence the need for another girl's primary school in Eastlands area. Sisters of Mercy remained on the staff of the school up to 1990. For more information on St Anne's Primary School [Click here](#)

Even though Sr. Dolorosa Waldron came to Nairobi in 1956 to set up the multiracial Catholic Mater Misericordia Hospital in Nairobi city, it was not until 1962 that it was achieved. Many obstacles and frustrations had first to be overcome. Archbishop McCarthy made a large plot of land available for the hospital in the then predominantly European area of Westlands, near present day Strathmore Secondary School, but when Dolorosa applied to the City Council to build a multi-racial hospital there, permission was refused. Dolorosa was determined that the hospital would be multiracial. She was later given a much smaller, most unsuitable, alternative site near the Ngong River in Nairobi South, by the colonial government. It was widely assumed at that time that the Dublin Sisters of Mercy had, back in the late 50s, a few hidden crocks of gold! Nothing could be farther from the reality. Dolorosa had to find her own funding. She received a grant of £30,000 in 1959 from the colonial government but she had to match it with a similar amount of her own. In 1960, she successfully negotiated a loan of £30,000 with the Hibernian bank, O'Connell St, Dublin, to be repaid with interest over a period of 10 years. The foundation stone of Mater Misericordia Hospital, Nairobi, was laid on the 19th of March 1961 and the first phase of the hospital was officially blessed and opened on the 5th of May 1962, ready to admit its first patients. Dolorosa had her hospital but her financial worries were not yet over. She still had to repay the loan with interest. Patient fees were needed for the running costs of the hospital. However, Divine Providence and the Infant of Prague, to whom she had great devotion came to her rescue in a most unexpected way. One day as she was wrapping her 6-yard black pleated habit in an old copy of the Universe newspaper, her eye caught an article in it about the recently established German Bishops Campaign Against Hunger and Disease in the World, Misereor. She duly applied for assistance. Misereor very generously agreed to pay off the Irish bank loan and the interest for her. Very soon the 60 bed capacity hospital was unable to cope with the demand so further

developments and improvements were needed. Misereor again came to her assistance. A new maternity wing, X-ray and laboratory departments were opened in 1971. Yet despite its financial constraints, the hospital had, earlier in 1966, opened a free 14 bed Orthopedic Ward for poor physically disadvantaged children. To reduce running costs, for a number of years the hospital was staffed by Sisters of Mercy only. For many years the sisters were not paid salaries, but they were maintained by the hospital. Every possible cent, as well as donations from families, friends, and benefactors, were ploughed back into the running cost of the hospital.

At the request of the Kenya government, the Mater School of Midwifery under the direction of Sister Stanislaus Barry, admitted its first set of midwifery students in 1972. Sister Stanislaus was also instrumental in setting up the Family Life Counseling Association of Kenya in 1976, while also being the Principal Tutor in the midwifery school and Nairobi Archdiocesan Medical Co-ordinator. Sister Mary Lavelle was instrumental in acquiring some extra land for the hospital in 1986. Sister Magdalen Rafferty had major extensions of a new casualty, further operating theatres, modern intensive care, and cardiac units, added to the hospital in 1994. The hospital's Catherine McAuley School of Nursing admitted its first students in September 2004 for the regular Kenya Registered Nursing and Upgrading Courses. Sister Maria Ngui, a Kenyan Sister of Mercy, is currently the director of this School of Nursing. It was the 1st hospital in East Africa to receive International Standardization Organization Certification in 2002. It also received the Kenya Quality Award in the large organization category, in 2003. For more information on the Mater Hospital please [click here](#)

More online information on the Mater Hospital please [click here Page 6](#)

More online information on The Mater Comprehensive Care Clinic please [click Page 9](#) also [click here](#)

From 1963 to 67 Sisters Consolata O'Keeffe and first Sr Maria Regina O'Connell, and later Sr Brid Coyle, taught in St. Mary's School, Nairobi.

This sad plight of the many girls who finished their primary education and who could not get places in the few secondary schools of Makadara area, touched the heart of Sr Stella McCormack to start Huruma Girls High School in 1964.

For more online information on Huruma Girls High School please [click here](#)

The school was first in a classroom belonging to Shauri Moyo Primary School, but it soon moved to part of the sisters' plot at Makadara. Dolorosa advanced some funds to build the classrooms, which the late Tom Mboya, Minister for Planning and Economic Development, refunded after a fundraising event. The current president of Kenya, Honourable Mwai Kibaki, then the local Member of Parliament, also helped to get funds for the school. The school is now a triple stream school. There has been a Sister of Mercy on the staff up to 2003.

When the Dublin Sisters of Mercy constituted an administrative region in Kenya, Villa Maria property along Waiyaki Way, Westlands, Nairobi was purchased in 1968 as the Regional House. Dolorosa Waldron was appointed the first regional superior. She and the school sisters, Srs Cora Ferriter and Joseph Dunne of Our Lady of Mercy schools, Nairobi South, then went to live at Villa Maria. Villa Maria remained the Regional House until 1979, when the newly appointed Regional Superior, Sr. Consuella Corkell, moved the Regional House to Makadara. Different sisters lived at Villa Maria until January 1982 when Villa Maria became the Kenya novitiate house until 1999, when the novitiate moved to the newly constructed Catherine McAuley house at Nakuru. In January 2000, Villa Maria became Vice- Provincial house, and later the Provincial House. A new Provincial House has just been completed in 2006 on the grounds at Villa Maria, while the original Villa house becomes a sisters' hospitality house.

In 1968 the new principle of the predominantly Protestant Machakos teacher training college, requested that sisters from Mbooni T.C., be posted to his college to look after the welfare of the Catholic students there. In September 1968 Sr Jacinta Galvin, Mbooni, joined the staff of Machakos T.C. She was accompanied by Sr. Magdalen de Pazzi Chandley. They lived in a college staff house. Sr Carthage Carroll replaced Sr Magdalen in 1969 and worked as a nurse at Machakos District Hospital until 1974 when she returned to Ireland due to failing health. Sr Regina Murphy joined Machakos T.C. staff, from Mbooni, in 1972. In 1981, Jacinta and Regina co-authored a Primary Methods Handbook for trainee teachers. The book is still in use in some of the training colleges. Jacinta and Regina remained on the college staff until Regina's sudden death in May 1991; Jacinta then resigned from the college in December 1991.

In 1969, Bishop R. Ndingi Mwana a 'Nkeki, Machakos Diocese, came looking for sisters to organise a young struggling girls' self-help secondary school in a primary school classroom about 12 kilometres away from the new Makueni Church compound. Makueni is approximately 140 kilometres Southeast of

Nairobi, which could only be reached by dusty sandy tracks in the dry season, and by partly flooded tracks when the rains came. Two teaching sisters from Makadara, Sr. Redempta O'Riordan and Therese Noel Gallagher, arrived in Makueni on the 11th of January 1970. There was no convent or school ready for them. They at first stayed in the partly completed priest's house. They did not have a bedroom each until they moved to their own convent in 1973. They also decided to transfer the Infant School to Makueni Church compound so as to be nearer their base. Funds had to be got and classrooms had to be built, yet Makueni Girls Secondary School admitted its first 27 students on the 24th of January 1970 to the back of the partially completed church building. Gradually as funds became available, this school developed and is now one of the prestigious schools in Makueni district. The Sisters of Mercy withdrew from the school in 1998.

In 1970 there were no health facilities available in the whole area of Makueni. Sr Catherine de Ricci Hayes, a nurse, arrived in Makueni in October 1970, to set up Catholic Mission Dispensary, Makueni. The first clinic was held on the veranda of the priest's house. Soon a small building was put up, and Catherine and her helpers began travelling on the dry dusty tracks, sometimes to places 100 kilometres away tending the sick on the way under the shade of a tree or at the back of a temporary church. Makueni is a famine prone area, so the sisters were often involved in the distribution of emergency relief food.

Sr Jennifer Kiuvu, a past pupil of Makueni Girls, and the first Kenyan Sister of Mercy, taught in the local Kivandini Primary School from 1987-95.

Sr Dolorita Burke chose Makueni as the place where she wished to set up St Anthony's Centre where young girls, unable to get places in secondary school, could learn dress making and tailoring. Due to ill health she had to return to Ireland in 1991 but her work was continued by Sr Bernadette Mueni who had the centre moved in 1998, to a new spacious building across the road.

The Sisters of Mercy withdrew from the Makueni Mission in May 1998 after 28 years a faithful service there.

Sr Cecelia Hall worked on the staff of Heshima Road Primary School, Eastlands, Nairobi, from 1971-72. She took charge of the school choir and of instrumental music. Her school orchestra, percussion and recorder bands got top trophies at the Kenya Music Festival. Cecilia also arranged the music and did the artwork for teachers Catechetical Guidebook, God's Power in Christ. Later when she

returned for a short stay in 1986, she taught the postulants how to sing the Prayer of the Church.

Later different Kenyan sisters taught at different times in other City Council primary schools in Nairobi and outside.

After Vatican 2, teachers needed much encouragement and help in the teaching of religion in schools. Sr Stella McCormack was appointed in 1972 to do this catechetical work in the many primary schools in Nairobi city and its environs. She visited the schools, met the education authorities, and persuaded the parish priests to adopt a more modern approach to the teaching of religion. There were no textbooks or teachers guides available to help the teachers and catechists. During the 10 years that Stella was Religious Education Advisor in Nairobi Archdiocese, she co-authored teacher's guidebooks, *God's Power in Christ*, and *Come and See*, which proved a great help to teachers and catechists, and which are still in use in 2006. Stella was not new to publishing; she had earlier co-produced a Kikamba hymnbook while on the staff of Mbooni teacher training college.

Srs. Magdalen Rafferty and Tryphonia Joannes, from the Mater community, Nairobi, arrived in Kibwezi on 4 January 1974 to set up Sisters of Mercy Catholic Dispensary, Kibwezi. Magdalen concentrated on establishing the home dispensary, while Tryphonia organized mobile clinics to faraway places where there were no medical services of any kind available. In their first year at Kibwezi, the sisters treated over 18,000 patients. During famine times, the sisters were also involved in the distribution of relief food. Sr Andre D'Souza had an outreach clinic built at Kambu in 1987. The Kenya Ear Foundation started operating from Kibwezi dispensary in 1989. Sr Antonio Mahony set up laboratory testing facilities during her time there. Sr. Mary Okumu had a dentistry unit included in 2004. The dispensary is still under management of the Sisters of Mercy and is still serving the people of Kibwezi and beyond.

In 1977, Sr Albertus McHugh arrived in Kibwezi from Mbooni, to do catechetical work with the Catholic teachers in the many primary schools scattered in the interior of Machakos Diocese. She spent 10 years crisscrossing from school to school organizing religious education awareness program courses for teachers.

Also, during this time Sr. Albertus worked tirelessly to negotiate the getting of land from neighboring DWA estate, and to get funding to build Saint Joseph's Girls High School, Kibwezi. Saint Josephs admitted its first pupils on 17 February 1986 under the administration of Sr Kathleen O'Keefe. The school has since developed to triple stream boarding school. The sisters withdrew from principalship of the school in 1992, when the current Principal, Mrs Bridgett Mutinda, was appointed to the school. Sr Catherine Wabwoba, a Kenya Sister of Mercy, is currently Deputy Principal of the school.

Before Sr Albertus McHugh retired to Ireland in 1987, she had also helped the Kibwezi women's beekeeping project.

Kenyan Sisters Jennifer Kiuvu, Teresia Ngonge and Joyce Oluoch, have taught at different times in Kibwezi Township Primary School. Another Kenyan sister, Sr Winnie Njuguna set up Saint Paul's nursery school, Kibwezi on behalf of the parish. The sisters withdrew from the nursery school in December 2005, but they continue their services in the dispensary and in Saint Joseph's Girls High School.

In early 1980s, Sr Leonie Boland helped set up Amani Counseling Center, first at Westlands, and later at Mbagathi Rd, Nairobi. Leonie also became a fulltime director of the center. Not only does the Center offer counseling services, but it also trains counselors.

In the early 1980s Sr. Mary Killeen used to meet, on her way to and from Our Lady of Mercy Primary School, South B, many children from the nearby Mukuru slums who were out of school or had never been to school, because of their inability to pay the different school levies of those cost sharing days. At first she admitted some of them into Our Lady of Mercy, but having boys of 14 years of age in the same class as 6 year olds, was not satisfactory. Sr. Mary advised the parents to request the local district officer to identify a site in Kayaaba for a center. Thus, with the help of the Missionaries of Africa of South B Parish, Mukuru Promotion Center, MPC, started in 1985 as an informal school for those who had dropped out of school as well as for newcomers. For more online information on Santa Maria Mukuru Primary School [Click here](#)

The parents again approached Sr Mary to set up a formal primary school so that their children could have more status in society. Sr Mary went fulltime to Mukuru in 1990, and immediately set up Mukuru Kayaaba Primary School.

Then the parents of Lunga Lunga, Reuban and Mukuru Central, came looking for help for their children; thus schools in each of these areas find out in 1991. For more online information please [click here](#) and [click here Page 2](#)

St. Catherines and St. Bakita's primary schools started operating in 1992 and 1995 respectively.

For more online information on St Catherine's Primary School please [click here](#) and [click here Page 2](#)

For more online information on St Bakita's Primary School please [click here](#) and [click here Page 2](#)

The schools have got temporary classrooms of concrete floors and mabati or galvanized sheeting walls and roofs. Mukuru Central School was handed over to the management of the Marianist Society in 1997, while Ruben school was first given to a Japanese group but was eventually handed over to the Australian Christian Brothers in 2000.

It was soon realized that the children could not concentrate in school on empty stomachs. At first, a local businessman sponsored a school lunch program, until in 1993 World Food program came to their assistance. Also, many of the children were sickly, so a school clinic was set up to treat them and some very sick adults in the neighborhood. Social and community development workers were engaged to identify the neediest children as well as improve their living standards. For more online information on the Mukuru Project please [click here](#)

The social workers soon discovered many HIV/AIDS orphans and abandoned street children in the villages. At first MPC cared for some of these children in rented houses in the slums, but for genuine rehabilitation to take place, these children needed to be in a safer place away from the temptations of substance and sexual abuse. Thus, King Baudouin's Children's home came into existence in 1994. Currently the home accommodates proximately 60 children who attend St Bakhita Primary school.

The four MPC primary schools accommodate approximately 4000 children, yes there are quite several children still out of school. The children are not required to wear school uniform, many of them cannot afford shoes, but these externals are unimportant in Mukuru. Some of the children from the schools do very well at the end of primary school and MPC sponsors some of them to

secondary schools & technical training colleges. Some of those sponsored have gone to University, when University education was free.

Mary Immaculate Center, South B, was opened in 1996 to rehabilitate street boys of that area, and if possible, to integrate them into the formal education system and back into their families. About 80 boys are catered for at the center for the one- year programme, 20 of whom are accommodated there at nighttime.

In 1999 a group of doctors from Trnava University, Slovakia, and some Slovak businessmen set up Mary Immaculate Clinic, on the same compound as Saint Catherine's school and Mary Immaculate Center. As well as treating ordinary illnesses, the clinic also had a comprehensive HIV /AIDS program in place. Trnava University also offers a B Sc. Degree Course in Healthcare and Social work for those who qualify friend Mukuru. Sr. Jacinta Mwendu, helped by Sr Stella Mutiso and some local community health workers, carry out a community home based care program for the very sick or those too poor to go to a clinic. They also check on the children's health in the Mukuru schools at the beginning of each term.

In 1999, Sr Therese Stritch organized some women's groups to help them help themselves. She also held dressmaking and craft classes for young girls in a classroom at St Catherine's Primary School. A permanent skills training center was opened in 2001 near Saint Bakhita primary school. The center has now extended its courses to include hairdressing and computer studies. For more information please [click here](#)

McAuley House, built in 1991, replaced the former Sister's Dispensary, behind the convent garage at Makadara. At first, it was a centre for the Temporary Professed Sisters. Later, with Union, it became the Vice- Provincialate House. Currently it houses the Africa Mercy Justice Desk, the Provincial Project Co-Ordinator's office, the Provincial Archives, as well as at times accommodation for upcountry sisters and seminars for the temporary professed.

From Elphin to Mutomo 1962

Early in 1962, Monsignor William Dunne, SPS, visited Mother Regis Clancy at Sligo Mercy Convent, Elphin Diocese, In Ireland, to see if they could 'spare a few nurses' to bring medical services to the very marginalized people of southern Kitui, and to open a diocesan hospital at Mutomo. Mother Regis, accompanied by four pioneers, Srs. Teresita Conneally, Paschal Gibbons, Goretti Cunniffe and Mary McDermott, arrived in Nairobi on 11th December later that same year. Mother Regis was determined to have their first celebration of the Eucharist in their new foundation at Mutomo on Sisters of Mercy foundation day, 12 December. Even though it took the sisters five hours to reach Mutomo, Regis had her wish.

Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, but more commonly known as Mutomo Mission Hospital, was then under construction. The sisters set up a clinic in the Convent and started mobile clinics over rough dusty roads in the dry season, but sometimes impassable during the rainy season. By 1964 the hospital was ready to admit patients. July 1967 saw the arrival of the first small plane on the airstrip on the outskirts of the town. This marked the beginning of visits by the Flying Doctors Service and of other volunteer doctors and staff for specialized services. 1973 saw the commencement of the Leprosy Program; by 1981 a Tuberculosis Program was also included. An Enrolled Midwifery Training Program started in 1970 and continued until 1990 when such programs were phased out by the Ministry of Health. Because of the remoteness the area, it has been difficult to keep qualified staff. So it was a great boost to the hospital when in 1972, Sr. (Dr.) Marian Dolan arrived as a resident medical officer to the hospital, and later, in 1980, returned as a surgeon. 1978 saw the expansion of the Public Health Outreach to include the training of traditional birth attendants and of community workers. Since the mid- 1980s, the hospital has been very actively involved in HIV /AIDS programs. A dentistry unit was added in 1998.

Mutomo is a semi-arid area of Kenya where famine occurs all too often due to lack of sufficient rainfall. Water is always a major concern for the hospital. Underground water is salty; a rainwater catching dam was built but it silts very easily. The hospital's main fresh water supply is from the rainwater harvested from the hospital roofs and stored in water tanks. Medical and other supplies have still to be brought from Nairobi, approximately 250 kilometers away with the last 76 kilometers still a dirt road. Electricity has not yet reached Mutomo.

The hospital gets its power supply from sometimes erratic generators. Only within the past year have direct dialing and mobile phone services come to Mutomo, but the direct dialing system is very seldom operational. Financing is another serious responsibility for the hospital as the local people due to climatic conditions, are mainly subsistence farmers. Yet, despite all these constraints, the hospital continues to offer quality services to the sick of Southern Kitui and beyond.

In 1963, of more than 200 pupils in the local primary school at Mutomo, only two were girls. Education of girls was not then valued locally. In February 1964, Srs. Bernadette Meehan and Oliver Power arrived in Mutomo to teach in Mutomo primary school. By 1969 there were over 122 girls in the school.

Then the local people requested the sisters to start a secondary school for girls. Mutomo Girls Secondary School admitted its first students in 1970, the sisters having withdrawn from the primary school to teach in the newly started Harambee secondary school. The school very soon developed into a very successful two stream boarding school. The sisters handed over the principalship of the school in 1981. Sr. Kathleen Rooney was deputy principal up to 1993. Presently Sr. Teresia Mwaniki is a member of the school's Board of Governors.

At the invitation of Archbishop J.J. McCarthy of Nairobi, Srs. Francis O'Hara, Benigna Fallon, Martha Geelan and Kathleen Giblin, arrived from Mutomo to Ngarariga, on 23 September 1967, to set up a secondary school for local girls and to provide medical facilities. They were formally introduced to the people of Ngarariga by the parish council chairman, Mr Adolf Kamua, on the feast of Our Lady of Mercy, 24 September 1967.

The Elphin sisters had got the new convent built in readiness, Francis O'Hara and Benigna Fallon set about organizing the secondary school in two wooden structures, once an emergency Mau Mau hospital, but more recently vacated by a boy's secondary school. Sister Pauline Lavin joined them in October 1967. Permanent buildings were put up as funds became available. The school was at first an unaided secondary school up to Form Two. The school developed excellent facilities and is now a double stream government school.

Martha Geelan and Kathleen Giblin organized their clinic with outreaches attached, in a large disused one-roomed carpentry workshop building, which they later got renovated for better services. They also ran domiciliary

midwifery and pre-school feeding programs. However, the sisters closed the clinic in April 1976 as the people had opted to go to the free government clinics which had been set up in the area.

In the 1980s, Sr. Therese Stritch organized an income-generating local women's groups. These groups continue today and also include dressmaking, knitting and cookery classes for girls unable to get into or have dropped out of secondary school. When the parish opened Our Lady Help of Christians Health Center in 2000, Kenya sisters, Selina Mbuli, and later Patricia Kyambu, worked there for some time.

Ngarariga convent is currently the Mercy Postulancy House under the direction of Sr. Margaret O'Brien. Sr. Teresia Waraga teaches in the nearby Ngarariga Primary school.

Three Elphin Sisters of Mercy, Srs. Francis O'Hara, Xavier Ryan, and Paschal Gibbons, formed the pioneer community to Karen, Nairobi, in 1971. They stayed in the priest's house until a separate convent was ready in 1974. Francis at first, was secretary to the Rector at Saint Thomas Aquinas Seminary, Xavier taught in the local Saint Mary's Primary School, while Paschal worked in the local City Council Health Center. Sr. Breda McDermott joined them in 1974 and taught at Karen C Primary School, a short distance further down the road. Karen became the Elphin Sisters Regional House 1971-79. Later, Sr. Margaret Lennon, Karen community, worked for some time in the Nairobi Archdiocesan Development Office. The sisters withdrew from the Karen Mission in 1981.

From Cork to Eldama Ravine 1964

Bishop Joseph Houlihan, Eldoret Diocese, requested the Sisters of Mercy, Cork Diocese, to set up what later became known as Mercy Hospital, Edama Ravine. When the two pioneers, Srs. Teresita Nolan and Borgia Curtin, arrived in Kenya in September 1964, the hospital was under construction. They worked for a year in the War Memorial Hospital, Eldoret, now known as Usain Gishu District Hospital, while they stayed with the Loreto Sisters, Eldoret. The sisters went to live at Eldama Ravine in October 1965, and Mercy Hospital opened its outpatient Department in January 1966. The Sisters also started mobile clinics to outlying areas by February 1966. Borgia went to work at the War Memorial Hospital, Nakuru, to earn a salary to help in the running Mercy Hospital. The sisters at first, met with strong opposition from the African Inland Missionary Church who regarded Eldama Ravine as their territory. However, patience and perseverance won the day. Different sisters worked at War Memorial up to 1971 when their services were more urgently needed at Eldama Ravine.

Sr. Emma Moloney arrived at Eldama Ravine in 1966, to start an extension to Shinomi Primary School. This extension was later to become in 1972, the much-needed Eldama Ravine Girls High School under the administration of the Sisters up to 1992.

Over the years other Sisters of Mercy from St. Marie's of the Isle, Cork, came to Eldama Ravine. However, around 1968, Bishop Cornelius Lucey of Cork, stipulated that St. Marie's of the Isle, Cork, could not have more than five sisters in Kenya at any one time; he needed sisters for his Peru mission. But the Mercies were undaunted! They sought and received many Sisters at different times, from Mercies of other diocese in Ireland. The Sisters of Mercy withdrew from Eldama Ravine in 1993 after 28 years of dedicated service to the people of Eldama Ravine and far beyond.

In 1980, Srs. Augustine Gleeson and Mary Harnett, Eldama Ravine, made a new foundation at Njoro, one hour's drive south of Eldama Ravine and about 50 kilometers South of the Equator. In 1969, the chairman Njoro County Council requested St. Marie's of the Isle, Cork, for sisters to set up a Health Center at Njoro in conjunction with the government. Misereor gave funds and the Health Center was ready by 1976. In the meantime, government policy had changed

regarding staffing of health centers. The Sisters, being Kenya registered nurses, were told that they were too highly qualified to be employed in in Njoro government health center. As a concession, they were allowed to operate Huruma Mobile Clinic in the Njoro area, at first from Eldama Ravine, and later from Njoro. In 1980, the Sisters went to live at Njoro and built a small mercy clinic there. Many of the wounded of the 1998 ethnic clashes were treated by Sr Marie Ngui at Huruma Clinic. Augustine was also Nakuru Diocesan Medical Co-ordinator for many years. Sr. Emmanuel Maxwell was particularly involved in community development work helping the local women build rainwater storage tanks from roof catchment areas. Sr. Margaret Mary Ryan taught in Njoro Boys High School from 1980-85. Sr. Jennifer Kiuvu taught in Njoro Primary School. Sr Rosetta Gray came from Limerick, Ireland, in 1989 and took charge of catechetical work in Larmudiac Parish. She produced a catechetical book for teachers, God Calls Us. In 1997, Sr. Stella McCormack moved to Njoro with the Vic-Provincial Archives. The Sisters of Mercy withdrew from Njoro in December 1999 after more than 20 years of devoted service to the people there and in the surrounding areas.

When Sr. Mary Clare Dale-Green, English Mercy Institute and Headmistress of Kakuma Boys Secondary School, North Turkana, heard that the Cork and Ross Mercy Sisters, were withdrawing from Eldama Ravine in February 1993, she travelled that same day to Ravine to request Sr. Annunciata Desmond to teach in her school. While Annunciata taught in Kakuma Boys for the remainder of 1993, Sr. Margaret Twomey, also from Ravine, went to work in Kakuma Hospital.

The Cork Sisters of Mercy decided to go to the newly established Parish of Lokori, South Turkana, to bring mercy there. Srs. Annunciata Desmond and Margaret Twomey arrived in Lokori at 5:30 p.m. on 11 January 1994 to start their work there. Annunciata joined staff of Lokori Girls Primary School, while Margaret started Primary Health Care Mobile Clinics. A Turkana Sister of Mercy, Esther Erus, is currently in charge at the clinic. Sr. Louise Roche joined Annunciata in the school in October 1994. In the afternoons, Annunciata and Louise started, beadmaking, needle work and home management classes for the local women. Louise soon became full time involved in the women's activities as well as conducting separate literacy classes for shepherd boys and shamba girls. Mercy Center, Lokori opened in September 1998 where Sr. Therese Stritch now has skills training classes in dressmaking for the local girls, as well as continuing with the literacy classes. In 2003, the Sisters started a goat project to help the poorest of the poor. Lokori is a very interesting place, a 7 hours' journey from Nairobi, with sand, and more sand, everywhere.

Temperatures can reach 40 degrees in the daytime. Sometimes the sisters sleep on the rooftop under the beautiful starry night sky. The local people are nomadic; they move with their camels, sheep, and goats in search of water and pasture. Cattle rustling and banditry, are frequent occurrences in South Turkana. Once Annunciata and Louise were stopped at gunpoint'; they were lucky that they had only to part with KShs 2,000/-!

For more information on the Mercy Centre school Lokori please [click here](#)

For more information on Lokori please [click here Page 4-12](#)

From Kildare and Leighlin to Mombasa 1973

Sr. Mary O'Toole, St. Leo's, Carlow, Ireland, had an opportunity to fulfill a childhood wish to work on the Missions, when she came to teach at the Loreto Sisters mixed St. Charles Lwanga High School, Changamwe, Mombasa, in 1973, where the majority of the students were both materially and academically poor. In 1976, she reluctantly bade farewell to Changamwe, when her three-year contract expired. She then went to teach at Saint Mary's Junior Seminary, Kwale, Mombasa, which was then under the administration of the Holy Ghost Fathers. She was joined by Sr. Anne Doyle in 1977. Mary went on sabbatical in 1979. She was replaced at the Junior Seminary by Sr. Francis Conway. Anne and Frances remained on the staff of the seminary until 1986 when both returned to Ireland.

In October 1978, Srs. Mary Ryan and Nancy McLoughlin, came from Carlow, Ireland, at the request of Fr. Paddy Leonard, CSSp, to teach in Riara Harambee Secondary School, Kiambu. The sisters stayed in a staff house belonging to Loreto High School, Kiambu, which house the sisters had to vacate in 1980, as it was required by Loreto High. Mary and Nancy then went to teach in St. Joseph's Junior Seminary, Mwingi, Kitui District from 1980-84, They returned to Ireland in 1984, having left St. Joseph's among the top secondary schools in Kenya at national examinations.

From Killaloe to Nuu 1980

Srs. Anne Considine, Nuala Galvin, Breda Naughton and Patricia O'Meara, Sisters of Mercy from the Killaloe Diocese, Ireland, landed in Kenya on 28 October 1980, at the invitation of Bishop William Dunne, Kitui, to open a new foundation at Nuu, Mwingi district. Anne and Breda had previously, as well as other Killaloe sisters, worked with the Elphin Mercies at Mutomo in both the hospital and school. They paid their first visit to Nuu on 2 November 1980, but Anne and Patricia were unable to return due to the muddy roads and flooded rivers until 14 November. On their first night in Nuu, their dining room table consisted of a plank of wood held up by two chairs! Patricia organized her many long hazardous dusty sandy journeys at first by motor bicycle, to the many primary schools further into the 'bush' to initiate her catechetical work among the teachers and students. She and her successors, organized seminars, and workshops at different venues to encourage and affirm the Catholic teachers and students. Later, they acquired a Rocky Suzuki, but due to the bad roads, the Rocky often had to spend long periods in 'hospital'!

Anne Considine first got involved in the distribution of famine relief food and a Mother and Child programme. She also initiated agriculture, tree planting, home science and secretarial skills training. Nuu Vocational Technical Centre was born in a small room divided into two to serve as dressmaking, and secretarial classrooms. Better facilities were soon built.

However, in 1990, the secretarial section of the Centre, moved from Nuu to Nguutani which is much more convenient for the students to do the Kenya National Examinations Council Examinations.

When Breda and Nuala came to stay at Nuu, Breda started a home and mobile clinic to places without medical facilities of any kind. Nuala initiated a mobile community-based health care program which also took her far into the 'bush' to give basic health care education, especially to the women.

In 1990, Sr. Angela Hartigan started teaching in Nuu Secondary School, a mixed school. She became the Principal in November 1990 and carried out many developments in the school. In December 1995, she left a thriving school in good hands. She later returned as a staff member in 2000-01.

Sr. Elizabeth Brennan, as well as being Religious Education Advisor, worked tirelessly to get a special needs school set up for local children. It is now a separate school in its own right. Sr Christina Quigley became Kitui Diocesan Family Life Co-Ordinator in 1986, continued in the same ministry when she moved to Nguutani in 1989. Sr. Agnes Kariuki was the first Sister of Mercy on Nuu Primary School staff. Sr. Jennifer Kiuvu later became Headteacher of the school. Sisters are still involved in Nuu VTC, Nuu clinic and in primary education. Even in 2006, Nuu has got neither electricity nor telephone nor a tarmac road, but it has got beautiful starry night skies. From 1982- 84 Sr. Regina Powell, Killaloe, worked in the dispensary near the Ursuline Convent at Mutane, Kitui.

In September 1989, the Killaloe sisters opened a second house at Nguutani, 90 kilometers from Nuu, on the way to Nairobi. Srs. Christina Quigley and Patricia O'Meara came from Nuu, while Srs. Mary Byrne and Eileen Cahill came from Ireland, to form the first Nguutani community. Christina and Patricia continued their respective Family Life Education, and catechetical work in the Nguutani area. Mary Byrne came to set up Mercy Commercial College, Nguutani. The commercial section of Nuu VTC later transferred its equipment to the newly established Nguutani college. Eileen Cahill taught for four years at Thitani Girls Secondary School.

For more information on Nguutani please [click here](#)

But the Sisters had some very traumatic experiences during their first six months at Nguutani. Three times their house was broken into at nighttime; and less than two weeks after the last break-in, Mary Byrne was very tragically killed on 1 March 1990, in a road accident near Thika town, while her companion, Christina Quigley, received serious head injuries and had to return to Ireland. But the Sisters did not allow those terrible experiences to influence their commitment to the people of Nguutani. Sr Loreto McNamara and Evelyn Lyons, a volunteer secondary school teacher, arrived from Ireland, in September 1990 for the opening of Mercy College, Nguutani. Sr Bridie McGowan joined Nguutani community in 1994 to continue her work as HIV/AIDS Awareness Co-ordinator in the area. Patricia O'Meara set up the nucleus of St. Monicah's Skills Training Centre in the early 1990s. Sr. Veronica Quigley worked there from 1987-1997. As well as offering dressmaking, tailoring, cooking, health education, computer, agriculture-courses, Sr. Bernadette Ndegwa is currently preparing to offer a hairdressing course at the centre.

From Clonfert to Mutune

1977

Sr. Colette Murray, Loughrea Sisters of Mercy, taught for nine years, 1977-86, with the Irish Ursulines at St. Angela's Girls Secondary School, Mutune Social Centre and at Tungutu Secondary School, Kitui.

From Kerry to Kipkelion

1983

In the early 1980, the local leaders in Kipkelion, approached their Parish Priest, Fr Gerry Roche, SPS, to assist them set up a girl's secondary school. Fr. Roche went to the Sisters of Mercy, Kerry Diocese, for Sisters. By June 1983, Srs. Noreen Foley and Margaret Slattery were identified to establish Mercy Girls Secondary School, Kipkelion, and Sr. Catherine O'Brien to run a mobile clinic. Mercy girls admitted its first students on 1st February 1984. In 1986, it became a boarding school; and in 1987, at the request of the local community, the school became a diocesan private school. In 1991, a technical section was incorporated into the school where dressmaking, tailoring, typing, agriculture, religious education and English are taught. In 1994 St. Monica's nursery school was added.

Sr. Catherine O'Brien started mobile clinics to outlying areas in September 1984. The clinic was handed over to Kipkelion Parish in 1997. Sr Veronica Quigley became Headmistress in 1998 and was joined by Sister Angela Hartigan in 1999. It was handed over the school to the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph, Asumbi in 2000.

From Cloyne to Chepareria 1984

Fr. Michael Dillon, SPS, went to the Sisters of Mercy, Cloyne Diocese, Ireland for sisters to help in the newly established self help Chepareria Girls Secondary School. Pioneers Srs. Mary Harnett, Peter Hegarty and Thesesa Burke arrived in Chepareria on 15 December 1984. Mary Harnett had previously worked in Huruma mobile clinic, Njoro. She started Primary School Health Care program at Chepareria. Peter Hegarty began her catechetical visits to Chepareria girls and to the surrounding primary schools, while Theresa Burke taught in Chepareria Girls. In 1989 Peter Hegarty got a small Chapel built where, students, catechists, religious education awareness program participants and other small groups can attend Mass and prayers in a homely atmosphere. In 1996, Peter started St. Michael's Nursery School, initially with seven pupils, but that number soon increased to over ninety. In 2000, Sr. Veronica Quigley opened Mercy Center where the local women and young girls are taught income- generating skills of cooking, knitting, dressmaking. In 2005, Sr. Peter Hegarty produced, before retiring to Ireland, 'A Pastoral Catechism for Teachers', for use in Kitale Diocese. Currently the two sisters at Chepareria, Veronica Quigley and Teresia Njoroge, are engaged in Mercy Centre and the Nursery school respectively. For more information on Cheperaria please [click here](#)

Updated information on Cheperaria please [click here Pages 1-3](#)

Mercy Union in Kenya in 1994

As has been said earlier, at first Sisters came to Kenya from different independent Mercy units in Ireland. It was not until 14 July 1994, that the different independent units in Ireland, came together to form one unit, the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy. However, the coming together of the Sisters of Mercy in Kenya had begun much earlier than 1994. The first gathering of the Sisters in Kenya took place in September 1978 when they came together to celebrate the Bicentenary of the Birth of Catherine McAuley, our foundress. The next meeting, organized by Sr. Augustine Gleeson, was held at St. Mary's Pastoral Center, Nakuru, in April 1984. With the increase in the number of professed Kenyan sisters into the Dublin congregation, many of whom were directed there by other Mercy groups, some felt that some of the Kenyan sisters should return to ministry sending group. Thus, at the first Mercy Kenya meeting held in September 1985, it was proposed that the separate autonomous Mercy Groups AMK, should be set up in Kenya for those willing to join it. However, with the advent of the Mercy Ireland initiative towards union in Ireland in the late 1980s, the idea of AMK was abandoned. At the first Congregational Chapter in July 1994, Kenya was constituted a Vice-Province In the new Congregation. At the Congregational Gathering 2000, Kenya became a Province. Sr Hilary Finnegan the first Provincial Leader in the Kenyan Province.

New Foundations & Ministries Since Union 1994

Srs. Teresia Njonge, Anne Itotia and Patricia Kyambu went to live, in 1996, on the compound of Mukuru Promotion Centre Headquarters and to form the first Express Community, called Express because of its proximity to Express Kenya Co., of Enterprise Road, Nairobi. The Sisters who live there are all involved in the Mukuru Promotion Centre project.

Updated Information on Mukuru Promotion Centre please [click here Pages 1-5](#)

Srs. Una Duignan and Teresia Waraga arrived in Masii on 31 December 1996 to set up a new foundation there. They were later joined by Sr. Theresa Burke in September 1997. Sr. Rose Macharia had earlier run a mobile clinic from Makueni to Masii but it did not prove viable. Una started a parish nursery school at the back of the parish hall. Teresia went to teach in the newly established Saint Mary's Primary School, Masii, where at first, she did not have even a classroom, and also had to teach the lower classes in their mother tongue which she did not know. Theresa Burke went to teach for two years, in Twone Mbee Secondary School, where the students were more interested in the rats running across the classroom rafters than in their maths lesson! In 2000 Sr Caroline Kinyua joined the community and taught in the newly established St. Stephan's Secondary School. Masii was also a halfway house for the Mutomo Sisters on their way to and from Nairobi. However, the Sisters withdrew from Masii on 1st. October 2005 after nine years of ministry there.

In the late 1990, Sr. Aloysius Courtney went to work at Nyumbani Children's Home for HIV/AIDS orphans, Nairobi.

Sr. Margaret Twomey, from Lokori, took up an appointment as Medical Co-Ordinator for Lodwar Diocese in May 2000, when she also moved to live at Lodwar town. Her work entails the coordination and facilitation of community-based health care services reaching out to approximately 92 villages, some many kilometers apart in the Turkana desert. Sr. Yvonne Channels of Mercy Grafton Congregation, Australia, arrived in Kenya, to set up and manage Bethany House, a diocesan hospitality house, at Lodwar. As well as providing daily lunch for a number of diocesan personnel, Bethany House, also caters for diocesan visitors and diocesan group meetings. But despite being in the desert,

Yvonne has no prospect of boredom, her work “being very challenging, exciting and at times just plain desperate’.

Updated information on Lodwar please [click here Page 8](#)

In 2000, DKA-Austria, a development agency of the Austrian Catholic Children's Organization, requested that Sr. Mary Killeen set up and be the Director of their Nairobi DKA Support Office. The Office advocates for the rights of the poor, identifies the needs of target groups, and works with local partners to address their needs. It also facilitates, monitors, and encourages their different project partners, and small development organisations who work to alleviate poverty, and in particular those working with street and slum children, and youth at risk.

Some sisters are also involved in the counseling ministry. Sr. Sally Mounsey does counseling work at the Mater Hospital, Nairobi. She also pays regular visits to the men's prison at Langata, Nairobi. Sr. Teresia Ngonge recently set up a Counselling Center at the Catholic University of East Africa, while Sr. Scholastica Nganda Is currently a counsellor in the Dean of Students Department at Kenyatta University, Nairobi.

Mercy Missionaries from Kenya 1997

Mercy hears 'the cry of the poor'. Appeals for help from the smaller Mercy Regions of Nigeria and Zambia, have been heard in Kenya. Sr. Joyce Oluoch went to Nigeria for six months in 1997 to promote Mercy as well as to do relief work in one of the Sisters' schools there. Sr. Rose Macharia has also recently been to Nigeria on vocations promotion and formation work. In February 2005, Sr. Patricia Kyambu and Rosemary Wanyoike were missioned to Zambia. As well as doing mercy promotion work, they have helped the sisters there in their health ministries. Patricia is currently accompanying some Zambian women in the early stages of the Mercy way of life. It is encouraging for young Nigerian and Zambian women to meet and interact with other African Sisters of Mercy. Their work has already borne some fruit. Presently, there are two Nigerian women at different stages of formation in Kenya. Soon, Zambian women will join the others in the formation process, so that Mercy can really take root in both of those countries.

**Sr. Liz Fletcher, Provincial, Sisters of Mercy, Province of Kenya,
April 2006**

This booklet has taken you on a walk in the footsteps of other people. Some are or have been known to you while in other cases you look through the eyes of another you have not known. It has taken you through different times, landscapes, and labours. You form a picture of an outer journey and at the same time get glimpses of an inner compass.

As we celebrate 50 years of the story of the Sisters of Mercy in Kenya, I would like to express my gratitude to all the sisters, coworkers, benefactors, families, friends and associates who have been part of that story. Only you and God share full awareness.

The roots of the Mercy tree are many and spread far. It is my hope that the branches will continue to strengthen and grow to reach peoples and places that are as yet mystery.

Thanks to all who have taken the interest and time to Chronicle this journey. You provide us with food for reflection and inspiration for the present and future.

In the words of Catherine McAuley, who made many journeys:
“we have one solid comfort amidst this little tripping about: our hearts can always be in the same place, centered in God for whom alone we go forward or stay back”.

May we always be aware of the presence of that same God as our compass.

Sr. Elizabeth Fletcher, Provincial
Sisters of Mercy,
Province of Kenya April 2006

For more updated Information on the Sisters of Mercy In Kenya please [click here](#)