



Congregation of the
Sisters of Mercy
Northern Province

Annual Report 2021
Republic of Ireland

Statement of Provincial Team (Trustees) Responsibilities

The Provincial Leader and the Provincial Leadership Team (*Trustees*) are required to prepare an Annual Report and Financial Statements for each year which gives a true and fair account of the state of affairs of the Province/Charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources for that year. In preparing these financial statements, they are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that this basis applies.

The Provincial Leader and the Provincial Leadership Team are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Province and to enable them to ensure that the Financial Statements comply with statutory requirements. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and protection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved on behalf of the Provincial Leadership Team:

Signed and dated by the Provincial Leader and at least one other Team Member:

Signed:

Date:

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Introduction

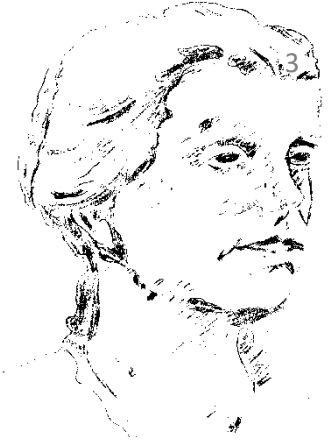
Our History

The Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy is an international Roman Catholic Religious Congregation. The Congregation was founded by Catherine McAuley who was born into an 18th Century Dublin where there was a great divide between a privileged minority who held power and influence and the vast majority who lived in very poor conditions. Catherine, influenced by her Christian faith, used her inheritance to set up a centre in Baggot Street, Dublin, Ireland from which she and her early companions responded to the needs of people who were disadvantaged in society. From the beginning, Catherine and her companions saw the necessity of providing basic education as a way of enabling people to improve their lives. They also recognized and responded to the need to improve healthcare in the city. In the years that followed their founding, the Sisters of Mercy focused on providing education and healthcare, and consequently established and ran schools and hospitals, and cared in whatever way possible, for the needs of those people who were poorest in society.

Our Mission Today

In recent generations, and as Government provision in the areas of healthcare and education continued to improve, the work of the Sisters became more varied. Motivated by the Christian vision of a world of equality, justice, peace and care of the earth, there has been a consistent effort to respond to unmet needs, to work for justice and to advocate for the voiceless. Sisters are consciously committed to

Eco Justice, through raising awareness and through working with others, to acknowledge and restore people's relationship with the earth and the whole community of life. Through this



Catherine McAuley

work we aim to redress the injustices affecting those most impoverished by the destruction of the earth's natural systems and to promote sustainable living. Efforts to support access to education for children, young people and adults have continued. Sisters are involved in various forms of healing work. Pioneering work has been done in the area of addiction, reconciliation and addressing the needs of refugees. The number of Sisters involved in pastoral care roles increased over the years. Many continue to be involved in promoting spirituality. Now that the age profile of the Sisters has increased, the need to care for older Sisters has become a necessity.

Our Present Structure

In 1994, the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy (Ireland) was formed by the union of twenty-seven autonomous Mercy Congregations, formerly of Ireland and South Africa. The Congregation is currently comprised of six Provinces – four in Ireland, one in Kenya, one in South Africa, and a Region on the United States. The purpose of this union was to ensure greater effectiveness

in the mission of Mercy. The Constitutions of the new Congregation were approved by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated life and Societies of Apostolic Life in 1995. Each Irish Province is recognised in civil law as an unincorporated association with its own Charity Number: since the Northern Province covers two jurisdictions we are registered as a Charity with the Charities Commission in Northern Ireland as well as in the Republic of Ireland.

The Northern Province was formed from eight former Diocesan units: Raphoe, Derry, Down and Connor, Dromore, Armagh, Clogher, Kilmore and Meath. The Province is comprised of six counties in Northern Ireland (Tyrone, Derry, Antrim, Down, Armagh & Fermanagh) and eight counties from the Republic of Ireland (Donegal, Monaghan, Cavan, Leitrim, Louth, Meath, Westmeath & Offaly).

169 Sisters
reside in
RoI in 63
locations



This Annual Trustee Report gives an account of the Charity in the Republic of Ireland

Our Mercy Mission

“The mission of the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy is to bear witness to the compassionate and merciful love of God ... Our administration of temporal goods must express the Gospel call to justice, charity and almsgiving ...

We use these goods for our common life, for the various apostolates of mercy and for the needs of the Church, especially the poor and deprived.”

(Constitutions 104 – 1984)

The Purpose of the Charity is the advancement of Religion, and the prevention or relief of poverty.

The Charity aims to support the religious and other charitable works carried out in the name of the Charity and to care for the Sisters throughout their lives.

We fulfil the purposes of the charity through the Activities and Ministries of the Charity in the following areas:

- *Congregational Living – the Advancement of Religion*
- *Healthcare and the Compassionate Care of the Sick and Those in Need*
- *Relief of Poverty, Promotion of Education, Justice and other Charitable Activities including Collaboration and Support of Other Groups.*
- *Positive Impact Investments*
- *Heritage and Upkeep of Listed Assets*

Our Mercy Mission and Strategic Direction 2019 - 2025

In line with the Activities and Ministries of the Charity and faithful to the direction set by the Congregational Chapter July 2018, and Provincial Chapter held in February 2019, the Sisters of Mercy, Northern Province set a strategic focus on the life and mission of the Charity for the coming six years.

Congregational Living – the Advancement of Religion

As the charitable endeavours of the Sisters of Mercy are modelled on the compassionate love of God for all God’s creation members will:

- Attend to the contemplative dimension of living
- Explore models of leadership needed for the future
- Provide care for sick and aging members

Healthcare and the Compassionate Care of the Sick and Those in Need

Collaborating and networking with other organisations and agencies the Charity aims to:

- Continue to support efforts to provide food, health care and housing both locally and globally
- Support people in need, spiritually as well as materially.

Relief of Poverty, Promotion of Education, Justice and other Charitable Activities including Collaboration and Support of Other Groups.

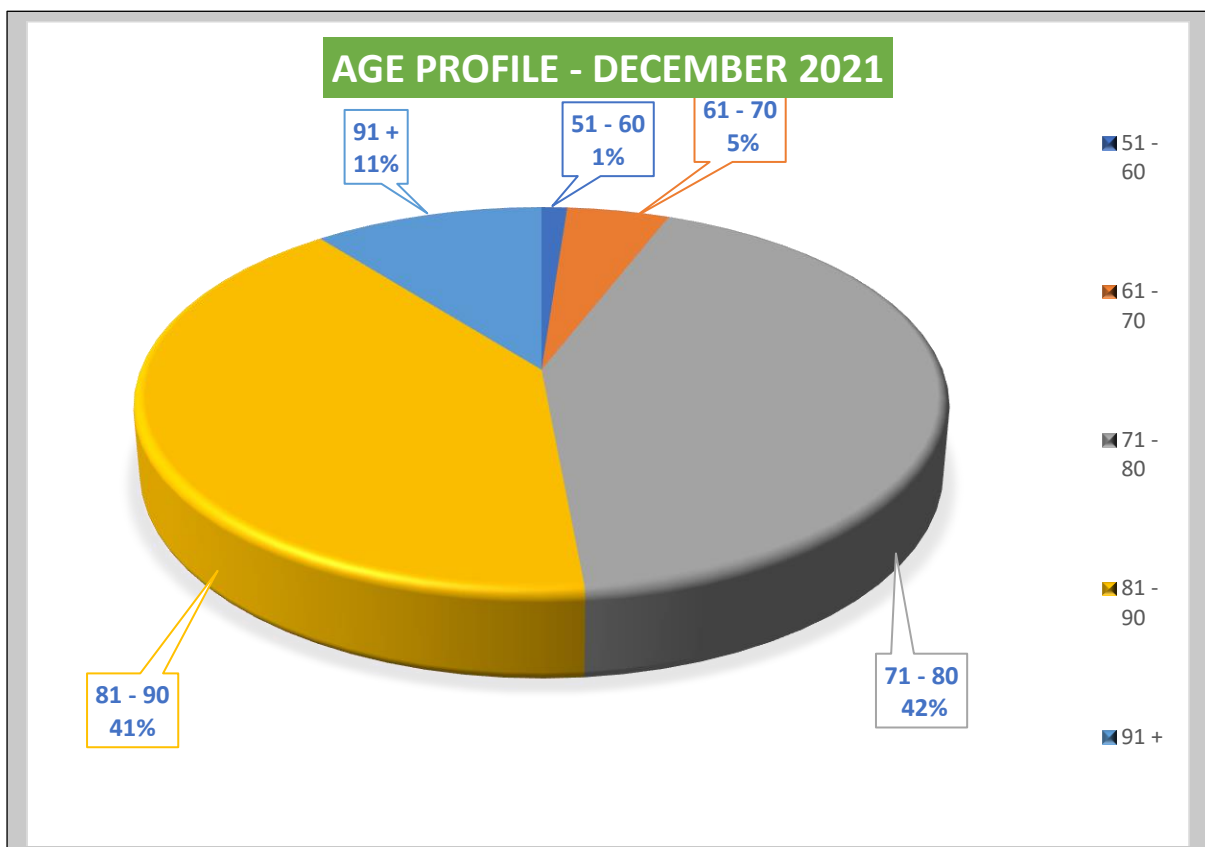
In working with other charities and groups who hold concerns consistent with its own, the Charity advances consciousness and education in relation to the following:

- The urgent need to address the issue of climate change at personal, communal and global levels
- People trafficking and the plight of migrants and refugees in Ireland and internationally
- The implications of Brexit for the Charity
- The need to build a just and peaceful society.

Positive Impact Investments

Conscious of the need to make its resources (personnel, properties, finance) available for furtherance of its mission, the Charity attends to the impact of the its investments by:-

- Viewing its investment portfolio as part of its Mission
- Seeking to bring about a more just society and contributing to care of the earth through a positive investment strategy
- Committing all of the investments within its Portfolio towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Public Benefit

The advancement of religion permeates all activities of the Charity. Benefits are the support and promotion of the holistic wellbeing - physical, emotional, spiritual, psychological and social - of the individual and communities, thus improving the general fabric of society.

The benefits of the prevention and relief of poverty flow from the provision of support and access to healthcare and education to people experiencing poverty and deprivation. The charity grant aids other charities to alleviate poverty and improve social conditions.

Public Benefit is achieved in a variety of ways, as shown in the Activities and Achievements of the Charity described throughout this Report.

The Beneficiaries are peoples of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and any part of the world without distinction on grounds of age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, nationality, ethnic identity, political or religious opinion.

Public Benefit is delivered through religious activities, impact investments, overseas aid, ecological awareness and a variety of services provided to families, refugees, older people, children, and to people experiencing hunger and poverty.

Activities & Achievements

Preliminary note

In 2021 the initial challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Charity continued to impact the focus and engagements of the Sisters of Mercy, Northern Province. By necessity the safety and welfare of our Sisters – many of whom are in advancing years – was a dominant concern. Compliance with Government guidelines, civic responsibility in keeping everyone safe, health and safety restrictions and the changed dynamics in school, church and community settings, ministry spaces and domestic contexts affected the opportunities for pastoral and community support programmes, outreach work and pastoral activities and gatherings. This is evidenced in the contained report of 2021.

However, the impulse to ministry and pastoral work, involvement in essential services and the innate capacity to re-imagine and adapt found new avenues of engagement, As well as conventional engagements, members of the Charity made use of technology and social media platforms to give new outlets and expressions to the activities of the Charity in 2021. This is clearly reflected in this Report.

Congregational Living and the Advancement of Religion

Since the Charity is a religious congregation, the nurturance of faith and the development of spirituality are of central importance. This focus influences and underpins all aspects of the life and work of the Charity. The Sisters are committed to daily personal prayer as well as a pattern of communal prayer suited to their local communities.

All aspects of the Charity's work involve the advancement of religion. The Trustees continue to assess the Charity's work and to search for new ways of carrying out this ministry. Congregational Living and the Advancement in Religion are mainly carried

out through community living and ministry in local parishes where Sisters reside and actively participate and interact with the Parish faith community. Through this living and praying, Sisters from the Charity support people in their daily needs and are committed to personal and communal prayer.

Those Sisters who earn salaries, stipends, or who receive pensions, donate them to the Charity and therefore have no independent means of support. They have devoted their lives and earnings to the furtherance of the Charity's objectives. Many also give their services free in their various ministries and continue to do so well beyond retirement age. Hence the work of the Charity includes the provision of living accommodation, the upkeep, up-skilling and retraining of sisters so that they will be able to continue in their service to the public.

The Trustees are cognisant of the age profile of Sisters, the work of the Charity, property requirements and financial implications. Residential accommodation is kept under review to ensure a continuum of care and choice as appropriate to each sister's needs. The Charity provides designated Assisted Living accommodation in Ardee, Tullamore, Dundalk, Kells and Ballyshannon.

The Aims of the Trustees are summarised below and will continue to be applicable for the foreseeable future:

- Enabling Sisters to continue and further the Mission of the Congregation
- Providing the necessary training to ensure that this can happen.
- Enabling Sisters to continue with individual ministries for as long as possible.
- Providing accommodation appropriate to the needs of all the Sisters.

F **Faith Development/Parish and Prayer Ministry**

As a Religious Congregation, faith and spiritual development, parish work and prayer ministry are of prime importance to the Trustees. A number of Sisters seek to respond to the hunger for God in society by promoting faith development, engaging in inter-faith dialogue and nurturing spirituality.

Review of
Achievements and
Activities in 2021

Many of the Sisters, even in retirement, are actively involved with people and clergy in their local parishes, in ministries aimed at facilitating a deepening of faith and relationship with God. The Sisters collaborate with others, not only in faith formation and Sacramental preparation but in all community activities, supporting and encouraging the development of leadership among the people and campaigning for services for older people. Home visitation of the sick and housebound, prayer and scripture groups, bereavement support, retreats, guided prayer, and the offering of experiences in creative forms of prayer are some of the services offered to people in the business of everyday life in the 21st century. A sample of this work is listed below:

- ❖ Diocesan Liturgy Group Member
- ❖ Céili Community Member
- ❖ Parish Liturgical Ministers
- ❖ Diocesan Pastoral Work
- ❖ Parish Ministry
- ❖ Marriage Tribunal Work
- ❖ Prayer Guide
- ❖ Spiritual Direction
- ❖ Retreat Director
- ❖ Diocesan Pastoral Assistant
- ❖ Diocesan Pastoral Council Member

Sisters also offer emerging spiritual development programmes through Creation Spirituality and Ritual, Higher Consciousness, Sacred Dance, Mindfulness and Practices for Wellness, and seasonal reflection days.

Spiritual Direction

Spiritual life is about being responsive and attentive to God-in-all-things as revealed through prayer, nature, creative expressions, poetry, art, and companionship. Spiritual direction helps people grow in a personal relationship with a loving God. Individuals seek spiritual direction for various reasons: some may be involved in life-

changing discernment; others may want to grow in awareness of the movements of God's Spirit within them.

Members of the Charity provide opportunities for Spiritual Direction, One-to-One Listening, Spiritual Accompaniment, Prayer accompaniment, Prayer Guidance and Lectio Divina. Learning to live with Covid-19 restrictions, has led to use of online platforms and a renewal of phone and written support.

Bethany House of Prayer, Dundalk.

"Bethany" House of Prayer, Dundalk is a welcoming space for spiritual nourishment, encouragement and support. The founding Sisters continue in this work and are open to and respectful to people of all faiths and none.

In 2021, Bethany developed 'A Prayer by Telephone' ministry. The Sisters are available from 9:00 am – 9:00 pm daily to 'listen and pray' via telephone with callers. In excess of two thousand, one hundred calls during 2021.

The "Garden Room" at Bethany is available Monday to Friday 9:30 am – 5:30 pm with an average of fifty people visiting weekly. The Sisters host a weekly online and up to twenty clients receiving counselling or spiritual direction.

The outdoor Crib at "Bethany", is erected in Advent and Christmas and attracts many to stop and pray – especially parents with young children. The Crib, lighted during the Christmas period is a sign of welcome at "Bethany" gate.



Eco-Spirituality



A number of members of the Charity engage with those who are searching for, and are energised by, the consciousness that we live in an evolving and expanding Universe. This nourishes faith that is alive, leading to a renewed interest in spirituality, theology and reading the scriptures with new eyes. Sisters support many others through this ministry.

Two members of the Charity are trained as *Laudato Si* Animators (Global Catholic Movement), accessing and disseminating support resources materials. During the

2021 they promoted the "Healthy Planet, Healthy People" Petition, which was presented to world leaders at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, Scotland in November.

Pastoral Work

A Sister is a Pastoral Worker in the Archdiocese of Armagh which straddles County Louth. Her work encourages clergy and laity in mutual planning for the future. The focus for 2021 was to raise awareness and engage faith communities in the forthcoming Catholic Church's Universal Synod (in Rome).

This Sister works with a team of laity in supporting National school teachers in their task of passing on the faith to young people. Monthly resources are prepared and disseminated to the schools to supplement the teaching of religious education in the national school sector. Online training for staff members is also provided.



Another member of the Charity is employed full time as Parish Sister in Tullamore. She coordinates teams of volunteers for the Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation Programmes which is a substantial piece of work. Apart from the administration of rotas, preparation and provisions of materials, attending the monthly meetings as a support to those leading the meetings with parents, this Sister also attends the Baptism ceremonies on Sundays. Based in the parish centre, the Sister is readily available to the people of the parish.

Music Ministry

Members of the Charity are involved in aspects of church music as choir directors or members, cantors and organists, providing music for Liturgies. For the greater part of 2021 public worship was restricted though some sisters continued to offer limited services in various parishes, providing music for worship available on webcams.

Family Support

Members of the Charity are involved in organisations providing support to families in times of crisis. A Sister works as a counsellor with ACCORD which offers a support to individuals and couples who are experiencing relationship difficulties.

Healthcare and the Compassionate Care of the Sick and those in Need

“Catherine McAuley generated in her Sisters a deep concern and compassionate care for the sick and dying. This concern engages us in the compassionate care of the sick, manifesting to them Christ’s healing love.” (Constitutions Par 43)

Today, over 180 years later, wellbeing activities, healthcare, care of the dying and the bereaved still engage many of the Sisters. Health and Wellbeing is about a way of living and being that enables us to live life to the full. It is at the heart of Mercy life and ministry. Sisters are involved in this work in hospitals, hospices, nursing homes, community care and within the Community houses. It includes the provision of psychological and spiritual therapies to promote wellbeing of body, mind and spirit, specially designed stress management programmes and collaboration with like-minded agencies in the delivery of wellbeing services. Many Sisters re-trained in Chaplaincy and Complementary Therapies to work in a variety of settings to promote the wellbeing of people and contribute to the alleviation of stress in our society.

In addition, the Charity must care for its older and frail Sisters who are now themselves in need of care. The Trustees will continue to ensure that these Sisters receive the level of care they require. These Sisters have dedicated their lives to the furtherance of the Charity’s objectives and have also donated all their earnings, income and pensions to the Charity.

The Health Care Aims of the Trustees in 2021 are summarised below;

- ❖ Enabling the Sisters to continue with their healthcare ministries for as long as possible. At the beginning of 2021, there were twenty members of the Charity engaged in Healthcare and Compassionate Care of the Sick and Those in Need, through visitation of residents in nursing homes or residential care homes, support of those in assisted living spaces, hospice and hospital visitation, dementia services, psychotherapy, hospital chaplaincy.
- ❖ Ensuring all Sisters receive the appropriate level of care they require. To this end healthcare staff are employed by the Charity and a Health Care Team

support and monitor the health needs of members regularly ensuring the Trustees are updated as necessary.

- ❖ Maintaining the properties used as Community houses and reviewing these properties to assess their suitability for an ageing membership. Unsuitable properties are adapted or, if necessary, Sisters will be transferred to a more appropriate accommodation. Each community house is continually monitored as part of the Accommodation Strategy. Therefore, as the needs of our ageing members increase, properties are constantly under consideration.

Assisted Living

Assisted Living for Sisters is offered in the following locations: Convents of Mercy in Ardee, Ballyshannon, Dundalk, Kells, and Tullamore. These convents offer assisted living to those sisters who require support and/or assistance with everyday living.



Chaplaincy, Wellbeing and Care

Review of
Achievements and
Activities in 2021

Members of the Charity offer care support to individuals in the wider communities where they live. Some Sisters have a more structured ministry of chaplaincy, wellbeing and care.

Chaplaincy in Care Choice Nursing Home, Trim.

A Sister from the Charity is volunteer chaplain at 'Care Choice', Knightsbridge, Trim, six out of seven days in the week. The staff and residents are familiar with the support, the spiritual care offered, and the routine of activities. Daily one-to-one visits to residents ensure a listening ear, the getting to know individuals, bringing Holy Communion to those who wish to receive the Sacrament and building relationship with residents, staff and family members. While Covid-19 restrictions impacted every aspect of life for the residents, and safety guidelines were faithfully observed, this Sister maintained her vital ministry.

"I have a sense that my chaplaincy is valued in giving support to all at Care Choice, In turn, I receive joy, appreciation, openness, and welcome in being allowed to contribute to the lives of so many."

Culóg Centre of Creativity, Healing and Education, Laytown.

Culóg Centre of Creativity, Healing and Education is a ministry that supports well-being through a variety of therapies. In the first half of 2021, the weekly/monthly zoom calls continued to help reach 6/7 of regular clients. These people are living in challenging situations and appreciate the opportunity to be heard and to be supported on their journey. Other clients missed in-person interaction. In the second half of the year, clients began to attend in-person and Culog's doors were opened, albeit with care and restrictions.

Alongside counselling, Reflexology and Esalan Massage are the healing modalities used at Culóg. This sister was available to offer treatments to other members of the Charity. She gave Reflexology outreach to two Mercy communities in Meath, offering sessions to assist with health and wellbeing.

New Life Directions

New Life Directions (NLD), founded by and co-ordinated by two members of the Charity, provides opportunity for personal, psychological and spiritual development of individuals, families and communities and works in partnership with community, voluntary and statutory organisations.

During 2021 NLD developed and delivered workshops, training, mentoring and education programmes through interactive sessions, addressing Community

Education; Teamwork; Leadership and Organisational Development; Trauma Healing and Recovery; Capacitar Multi-Cultural Wellness Education; Ritual & Celebration.

NLD's programme of engagements in 2021 included –

- Delivery of Modules 3 & 4 training on Capacitar Multi-Cultural Wellness Education to twenty-eight participants. (In partnership with Capacitar International USA)
- Provision of Mentoring workshops to consolidate learning.
- Designing a curriculum based on Capacitar Multicultural Wellness, for Community Nurses and Nurses working in Higher Education at St Margaret's University, Scotland. (Summer 2021)
- Mentoring 5 women to co-facilitate Well-being Workshops, using Capacitar self-care practices.
- Restructuring the Governance for the forming of the All-Ireland Capacity Ireland Association. (It is part of the Capacitar European Network.)
- Showcasing the work of Capacitar Ireland over the last 21 years at the Capacitar International Global Zoom Gathering (June 2021).
- Facilitating seasonal celebrations that use reflection, song, dance, storytelling, PowerPoint presentations. movement and prayer.

1 February: 'Celebration of the Arrival of Spring,' remembering Brigid (Muire na nGael) x 71 participants

8th & 9th March: Celebration of International Woman's Day. Theme: 'Women in Leadership achieving an equal future in a Covid 19 world.'

7th April: "Click & Collect': Through Lifestyle Development Group, an opportunity for social connection and participation x 31 participants

Summer: 'A Covid Gallery' was created on Lifestyle Development Facebook platform showcasing the art and crafts from 60 women who had attended classes.



November: 'A Time to Remember' – a series of three gathering that assisted participants in giving thanks for memories held of departed relatives and friends.

Art Therapy – Divinely Inspired Wellbeing

A member of the Charity is an independent provider of one-to-one and/or group art therapy and creative art workshops. It is a peripatetic service collaborating with existing organisations in the public, private, community, voluntary, health, social and education sectors to meet local needs. In general, participants effectively use the creative process to connect with experiences that nourish their soul, recognise themselves in created and expressed images and engage with the invitations the images prompt. The purpose is to support well-being throughout the life cycle.

In 2021 this Sister provided in the region of 530 engagements in art therapy across a range of services that were offered to a range of organisations, including those providing care for carers, parents in adoption, dyadic art therapy for parent and child, survivors of acquired brain injury, community development through engagement with culture and arts, primary school children, and women engaging in ongoing personal development and healing. Continuing Professional Development was offered to therapists.

Relief of Poverty, Promotion of Education, Justice and other Charitable Activities

“Our foundress, Catherine McAuley, generated in her Sisters a deep concern for those at risk in society – this concern engages us in Christian Education ... it urges us to be with, and for, the poor and distressed, working for social justice and wellbeing, seeking to bring rich and poor together in mutual love and service.” (Mercy Constitutions, Par 43).

In 2020, 169 Sisters engaged in the Charity’s commitment to the relief of poverty, promotion of education, justice and other charitable activities through ministries related to the following:

- Promotion of all Aspects of Education
- Justice, Peace & Reconciliation
- Overseas Development and Support
- Pastoral, Social Care and Development

*“Be ever ready to
praise, to encourage,
to stimulate ...”*

Catherine McAuley

*P*romotion of All Aspects of Education

Review of
Achievements and
Activities in 2021

A priority of the Founder of the Sisters of Mercy, was to open schools, creating education opportunities for children, especially poorer children. The provision of formal education was a major ministry of the Charity for over 170 years.

By the late 19th century, second level schools were established in most provincial towns throughout Ireland. In recent years there has been a gradual transfer of responsibility for Catholic education in Mercy Schools to other trusteeships who ensure school communities where Christian faith, justice and responsibility are nurtured.

CEIST Catholic Education an Irish Schools Trust

The 21st century brought new challenges which required the creation of new structures to ensure that Catholic Education is a viable choice in a pluralist Ireland for those who wish to avail of it. To this end, CEIST was set up in 2007 to act as Trustees for the Catholic Secondary Schools of five Religious Congregations, including the Sisters of Mercy. CEIST is now an independent autonomous entity. In 2021 CEIST was the patron of 107 Catholic Voluntary Schools with a combined total of 57,319 pupils.

EDUCENA

The Educena Foundation works with CEIST Trust to enable resourcing of trusteeship of Catholic post primary education in Ireland, managing and optimizing the financial resources that will be needed in the future. The task of transferring the schools from

the Sisters of Mercy to EDUCENA has involved considerable work on the part of the Charity's Trustees and their legal advisors.

Pre-Schools

The Charity enabled the establishment of two pre-schools – Scoil Iosagan, Tullamore and Castle View, Tullamore. One of the founding Sisters is a member of the Management Committee. Castle View Pre-School is based on the halting site and caters for children who live and travel on the on both official and unofficial sites.

Reading Recovery

For over two decades, a Sister from the Charity has been actively engaging schools in Reading Recovery. Based at the Monaghan Education Centre, the programme allows schools to evolve into real communities of enquiry where teachers become Literacy Leaders. The outcome of this project is the dramatically improved standard of reading and writing across the Republic of Ireland.

Reading Recovery is a short-term intensive intervention for children identified as having lowest achievement in literacy after their first year at school. It is particularly beneficial to children living in poverty, children living with limited knowledge of English. The key to successful implementation is the effective delivery of a professional development programme to teachers who allow the programme to be an essential part of literacy in schools.

The Department of Education has received 450 applications from schools across the Republic of Ireland, for training in the next school year.

Ecology Education

Two Sisters offer on-going education to the Charity members on current ecological and theological issues. In 2021 they offered the following:-

Webinar Series: 'Caring for our Common Home' - Series of 6 webinars to address socio-eco realities of our time. Summer Course: "A Theology of Liberation" by Gustavo Gutiérrez.

Archives Office

Through our Archives service the Charity aims to preserve the history of the Charity which was so entwined with the lives of local people and parish communities. The

social, economic, religious and political climate of almost two centuries is reflected in the history of the Charity. The Sisters of Mercy are protecting resource material that will be available to researchers in the future.

Justice, Peace & Reconciliation

“The Charity governing document urges Sisters to be with and for the poor and distressed, working for social justice and wellbeing, seeking to bring rich and poor together in mutual love and service.” (Constitutions Par 43 1985).

The Charity is committed to raising awareness of the interdependence and interconnectedness of all of life. It aims to promote right relationships with all people and with all of life. Over the years, Sisters of the Charity have endeavoured to alleviate suffering in all its forms. These Sisters worked in schools, workhouses, orphanages and hospitals in co-operation with the Church and State.



Sisters work passionately to reduce poverty, violence and racism as well as the widespread denial of human rights, the degradation of Earth, the continued oppression of women, the abuse of children, the mistreatment of immigrants and the lack of solidarity among people and nations. We examine the root causes of these issues and promote systemic change in the communities in which we minister. We connect our efforts on a global scale with Sisters of Mercy Congregations throughout the world through Mercy International Association and Mercy Global Action at the United Nations.

The work included:

- Earth Wisdom
- Green Sod Ireland
- The Mercy Girl Effect, UNICEF & ARISE Foundation
- MECPATHS
- Mercy International Association
- GLÓIR
- Towards Healing, Towards Peace

Ecology, Cosmology and Sustainable Living

The Universe Story - an evolutionary context for a changing world guides a systemic approach to the Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor. A response to this cry is explored by Sisters through research, education, writing, seminars and retreats with a variety of groups, nationally and overseas. This ministry is rooted in practical living; working with colleagues and in partnership with local communities and with the Society of Missionaries for Africa (SMA) Climate Justice Campaign. This approach benefits individuals and local communities by promoting a sense of responsibility to care for our common home. Local initiatives re plastics, food waste, fossil fuels alert people to the need to be aware and to act before it is too late.

Earth Wisdom

The Earth wisdom group focuses on the shift of consciousness Earth Wisdom focuses on the shift of consciousness needed to co-create a world that works for all of life. In 2021 the group continued to explore the call to individual and societal transformation. The group reflectively engaged with *Quest of Rose* by Anneloes Smitsman and Jean Houston. We held celebrated Summer Solstice and Autumn Equinox.



Themes explored throughout 2021 were: St Brigid's Day (Healing – personal, collective and planetary) Spring Equinox (Balance and Regeneration), Earth Day (Restoring our Earth).

Green Sod Ireland

A Sister of the Charity is a founding member and a director of the Green Sod Land Trust. The Trust works to ensure that Ireland remains a country where ecosystems continue to thrive and flourish. Wild Acres create safe habitats vital for biodiversity.

The Trust networks with NGO's community groups, schools and government agencies such as Teagasc, Department of Social Protection, National Heritage Council, Bird Watch Ireland and Environment Protection Agency. Green Sod Ireland is formally registered with the European Re-wilding Network. In 2021, the Trust made a presentation at the European Re-wilding Network Annual Conference. It was

invited by Afri (Action from Ireland) to partner them and other groups in The Celtic Alphabet Tree Planting Project.

During the year the Trust held a series of talks for companies and organisations to raise awareness of biodiversity and climate issues. Volunteers continue to offer ongoing education on biodiversity and climate change in schools and colleges. The 'Save a Sod' project was consolidated as a way of raising both awareness and funds.

The Mercy Girl Effect/UNICEF

Mercy Girl Effect (MGE) is a Non- Governmental Group working in consultation with UNICEF and the Working Group on Girls. A Sister co-coordinates the Group to educate and animate a new generation to be advocates for young women and children vulnerable, to being targeted by traffickers.

During 2021, the Mercy Girl Effect focused on the plight of tea pickers, many of whom were left stranded and far away from home when the pandemic struck. Using the maxim "**A Comfortable Cup of Tea**" students in 17 schools across the globe looked at the ethical issues around tea, water and human trafficking, asking the pertinent question: "That Comfortable Cup of Tea - whose comfort?"

Sisters on the frontlines spoke to students about conditions in the tea gardens. The MGE effort raised nearly 50k for the work of ARISE and provided temporary shelter, education and protective clothing. The MGE Co-ordinator worked with the individual schools ensuring student leaders were both focused and action-orientated. The Working Group on Girls (WGG) was a vital part of the education process.

In addition, this member of the Charity has published a ground-breaking study – ***We Cannot be Silent***, which looks at Catholic Social Teaching through the lens of the 2030 United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

This Sister is currently researching systemic racism and interculturality in the USA , and the need for a new intentional movement of going and coming towards each other.

ARISE Foundation

A Sister from the Northern Province Charity is a trustee to the ARISE Foundation. It is one of the foremost active agencies in the world which examines the factors driving the rise in human trafficking. It examines the push factors - wars and conflicts, persecution and terrorism, destitution, corruption, instability, grinding poverty, man-made phenomena such as climate change, and natural disasters, which drive people out of their homes, communities and countries, risking their lives in doing so. *ARISE* is about people being displaced from Afghanistan, Burma, Tigray, Nigeria, Venezuela, Eritrea, Syria, Iraq and Sudan, or illegally repatriated by China to North Korea. This Foundation helps those on the frontlines with both financial aid and emotional and professional guidance.

MECPATHS

MECPATHS is a project of the congregation of The Sisters of Mercy working in partnership with the Hospitality sector in Ireland to counter child trafficking and child sexual exploitation. It is the only project of its kind in Ireland.



Underpinning the work of MECPATHS are:-

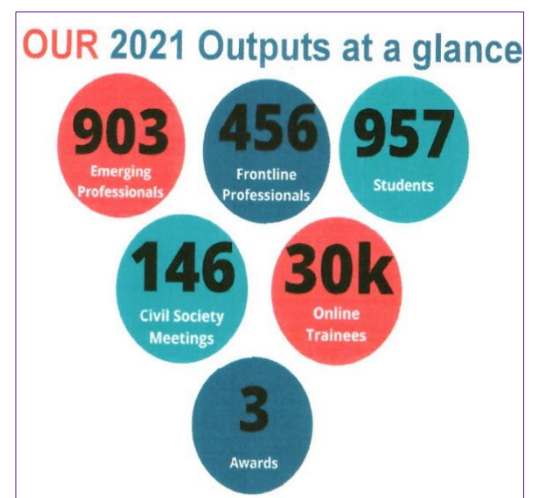
Children's Rights – advocacy for a child's dignity and right to be protected from exploitation.

Justice – upholding children's rights by championing the full implementation of international and domestic laws concerning the rights of the child.

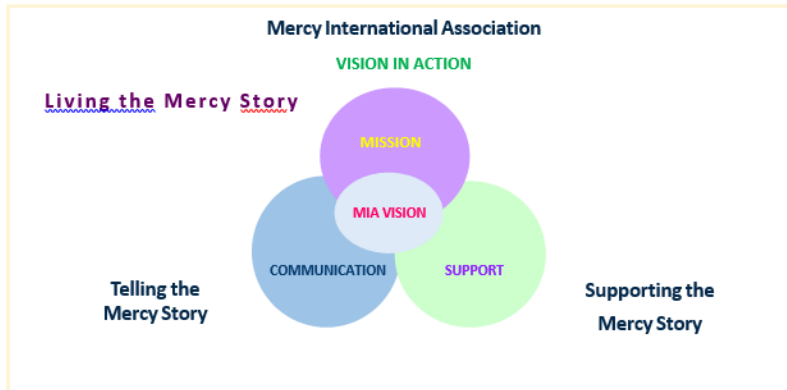
Education – raising awareness of the reality of child trafficking for exploitation in society today to inform and equip individuals and groups with information that promotes responsible action.

Collaboration – in partnership and networking, sharing of resources and experiences and being open to deliver a multi-faceted response.

Compassion – responding to the injustice of child trafficking



Mercy International Association



Mercy International Association (MIA) is an association of the leaders of the Mercy Congregations, Institutes and Unions throughout the world. The leaders work together to share some aspects of the common work of the Sisters of Mercy.

GLÓIR

Glóir is a collaborative venture sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy and the Holy Union Sisters. Sisters from the Northern Province Charity are staff members or serve on the Board of Directors. Glóir works collaboratively with others to create spaces where imaginative ways of living justly on our planet can be explored.



Group Facilitation and Consultancy
Leadership Training and Education
Organisational Development in context
Imaginative Exploration of Experience for Transformation
Right Relatedness through Role Creation

The Project works with people who believe in participating in the shaping of a future marked by greater social justice. Glóir understands this justice-work as expressed in right-relatedness, clarity about role, and ability to deal with the complexity of people living/working towards a common aim as part of the community of all of life.

In 2021 Glóir offered Leadership and groupwork training, Facilitation of Preparatory Groups for Chapter events, Facilitation of Congregational & Provincial Chapters, Facilitation of Leadership Teams in team-building, reviewing & planning.

Solidarity with and support for former residents of Mercy-run Institutions

Towards Healing Counselling Service

In the periods 1996–2011, and 2012–2017, the Charity contributed funding to Faoiseamh/Towards Healing. In 2021 the Charity donated €20,000 which supported the provision of Counselling and other services to former residents.

Towards Peace

Towards Peace is funded by the Irish Catholic Bishops conference and AMRI, of which the Charity is a member, Towards Peace offers spiritual support to those who have been abused by Church personnel. In 2021 one of our Sisters acted as a Spiritual companion with the organization, offering up to 20 sessions to persons recommended for this care support.

Support for other groups

In 2021 donations were made towards other groups to assist them in their justice, peace and reconciliation ministries. This included to Trociare, Green Sod Ireland, Irish Refugee Council, Peter McVerry Trust, Simon Community, St Stephen's Green Trust, Trocaire Romero Fund. UNICEF re Vaccinations.

Overseas Development & Support

“Belonging to the Universal Church, missionary in her very nature, we seek to incarnate the mercy of God, according to the limits of our resources, in missionary countries.” (Mercy Constitutions, Par 45)

Review of
Achievements and
Activities in 2021

The Charity supports, through its human, financial and other resources, all charitable works carried out in the name of the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy. This objective, rooted in the priority outreach of the Congregation to people who experience poverty and marginalisation in society, is given live expression in its financial sponsorship of

numerous and ever-increasing charitable activities. The Charity responds on a global scale to the call of people who experience poverty and disadvantage at local, national and international levels and works in collaboration with other Mercy Charities and in partnership with other charities who work in overseas development and support.

Emergency-relief and awareness-raising

Ever attentive to world issues, the Charity endeavours to relieve distress and raise awareness of justice issues wherever possible.

In 2021 local communities of Mercy Sisters donated to other charities, to those working to support those in need at local, national and international levels. The Charity donated funds responding to emergencies worldwide as well as locally. The more international-related agencies supported in 2021 included: Trócaire for the Romero Fund promoting Justice, St Stephens Green Trust for the support of refugees in Ireland, Irish Refugee Council, The Peter McVerry Trust for the homeless.

The Charity contributes to the Mercy Solidarity Trust, an Irish charity, whose purpose is to support the mission of the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy worldwide but especially in the developing world.

Derry-Donegal Outreach Programme

A member of the Charity is a co-founder of the Derry-Donegal Outreach Programme, which works for short-term relief of impoverished people and toward long-term structural change. Motivated by compassion, respect and dignity, the network of donors supports a variety of services for individuals, families and communities in the following seven countries: Kenya, India, Peru, Zambia, Chile and Papua New Guinea.

The long-standing relationship between donors and beneficiaries of D-DOP is grounded in careful administration and the knowledge that contributions directly reach the people and projects they want to help. Local accountability is achieved by regular postings in the local church and parish bulletins in Derry and Donegal.

The Sister who founded this project is the direct link to the 'on-the-ground' person in each of the seven countries.

Lima, Peru. Dr Tony Lazzara’s home for children who are poor and sick or who have disabilities. He writes in gratitude, “*The Derry-Donegal Outreach has been invaluable in supporting our efforts to furnish medical, care and education to our very vulnerable children.*”



Chile. Sr. Josephine Twomey RSM works in Chile. She has a centre in a very disadvantaged area in the parish where she offers rehabilitation and therapies to people who cannot afford to pay elsewhere. Funding from Derry-Donegal Outreach Programme supports therapists and on-going administrative expenses.

Eldoret, Kenya. Fr Noel Brown SMA works in “informal settlements” or slums in Eldoret, Kenya. His work of necessity is remedial. D-DOP financially supports this project with daily supplies of food and other necessities of life on a regular basis, school fees, school uniforms, scholarships, fees for 3rd Level Students.

Nairobi, Kenya. Sr. Mary Killeen RSM works with street children and families in Mukuru, Nairobi and also with the Songa Mbele Na Masomo. Her Children’s Rehabilitation Centre offers support care services, medical support, food, education and therapies within the Centre and with help from the Derry-Donegal Outreach Programme.



Rehabilitation Centre, Mukuru

Mazabuka, Zambia. Brian Simpemba runs the Rosangela Music Centre in Mazabuka, Zambia, providing development opportunities in music, art, football, etc. and offers sponsorships to less privileged children and the underpowered youth, many of whom know deprivation; some are orphaned, some have dropped out of school, while others are street children.

Dawaki, Nigeria. Sr. Rebecca Odu, a Nigerian Sister of the Infant Jesus works with vulnerable people in an extremely disadvantaged area of Dawaki, Nigeria. Aware that systemic changes can be brought about by basic education and how it can lift the people out of the cycle of poverty, this Sister is building a small Primary and Nursery school with the support of funding from D-DOP.



DAWAKI, NIGERIA:

Parataspar, India. Sr. Divya is from India and is the Principal of the Sacred Heart School, a Primary and Secondary school in Parataspar, Bareilly. The school caters for over 1,700 pupils and who come from nearby villages and are economically deprived. Sister not only provides education but also teachers' salaries, school fees, food, clothing and basic healthcare for all in her care. Sister Divya wrote: *"All students come from nearby villages.... These poor students would never have such facilities in any other village schools. We are really grateful for all the help you give us."*

UNICEF, ARISE, New York. Sr. Deirdre Mullan RSM is works in collaboration with UNICEF and other Aid Agencies. The D-DOP provided finance towards the Girl-Child education project; many of these girls are targeted by human traffickers.

Financial support from D-DOP Outreach allowed this Sister to enable a young woman to complete a course and to lead a more independent, sustainable life; a Syrian family who was in great need; tea workers who are vulnerable to have protective clothing. food and shelter; the building of wells.

WAURU JABBE: Community Development Association

Wauru Jabbe is a Community Development project in Nigeria providing adult literacy, computer and follow-on programmes to Muslim and Christians. A Sister in the Charity is seminal in engagement with community and village representatives. This is an inter-faith project with people from the Muslim and Christian traditions co-operating in the development of a community organisation. A governance structure appropriate to the cultural and legislative requirements of the region supports the vision, enabling the work of this community to continue.

The Association's Vision is:

- To enable the community in working towards addressing their needs
- To be actively engaged in self-determining their future development.

In 2021, WJCDA was supported by the Charity through the disbursement of €31,000. This helped enable the sustaining of activities on the ground in Nigeria.

In Adult literacy, 380 students (almost 70% female), registered in the six literacy centres offering both English and Hausa as well as training in IT, tailoring and knitting. From the skills-training classes nine women graduated while 94 students

completed the literacy training course. Teaching staff benefitted from further learning on classroom management and more broadly, enhanced their leadership skills. Tree planting was also promoted with distribution in 9 different locations.

Funding enabled significant renovation work at Siminaka (Muslim) school to take place, allowing for the resumption of classes and the return of pupils.

In addressing the challenges presented by food insecurity exacerbated by the prevailing pandemic, training was imparted through CRI to 100 caregivers who, while raising awareness on the needs of OVCs (orphans and vulnerable children), also acquired knowledge on a broad range of topics including health promotion, pre-post harvesting, and dry fish processing. The learning was then shared with community groups on the ground.

Dawaki village community was another beneficiary of funding which enabled the provision of supports, e.g. training for three women in dressmaking, land-acquisition for a woman recently widowed and school fees paid for up to twelve female students.

*P*astoral, Social Care and Development

The Charity is concerned with promoting pastoral and social development initiatives and responding to the needs of our time in line with Gospel values. The Aims of the Trustees in this area include:

- Enabling Sisters to carry out meaningful social and pastoral work based on the needs of the local community and their own expertise and skills
- Encouraging and motivating Sisters to support the empowerment of people of all ages who experience poverty and marginalisation
- Encouraging a collaborative and networking approach with statutory / voluntary agencies and the local community.

Review of
Achievements and
Activities in 2021

A sample of the Pastoral and Social Care of the Sisters is outlined. Engagement in this work of the Charity is ongoing in parishes, towns and cities where our Sisters reside.

Visitation

Visitation is a core activity of the Charity. Many Sisters spend many hours engaged in this traditional work of Mercy. Sisters visit parishioners who are housebound or in nursing homes, or who have a stay in hospital. Sisters make support visit to families in times of crisis and hardship, such as bereavement or illness and also at times of great joy such as the birth of a child or the recovery from illness. In all the visiting Sisters seek to offer “the kind word and the patient hearing of sorrows” (Catherine McAuley).

When this ministry by so many of our members was curtailed due to the pandemic. Sisters report that they developed a support service to those in need directly through phone contact, letter-writing and other means. A number of sisters have offered vital spiritual support at a time when formal worship had been suspended.

St Vincent de Paul

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a Christian voluntary organisation, working with those in need, particularly the materially poor. There is a Conference of SVP in every parish in Ireland. Many Sisters from the Northern Province are members of local conferences throughout the Diocese of Meath, Kilmore, Raphoe, Armagh and Clogher. Community of Sisters also make significant contributions to this work.



De Paul, Ireland

A Sister offers her services in a befriending role to service-users. De Paul Ireland supports those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Temporary Emergency Accommodation (T.E.A.M.)

In 1999, a Sister working in Mullingar who had been involved with many community groups including St Vincent de Paul Society, the County Council and Health Services established T.E.A.M. The aim of this organization *“to enable women, mothers and their children to move from homelessness, through a period of emergency accommodation, to an accommodation appropriate to need, by the provision of individual personalised plans.”* To that end, *Teach Fáilte* was opened in 2009 and continues to be a vital resource in providing accommodation to those in need in the community.

Migrants and Travellers

A Sister is a support person to refugees and migrants and is a befriender of families living in Diect Provision. Sisters also work in programmes with migrants and travellers such as Scoil Iosagain in Tullamore. They have also established community projects in Mullingar, Castleblaney and Drogheda. The Charity supports Tullamore Youth Project and member of the Charity.

Inter-faith Forum, Dublin

A Sister is a member of Dublin City Interfaith Forum in building understanding, respect and cooperation between different denominations and faith groups. The forum liaises with Dublin City Council and Gardaí Síochána on common projects such as environmental justice, Hate Crime Legislation. The Forum also works with the Religious Affairs Department in RTE to provide a variety of Interfaith programmes for radio and television.

Women’s Community Projects Mullingar

A Sister from the Charity inaugurated this project in 1982 and it continues to offer Childcare, Education, Work programmes, Pastoral Care, Counselling Service, Money Advice and Budgeting Service and Older Persons services.

Drogheda Lifestyle Development Group

A community-based project founded by the Charity, is an instrument of empowerment and transformation. It ensures improved quality of life for children and adults of all ages. A Sister serves on the Board and other Sisters are invited in delivering programmes.

CASA

This organisation offers friendship and social support to people who live with disabilities. One Sister is very active and committed to visitation and attendance at social events in her local CASA group.

Circle of Mercy

The Circle of Mercy is a lay organisation whose members come together in a spirit of prayer, mutual support and compassionate living, to promote the Mercy Charism and live the Gospel in the spirit of Catherine McAuley. A number of Sisters from the Charity are also involved in the Circle of Mercy.

Notwithstanding the personal impact on individual members of the Circles of Mercy, the coronavirus called for creativity in keeping virtually and actually connected. The WhatsApp group has provided mutual and vital support. The Prayers Requested App allows for Mercy-minded people to hold others in conscious prayer remembrance and is an outreach ministry for our Circles. The Mercy e-news is a platform for maintaining strong links to Mercy Communities worldwide.



The energy and enthusiasm of our members by far outweigh the possible limitations of an increasing age profile and continue to be a source of hope and possibility.

CIRCLES OF MERCY (RoI)				
	Circle Location	Religious	Lay	Total Members
1	Athboy	2	5	7
2	Ballinamore	1	6	7
3	Castleblayney	2	5	7
4	Kilbeggan	1	7	8
5	Laytown	1	8	9
6	Mount Bolus	3	3	6
7	Rochfortbridge	1	7	8
	Total Members	11	41	52

AMRI

The Association of Leaders of Religious and Missionaries of Ireland represents Religious Congregations, Societies of Apostolic Life and Lay Missionary groups. As one of the member organisations, our Charity contributes to AMRI which promotes active collaboration throughout the Association. A full time Secretary General and executive staff co-ordinate work for justice, education, healthcare, lay mission and other areas.



AMRI promotes the common interests of member organisations and supports their leaders in responding to the challenges of the time. It raises awareness and facilitates responses to current and emerging social justice issues. AMRI collaborates with the Irish Episcopal Conference. It co-sponsors the two companies Coimirce (the National Board for safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church) and Towards Healing.

Support for other groups









In 2021 donations were made towards other groups to assist them in their justice, peace and reconciliation ministries. This included to T.E.A.M., The Red Door Project, Lifestyle Development Drogheda, Blaney Blades, Castleblaney Trust for Needy and Homeless and others.

Positive Impact Investing

The Charity views its investment portfolio as part of its Mission. Alongside its many active ministries, the Sisters of Mercy also seek to bring about change through investment portfolios.

Some investments can be harmful, e.g. investments in fossil fuel companies or armaments companies which support the production of goods that can be harmful and/or highly damaging to the environment or human wellbeing. The Charity seeks to avoid such investments. Moreover, the Charity consciously commits its investments to the bringing about of positive change in the world through investing in activities that make beneficial impacts for both individual wellbeing and for the environment.

The Charity’s investment portfolio achieves maximum positive impact on the world around us through the consideration of a number of headings as listed below.

 CO2 EMISSIONS	 RENEWABLE ENERGY	 FOSSIL FUEL RESERVES	 CARBON SINKS	 CO₂ EMISSIONS SAVED	 TONNES OF CO₂ AVOIDED	 JOBS CREATED	 HELP FOR THE GLOBAL POOR
For every tonne of CO ₂ emitted by an average charity portfolio, your portfolio will SEQUESTER (WITHDRAW) 1.2 tonnes of CO ₂	Your portfolio produces 113 times the renewable power of an average charity portfolio	Your Portfolio is FOSSIL FUEL FREE	102 times more CO ₂ sequestered (withdrawn) into carbon sinks than an average charity portfolio	L&P client portfolios saved emissions equivalent to CO ₂ emissions from 31,000 households	58 times the emissions avoided by investing in renewable power and energy efficiency projects versus an average charity portfolio	1.6 times more jobs created than an average charity portfolio, predominantly in developing world	Your Portfolio will directly impact and help 1,990 people in the Global South, via access to financial credit, clean water, and efficient cooking stoves.

The Portfolio and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

All of the investments within the Portfolio contribute towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs were developed and adopted by all member states of the United Nations to help achieve “a more sustainable future for all”. They represent a call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and promote prosperity and people’s wellbeing by 2030. They integrate and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Achieving the SDGs on a global basis requires collaboration between governments, the private sector, civil society and citizens alike. The Portfolio plays a role in the realisation of the goals.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Source: UN (<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>)

The Sustainable Development Goals are also closely aligned with the charitable objectives of religious organisations. Since the publication of *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis has made a strong commitment to sustainable development. His appeal to “...every person living on this planet for an inclusive dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet”, provides a firm ethical foundation for actions that need to be taken urgently at all levels. Pope Francis’ speech ahead of the United

Nations General Assembly's formal adoption of the 17 SDGs gave further support to the ambitious and transformational vision of the goals.

A comprehensive Ethical and Positive Impact policy ensures the Portfolio remains consistent with the ethos of the charity. The Portfolio currently excludes companies involved in the production of weapons, tobacco, alcohol, pornography, and activities such as gambling and embryonic stem cell research. Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) criteria complements the screening as it improves the overall ESG risk exposure of the Portfolio. In particular, climate risk is addressed through the exclusion of fossil fuel companies and a focus to reduce the carbon footprint of the Portfolio through investment in such areas as renewable energy and forestry.

Environmental Impact

Overall Carbon Footprint



Measurement of carbon emissions is crucial in helping the Charity to understand the role the investment portfolio plays in the climate crisis, while taking measures to address it. As the SDG logos to the left show, limiting carbon emissions interacts with several SDGs in addressing Climate Action in particular. Climate justice too is addressed in the portfolio. Climate change predominantly impacts those who have done the least to contribute to pollution and have less resources to deal with it. Control of carbon emissions in the portfolio also has positive implications for reducing poverty (SDG1), reducing inequality (SDG10) and preserving life on land (SDG10) and in the ocean. (SDG14)

The Portfolio includes a number of carbon sink-type investments, which sequester or draw carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere. Forestry in particular is a very effective carbon sink, as trees absorb carbon dioxide as part of their growing process. Therefore, the presence of forestry funds means that any carbon emissions from the majority of the portfolio are effectively offset entirely by the forestry investments.

Put another way, this means that the Portfolio in aggregate will sequester (withdraw) -1,026 tonnes of CO₂e from the atmosphere per annum while an unscreened portfolio of the same size would produce c. 1,055 tonnes of CO₂e. We believe that these extremely strong carbon emission statistics makes the Portfolio very much part of the solution to climate change, rather than part of the problem.

Fossil Fuel Reserves

Following the Trustees decision to entirely divest from fossil fuels in early 2017, the Portfolio now holds no fossil fuel reserves. This section addresses the level of exposure that the portfolio has to companies owning thermal coal, oil gas reserves and other unconventional sources of reserves such as oil sands, shale oil, and shale gas. Many of these reserves may not be useable if we are to keep the targeted temperature rise (as a result of global warming) below 2 degrees Celsius. This risk is referred to as stranded asset risks and it is addressed through avoidance of companies holding fossil fuel reserves. Hence, in addition to the impact, not holding these assets reduces the financial risk within the portfolio.

The chart below shows the fossil fuel reserves held by investments within the Portfolio across the major fossil fuels in comparison to an unscreened portfolio. As the chart shows, the Portfolio holds no fossil fuel reserves at all. This is a key metric to ensure that the Portfolio is not supporting fossil fuel activities that are diametrically opposed to the impact the Portfolio is trying to achieve elsewhere in the investments, namely promoting transition from fossil fuels to sustainable energy.

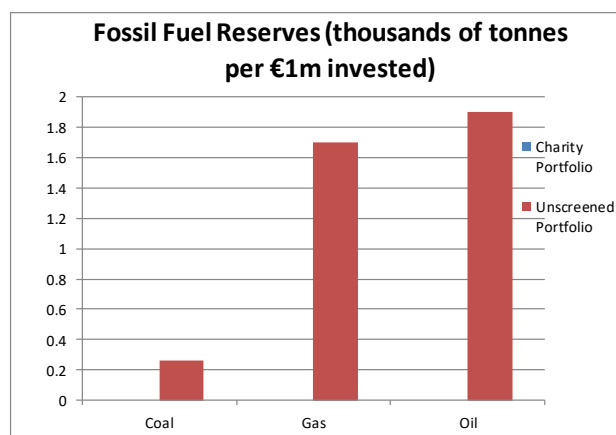


Chart showing the Charity's Investment Portfolio holds no fossil fuel reserves (no blue bar)

Renewable Energy

Reducing reliance on fossil fuels for energy needs is vital for the transition to a low carbon future. The pandemic and resulting national lockdowns led to a drop of 5.5% in our primary energy consumption for the first time since 2009, with consumption of all fuel decreasing except for renewables and hydro. In fact, electricity generation from renewable sources expanded by more than 8% in 2021. Solar and wind are set to contribute two-thirds of renewables growth.

Given the importance of promoting renewable energy sources to address climate change, any investor interested in impact investing generally seeks a high level of renewable power output from their investment portfolio.

Within the Portfolio, renewable power is produced by a number of investments based in Ireland, Europe, the US and the developing world. Some of the key impact metrics of these funds are referenced below:

Renewable Energy Fund

Renewable energy fund holding both onshore and offshore projects

- Energy for 300,000 houses per annum
- Avoids emissions of 400,000 tonnes of CO₂ per annum
- 1,000,000 MWh of renewable power per annum



Solar Income Fund

Fund holding approx. 40 solar plants in Europe

- Energy for 150,000 houses per annum
- Avoids emissions of 162,000 tonnes of CO₂ per annum
- 480,000 MWh of renewable power per annum



The benefit of generating renewable power can be measured by how much fossil fuel power (and resulting CO2 emissions) it replaces. In 2021, the Portfolio avoided the release of almost 2,112 tonnes of CO2e. This is equivalent to:

- Removing 456 cars from the roads every year
- 4,859 barrels of oil saved
- 1,760 acres of pine forest absorbing CO2 for one year
- 232 round trips around the world by one typical passenger car (travelling at the equator).

In terms of renewable energy produced, the Portfolio produced 4,082 MWh in 2021, enough energy to power approx. 4,685 homes.

Environmental Protection and Carbon Sequestration

Environmental protection is a critical aspect of sustainability addressed by the Portfolio. The forestry investments within the Portfolio have a mandate to:

- Produce sustainable timber
- Sequester carbon from the atmosphere
- Protect natural resources and biodiversity of the area, in order to minimise the effect on the biodiversity and general environmental welfare.



The managers of the forestry investments in the portfolio review any new forest properties at the outset to record and maintain Biodiversity already present. They have also adopted an approach in their management to enhance biodiversity by planning linkage between features using corridors so that the biodiversity features on site are conserved and new features being created are all joined and form part of a biodiversity unit within each property. These features are measured and captured on the managers' geographic information system (GIS). A detailed biodiversity classification and ranking system is in place and enhancement targets are being set to enrich diversification in fauna and flora throughout the portfolio.

Social Impact

Job Creation



Providing employment is one of the best methods of reducing poverty, and therefore it has a number of positive beneficial effects across the SDGs, from poverty reduction (SDG1) to providing Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG8). As the majority of the jobs created by the impact investments are in the developing world, and tend to favour women as much (if not more) than men, then job creation in these areas improves Gender Equality (SDG5) and Reduces Inequalities (SDG10), both between sexes and between the developed and developing regions of the world.

The Portfolio has a number of funds which provide job creation through their economic activity. The equity funds provide capital to companies that employ anywhere between hundreds to hundreds of thousands, and therefore in theory the provision of additional capital by investors will enable these companies to create jobs. However, as these funds generally invest in well-established businesses in the developed world, the job creation impact from additional investment is low. However, other funds that operate in the developing world, tend to produce far higher job creation and comprise the majority of the additional jobs produced for the portfolio as a whole.

The new jobs created by an unscreened portfolio of the same size as the Portfolio would only create 11 new jobs, while the Portfolio helped create around 18 direct jobs in 2021.

Homelessness Crisis

In Ireland, there were 10,378 homeless people in 2019, and an increase of 243% of homeless families since 2015. Social housing in Ireland is therefore at crisis levels mainly due to limited supply of residential property and a booming population (at

the time of the report writing, the population in Ireland had reached 5 million, the highest level since 1851).

The portfolio includes a Social Housing Fund which addresses this chronic shortage of housing for vulnerable groups in Ireland. The goals of the fund are shown below:

Social Housing Fund

Innovative fund acquires properties for social housing purposes

- Provide €100m+ in long term capital to housing sector
- Target high ESG and sustainability standards
- 500+ new homes to be provided for social housing needs



Vita Green Impact Investment

The Vita Green Impact investment is committed to social impact and climate action, delivering sustainable water and energy services in rural African communities. It contributes to the delivery of the SDGs with a particular focus on SDGs 3, 5, 6 and 7 relating to improved health and gender equality as well as access to water and energy. Below is a summary of Vita positive impacts:

Impact Area	Impact
Livelihoods impacted (numbers of people)	219,000 impacted by access to clean water 91,000 impacted by improved cookstoves
Litres of clean water	602 million litres /annum
Hours saved collecting firewood & water	9.1 million hours
Money saved purchasing firewood	€178,000
Tonnes CO2 now being reduced /annum	808,000
Incidence of water borne disease	40% reduction

Source: Vita Annual Impact Report

Heritage and Upkeep of Listed Assets

The Charity owns a number of Listed buildings (protected structures). These are structures, typically buildings, that are placed on the Department of Communities listed buildings database. By including them in this database, the importance of these structures is recognised, they are legally protected from harm and all future changes to the structure are controlled and managed through the development control process. Listing helps us acknowledge and understand our shared history. It marks and celebrates a building's special architectural and historic interest, and also brings it under the consideration of the planning system so that some thought will be taken about its future. The Charity is legally required to make sure that these structures do not become endangered through neglect, decay, damage or harm.

Certain repair works that are normally routine on a building, may require planning permission on a protected structure. Additional expenditure is incurred in sourcing expertise and materials for the renovation of a listed building or in carrying out demolition on a heritage site. Associated costs are Insurance, Maintenance, Security, General upkeep, Depreciation, engagement of a Heritage Architect and other Professional Fees.



Gate Lodge, Villa Nova,
Bundoran

Financial Review

Results for the year

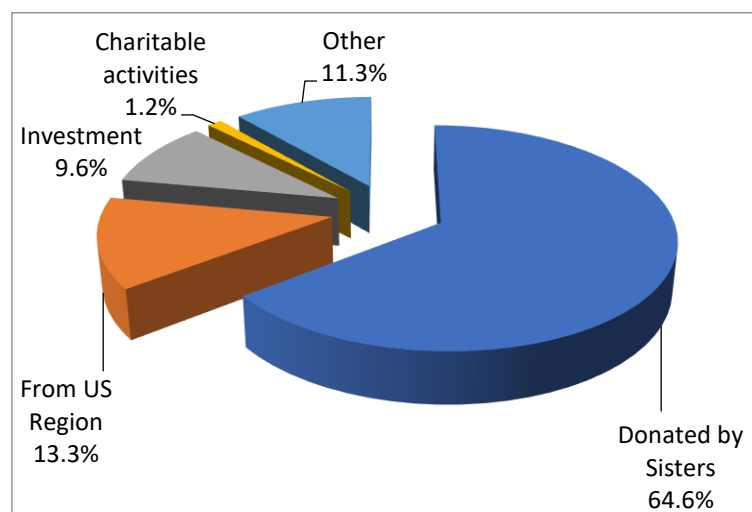
A summary of the year's accounts can be found on page 64 of this report.

Income - where our income came from

Income for the year totalled €5,702,180:

- Voluntary income of €4,441,350: the majority of this, €3,685,235, was the pension, salary and stipend income earned by the members of the Sisters of Mercy Northern Province and donated to the Charity. The balance, €756,115, was received from the US Region of the Sisters of Mercy as a contribution towards the costs of members who have return to Ireland from the US.
- Investment Income of €547,272: was the income earned on the Charity's investment portfolio, bank interest and rent received.
- Charitable activities of €68,475: was legacies and other income received.
- Other Income of €645,083: was the gain on the disposal of tangible assets, mainly property.

Breakdown of Income



Expenditure - where the money is spent

Total expenditure for the year was €6,377,214.

Charitable Activities - of the total, €6,263,340, or 98%, was spent on Charitable Activities:

- Congregational living, the advancement of Religion, €2,730,361: this includes the upkeep and up-skilling and retraining of the members of the Province. The members who receive salary, pension, stipend and retirement lump sum income donate them to the Charity and therefore have no independent means of support. They have devoted all of their adult years and their earnings to realize the objectives of the Charity. Many also give their services free in their various ministries and continue to do so well beyond retirement age. Hence the work of the Charity includes the provision of living accommodation, the upkeep, up-skilling and retraining of the members of the Province so that they will be able to continue in their service to the public

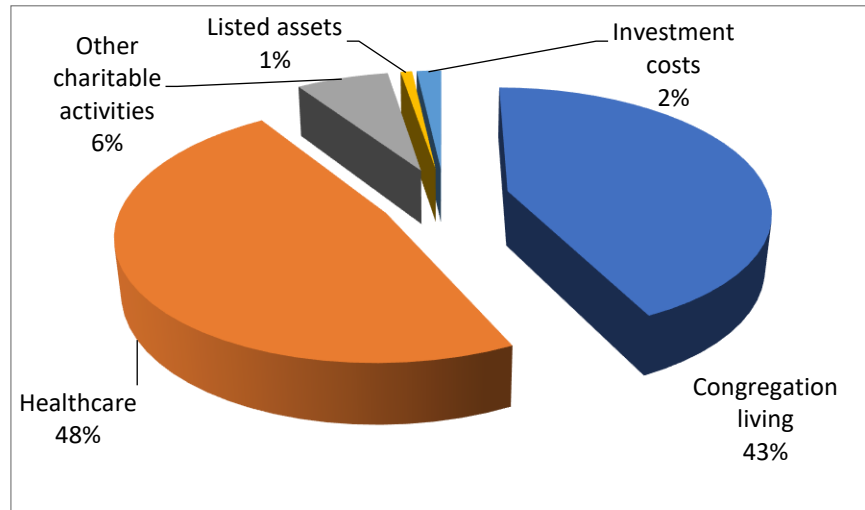
- Healthcare and the compassionate care of the sick and those in need, €3,049,641: Catherine McAuley generated in her Sisters a deep concern and compassion for the sick and dying and today, over 180 years later, wellbeing activities, healthcare, care of the dying and the bereaved still engage many of the members in the Province. The members of the Province are involved in this work in hospitals, hospices, nursing homes, community care and within the Community houses. In addition, the Charity must care for the elderly members of the Province who are now themselves in need of care.

- Relief of poverty, promotion of education, justice and other charitable activities, €429,766: this includes expenditure on a number of headings, including Promotion of all aspects of Education, Justice, peace & reconciliation, Overseas development and support, Pastoral and social care and development, Support of other charities/groups and Involvement in critical global and local issues

- Upkeep of listed assets, €53,573: the Charity owns a number of protected structures. The structures are typically buildings that are listed on planning authority's Record of Protected Structures (RPS). By including them in the RPS, the importance of these structures is recognised; they are legally protected from harm and all future changes to the structure are controlled and managed through the development control process. The Charity is legally required to make sure that these structures do not become endangered through neglect, decay, damage or harm.

Investment costs – in the year, investment costs totalled €113,874.

Breakdown of Expenditure



Net movement in funds

Net expenditure for the year, therefore, was €675,035. This was before the gain on investment assets, which when taken into account results in a net increase in funds in the year of €1,531,477.

Investments

At 31 December 2021, the Charity had investments of €21.5m. The purpose of these funds is to provide investment income to promote the charitable objectives of the Charity and to provide capital growth in the reserves over the medium term. The objective for the investments is to generate a return of 4% per annum while utilising the charity's stated ethical investment policy. In 2020, L&P (Cantor Fitzgerald Ireland) were appointed to act as a Discretionary Investment Manager.

The investment funds have an ethical investment screen; they exclude companies that fall foul of certain ethical criteria, and where possible, favour stocks that provide positive benefits to society. As noted earlier, the Charity also holds a number of Positive Impact Investments that direct money towards fulfilling certain positive ethical criteria.

The Trustees, with their investment advisors, review the investments on a regular basis.

Policy on reserves

At the end of the financial year, the total funds of the charity amounted to €40.6m. Of this, €0.5m is restricted for specific purposes - see Financial Statements note 17. Of the balance, €12.6m is represented by properties and other tangible fixed assets essential for the running of the Charity. The Trustees have designated another €26.6m to provide for Mission and Ministry works and Congregation Living needs. Details are given in note 16 of these Financial Statements. The Trustees will continue to review and reassess these designations on an on-going basis.

Un-designated or general funds amount to €0.8m. This equates to less than 2 months of unrestricted charitable expenditure. The Trustees would like this to be higher as, given the nature of the Charity's work and its commitments, they consider the level of free reserves should be equal to approximately 6 to 12 months' expenditure.

Review of Objectives for 2021

Objectives Set	Progress Review
To continue its commitment to the ongoing care of the Sisters in the Province, especially during the pandemic.	On-going
To facilitate and support the Sisters in undertaking the Charity's activities through the challenges of Covid-19.	On-going. See Activities and Achievements throughout Report.
To re-set plans for engagement with the deliverance of various aspects if the strategic direction set in 2019	Complete
To resource current leaders and middle-management support personnel with tools for leadership.	Refresher Programme for all leaders complete (Kinharvie Institute) Conflict Management for Managers (HR Team Webinar)
To consult all members in devising of local leadership model that meets current needs of the Charity.	Consultation complete. Model in progress of development.
To initiate a reflection process for furtherance of the 'Religious Life' strategic direction of 2019.	Initial stages complete. (See Objectives for 2022)

<p>To develop on-going education and formation processes in eco and social justice.</p>	<p>Education webinars and lecture series established.</p>
<p>To actively collaborate with other Mercy Provinces and Regions of the Congregation in restructuring of governance.</p>	<p>Preparatory work at penultimate stages of completion.</p>
<p>To work collaboratively with other groups and agencies in responding to global and local needs</p>	<p>On-going. See Activities and Achievements throughout Report.</p>
<p>To maintain the Safeguarding Structures at National and Provincial levels.</p>	<p>See page 58</p>

Future Plans and Objectives for 2022

The Provincial Leader and Team will continue to give direction to their governance responsibilities as Trustees of the Charity. In monitoring both needs and spending plans, they will make every effort to efficiently manage existing assets in generating the income necessary to achieve the Charity's aims.

The Charity plans to give support to the various works of the Charity, to their Sisters who work in them, as well as to their colleagues and collaborators.

The Sisters freely choose this way of life and are the mainstay of the Charity. They are its chief agents as well as the source of the funding available to meet its obligations. They covenant their lives and their energies in dedicated service of the ideals of the Sisters of Mercy Charity. Devising and monitoring adequate systems to support life in their communities is an ongoing challenge in a time of unprecedented change in our demographics.

There will be continuing commitment to the ongoing care of all the sisters. Concern for frail older Sisters will require the careful and continual review of community houses and the assessment of their suitability for ageing communities. Where necessary, nursing home care will be accessed for Sisters requiring full time care.

Charity-wide Objectives 2022

The trustees of the Charity actively engage in training for their roles and responsibilities in undertaking the administration of the Charity.

The Charity will:

- continue its commitment to the ongoing care of all Sisters in the Province.
- facilitate and support the Sisters in undertaking Charity's activities through the challenges of Covid-19
- to undertake an in-depth engagement with every member of the Province
- provide a programme of support to develop leaders.
- reconfigure the model of local leadership to meet the changing needs of the Charity
- devise on 3-year strategy to support the flourishing of Religious Life in our time.
- engage in an Extraordinary Chapter event with Provinces and Regions of the Mercy Congregation to further the process of governance restructuring.
- work collaboratively with other groups and agencies in responding to global and local needs.
- develop a cohort of members to address Care for Creation and to assist the wider membership in being proactive on this, developing an Action Plan.
- maintain the Safeguarding Structures at National and Provincial level.

Structure, Governance & Management

Nature of Governing Document

The governing instrument of the Northern Province is the Constitutions of the Sisters of Mercy which was adopted by the General Chapter of the Congregation in August 1994 and approved by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life (Rome) in April 1995. The Province, as noted above, is one of four Provinces in Ireland and is an unincorporated association.

The governmental structure of the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy involves a number of inter-connected units: local, provincial and congregational. The nature of the authority in each unit is described in the Constitutions. The Province is a unit of the Congregation having the personnel and other resources to support its life, mission and membership.

Method Adopted for Appointment of Trustees (Provincial Leadership Team)

The Charity is governed by the Provincial Leader and the Provincial Leadership Team who are elected every six years by Sisters in the Province. The Provincial Leadership Team are the Trustees of the Charity. Provincial Leadership Team members are chosen for their expertise and skills as well as their experience and knowledge of the Congregation, its nature and mission.

The Trustees are members of the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy and as such their living and personal costs are borne by the Charity. They receive no remuneration for their services as Trustees.

Organisational Structure and Decision-making

The Provincial Leader and members of the Provincial Leadership Team are the Trustees of the Charity. They take responsibility for the overall running of the Charity. The Trustees meet regularly to review developments in the Charity and its activities. Every six years Sisters are involved in a prolonged meeting – called a Chapter – a period of reflection/prayer, evaluation and planning with a focus on the development of policies and effective use of resources in an assessment of current and future needs.

Trustees attend formal training courses on the duties of trustees and seek guidance and advice as necessary from their legal, investment and property advisors on the issues which arise in carrying out their duties. In addition, the Trustees have established a number of advisory groups. The function of these groups, whose membership includes various professional advisors, is to advise the Trustees on different aspects of stewardship and the general management of the assets of the Charity.

There are systems of accountability operational throughout the Charity. At the six yearly Chapter meeting there is a General and Financial Report to the Sisters. The Provincial Treasurer is appointed by the Provincial Leader with the consent of her Team. The Provincial Treasurer administers the affairs of the Charity under the direction of the Provincial Leader and her Team. The majority of the income of the Charity comes from Sisters' salaries, stipends and pensions, sale of property and income from investments. The salary, stipend and pension income is voluntarily donated to a common fund, administered through the Provincial Stewardship Office.

Collaboration and Partnership

It is the policy of the Charity to work in partnership and collaboration with their ministry colleagues, statutory and voluntary bodies, other religious congregations and parish and diocesan groups in serving the local and wider community. In some instances, Sisters are employed by these organisations whilst in other cases they work as volunteers.

The Charity is a member of AMRI (Association of Missionaries & Religious of Ireland), a support body for Religious Congregations which aims to bring a Gospel-based voice in relating to the issues of our world. An annual fee, based on the number of Sisters living in Ireland, is contributed by each participating group.

Risk Management

Governance and Management risks are named as the possibility of lack of decisive direction; whether the skills and training of the Sisters and staff are adequate; and whether the good use of its resources is optimum. Steps taken to mitigate these risks are:

- Review Chapter Statement and engage the appropriate personnel and resources to implement strategic plan
- Implement trustee and staff training/induction

- Monitor financial and operational performance.

Operational looks at the risks inherent in the Charity's activities including the risk of any Sisters being engaged in inappropriate activities; possible unsuitability of buildings, poor maintenance and poor health & safety; shortcomings in the services provided; difficulties with staff; and lack of a disaster recovery policy. Steps taken to mitigate these risks are:

- Policies and procedures are in place and a system of review agreed
- HR company contracted to provide advice
- Data backup procedure and security measures implemented
- Finance Manual reviewed and updated
- Insurance cover reviewed.

Financial risks include those arising as a result of poor investment performance and policy, weak budgetary control, inappropriate spending and poor accounting mechanisms. Steps taken to mitigate these risks are:

- Appointment of an investment advisor to work on investment strategy / investment objectives that considers diversity, prudence and liquidity criteria. The investment objectives are considered on an ongoing basis.
- Monitor and review financial and investment reports on a quarterly basis
- Finance Manual reviewed and updated.

Property

“For the sake of our mercy mission, the congregation and each province has the right to acquire and possess, to administer and alienate property temporal goods and revenues according to the norms of universal law and the constitutions, with due respect for civil law” (Cons. 119 1995).

“We value the resources of the earth as gifts of God and use them in a spirit of stewardship ... In the spirit of religious poverty, we seek to have a simple lifestyle and to balance concern for our future with support and compassion for poor and needy people” (Cons. 118 1995).

We are committed to a lifestyle reflecting the fact that all our possessions are held in trust for the mission of the Congregation. As property trustees we aim to promote the mission, addressing our own needs and those of the wider community.

The relevant professional advice is sought in relation to leases and agreements, protected structures, planning, health and safety legislation, acquisition, refurbishment and disposal of property and all legally binding issues and transactions.

Policies

The Trustees, in collaboration with the Congregational Leadership Team, ensures that policies and good practice guidelines are developed, circulated and implemented and that these are regularly evaluated and updated. The Trustees have taken steps to ensure that the Charity is fully compliant with all legislative requirements.

Since the mid 1990's the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy has had a Safeguarding Policy in place which has been reviewed regularly. The Policy aims to encourage adequate awareness and best practice among all Sisters in the Congregation and those working for them, to ensure that all children and vulnerable adults are safeguarded from abuse of any kind. The Charity is committed to a culture of safeguarding and to ensuring compliance with best practice in this area. The Trustees are proactive in complying with civil and ecclesiastical requirements for safeguarding in Northern Ireland. The Trustees review annually the implementation of its Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

The Charity has further policies and guidelines on Stewardship, Health and Safety, Fire Evacuation Policy for all residencies, Safeguarding Adults at Risk of Harm Policy, Data Protection Policy, Data Privacy Notices. Privacy Statements were included in recruitment procedures as well as being included in Mercy Projects Applications.

One Sister works as Human Resources Co-ordinator. In addition to the usual matters of managing Human Resources for the Charity, in 2021 it was necessary to manage significant, on-going work related to the pandemic, to keep abreast of the changing restrictions, guidance and regulations and to continually update employees on same; to implement the Employee Declaration Form, and to ensure Covid-19 on-line training for all staff in Assisted Living Convents

Throughout the year the usual human resources matters were attended to, although all recruitment and meetings took place using online platforms such as zoom and/or facetime.

The Human Resources Co-ordinator attended to the following:-

- Provision of information and monitoring of compliance with employment legislation.
- Ensuring Covid-19 guidelines updated as Government revised and issued same.
- Revision of Staff Induction Form.
- 'Phased return to work' policy implemented and staff training provided.
- 'Working from home' policy updated.
- Preparing 'Lone Worker' policy
- Contributing to interprovincial human resources meetings regarding the 'Right to Disconnect Policy'.
- Contributing to interprovincial human resources meetings regarding the 'Remote Working Policy'.
- Safeguarding training pack for new employees revised.
- All staff participated in and were accredited for 'Volunteer Now' on-line training for Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults.
- Ensuring that all policies are implemented.
- All recruitment meetings were chaired by the HR Co-ordinator.
- Preparing contracts for new staff employees.
- Conduct of Annual Appraisals for Managers
- Supervision meetings with Managers (via Zoom or in-person)
- Assisting with difficult staff issues.
- Line Manager and point of contact for the Managers.
- Checking staff files to ensure all the necessary documents are in place.
- Taking part in interprovincial HR meetings regarding 'Flexible Working' policy.

Upskilling is an important aspect of the HR Coordinator's role through availing of training webinars provided by the HR Team. In 2021, this Sister took part in the following training programmes: Conflict Management, Recruitment & Selection, Probation period and GDPR

Safeguarding

Safeguarding Policies and Procedures

The Trustees have adopted the 'Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland', 2016 and are committed to adhere to and implement the Child Safeguarding Policy within the Northern Province.

The Charity has a robust safeguarding structure in place. The Safeguarding Office employs a professional social worker who is both the Safeguarding Manager and Designated Liaison Person for the Province.

In 2021 a Safeguarding Co-ordinator was appointed to assist with Adult Safeguarding to further strengthen the Safeguarding Office. Additional administrative support from the Charity is also available.

The role of the Safeguarding Personnel is to promote and oversee the implementation of best practice in safeguarding in the Northern Province and to liaise with the Statutory authorities and external agencies in relation to safeguarding matters, as appropriate.

The Safeguarding Committee

The Safeguarding Committee, which consists of 10 members, convened quarterly – by zoom – during 2021. It continued to monitor and support the implementation of the Safeguarding Standards and to promote a robust safeguarding culture within the Charity. The meetings are chaired by the Assistant Provincial Leader and is accountable to the Provincial Leader. The Agendas and Minutes of the Safeguarding Committee Meetings are stored in Provincial House.

The Safeguarding Strategic Plan 2020 - 2023

The Safeguarding Committee monitors the implementation of the Safeguarding Strategic Plan. This Plan helps guide the development of safeguarding practice in relation to Safeguarding Children and Adults at risk of harm within the Province. Its purpose is to ensure that individuals are treated with dignity and respect and protected from harm within the Northern Province. Despite the impact of Covid-19, efforts continued to be made to adhere to and implement the 3-year Safeguarding Strategic Plan within the Province. The

Safeguarding Strategic Plan is based upon Standards 1, 5,6 and 7 of the NBSCCCI (National Board for Safeguarding Children in Catholic Church in Ireland)

In addition, the completion of the Safeguarding Annual Audit and Report assists with the monitoring of safeguarding practice within the Charity.

Safe Selection & Recruitment Policy and Procedures

The Sisters of Mercy recognise that all positions of employment within the Charity require safe recruitment practice. The comprehensive Recruitment Policy and Procedures is supported and supervised by the Human Resources Co-ordinator, who also assists with and oversees the interview process, ensuring a consistent approach to recruitment within the Charity.

Safeguarding: Induction

New members of staff receive induction in safeguarding and are afforded opportunities to attend Safeguarding Information sessions within the Province. Staff members are issued with information and supporting material in relation to 'Safeguarding Children' and 'Adult Safeguarding' when they commence employment. Records of completion of the induction process are monitored by the Human Resources Co-ordinator and are retained in the workplace.

Safeguarding Children

The Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy has adopted the Policy and guidance of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI), 2016. In 2019, all Mercy Provinces, adopted and disseminated the Congregational International Child Safeguarding Policy and Standards. The Policy too, is based upon the NBSCCCI Policy and Standards 'Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2016' and has been approved by the National Board.

The Charity is committed to implementing the Congregational International Child Safeguarding Policy and all Sisters and Staff are required to comply with this Policy.

Safeguarding Adults

During 2021, the four Provinces of the Sisters of Mercy, in collaboration with the CLT, commissioned Clara Learning to undertake a Review of the Congregational 'Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons' Policy to bring the Policy into line with the HSE Draft Adult Safeguarding Policy, 2019. Staff from Clara Learning met with the Provincial Safeguarding Managers on 11.05.2021, 14.07.2021 and 26.10.2021 in order to progress the review of the Congregational Policy.

The Safeguarding Adults' leaflet was updated in 2021 to include the contact details of the recently appointed Safeguarding Co-ordinator. The leaflet is included in the 'Safeguarding Induction Pack' which is given new staff on commencement of employment.

The Sisters of Mercy accept responsibility to develop awareness of the issues that can cause harm to adults and seek to provide a safe and caring environment for all.

Due to the demographic trend within the Province, the Provincial Leadership Team recognise the increasing involvement of personnel in caring for and safeguarding adults at risk of harm. Consequently, there has been an increased emphasis placed on delivering training on Safeguarding Adults to Sisters and Staff within the Charity, during 2021.

Garda Vetting

The Vetting Policies and Procedures of the Sisters of Mercy reflect the legal requirements in place in the Republic of Ireland. Records and documentation in relation to vetting are stored securely in Provincial House. Documentation is destroyed in a timely manner, in accordance with guidance.

The Sisters of Mercy recognise the importance of vetting and ensure that all Sisters and Staff involved in work or activities with children and/or adults at risk of harm have been vetted.

Vetting which took place in 2021

- 21 new staff members were vetted.
- 6 staff members were re-vetted
- 1 Sister of Mercy was vetted.

Safeguarding Children Training

Introduction to Children First: Online TUSLA Training, completed by Safeguarding Manager (02.02.2021)

Presentation on Reporting by Garda Supt B Walsh attended by Provincial Leader, Assistant Provincial Leader, Safeguarding Manager, (NBSCCCI by zoom -20.07.2021)

National Garda Vetting Bureau presentation attended by Vetting Co-ordinators, Safeguarding Manager, NBSCCCI (by zoom -30.09.2021)

Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment attended by Safeguarding Trainer and Safeguarding Manager, NBSCCCI (by zoom - 27.10.2021)

Safeguarding Adults Training

With the need to keep staff upskilled in Adult Safeguarding, and with Covid-19 restrictions impeding opportunities for in-person training, a Powerpoint presentation, based on the HSE Draft Adult Safeguarding Policy, 2019, with supporting material, was prepared and disseminated to staff in the larger communities in Ballyshannon, Navan, Kells, Ardee and Dundalk. Managers oversaw the attendance and engagement of staff in this training.

In all, 35 Staff members accessed the Adult Safeguarding material in their workplace.

Presentation by zoom on the Assisted Decision-Making Capacity, Act, 2015, was attended by the Provincial Leadership Team, and Safeguarding Manager. (23.06. 2021)

Safeguarding Updates / Safeguarding Communication Record

The Provincial Leadership Team recognise the importance of ensuring that Sisters and Staff are kept informed of best practice and developments in relation to safeguarding.

Safeguarding information and updates were provided through Newsletters, correspondence and meetings by zoom.

14.06.2021 - Meeting by zoom with Local Leaders

15.06.2021 - Meeting by zoom with Area Group Co-ordinators

19.10.2021 - Meeting with Local Leaders and Area Group Co-ordinators.

Inter-Provincial Safeguarding Managers Meetings

Provincial Managers continued to meet by zoom in order to share information and discuss issues in relation to safeguarding.

Review of Ministry

A Review of Sisters in ministry with children and/or adults at risk of harm was carried out in June/July 2021.

The Safeguarding Annual Report, 2021, was compiled for submission to the Provincial Leadership Team and the Congregational Leadership Team.

The Sisters of Mercy, Northern Province, have continued to strive to promote a robust safeguarding culture within the Northern Province during 2021.

Reference and Administrative Details

Name of Charity	Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy, Northern Province
Charity Number	CHY128 CRA No. 20000318
Address of Principal Office	Provincial House 74 Main Street Clogher Co. Tyrone BT76 0AA
Trustees (Provincial Leadership Team)	Sr. Rose Marie Conlan (Provincial Leader) Sr. Perpetua McNulty (Assistant Provincial Leader) Sr. Mary De Largy (Provincial Team Member) Sr. Áine Campbell (Provincial Team Member) Sr. Mabel Marron (Provincial Team Member)
Provincial Treasurer	Sr. Áine McGoldrick
Independent Auditors	Daly, Park & Co 6 Trevor Hill Newry Co Down BT34 1DN
Principal Bankers	First Trust Bank Meadowbank House 143-145 Strand Road Derry BT48 7TN
Investment Managers	Setanta Asset Management Ltd Unigestion SA
Solicitors	GL McGowan The Square Balbriggan Co Dublin K32 XN61