



SIGNIFICANT DATES IN THE HISTORY OF THE SISTERS OF MERCY West Midwest Community


Legend: **Auburn:** **Lime** **Chicago:** **Red**
 Burlingame: **Rust** **Detroit:** **Teal**
 Cedar Rapids: **Blue** **Omaha:** **Green**

- 1846** Chicago foundation is made by Mother Mary Frances Warde and five companions. Mother Mary Agatha O'Brien was the first superior. St. Xavier College (now University) was established. (Chicago)
- 1850** Mercy Hospital opens. (Chicago)
- 1854** On December 8 at 5:00 a.m. eight Sisters of Mercy from Kinsale, Ireland led by 25-year-old Sister Mary Baptist Russell disembark from the steamship Cortes at the Jackson Street pier to begin their ministry to the people of San Francisco. (Burlingame)
- 1856** Buenos Aires, Argentina foundation is made by Mother Mary Evangelista Fitzpatrick from Baggot Street, Dublin, Ireland. (Detroit)
- 1857** On October 2, five Sisters of Mercy arrive in Sacramento from San Francisco to begin a ministry in education and health care. This foundation will become the Auburn, California Community. (Auburn/Burlingame)
- 1857** On July 27 the Sisters terminate their contract to nurse in the City (San Francisco) and County Hospital. They buy the latter and open St. Mary's Hospital, the oldest Catholic hospital in the West. (Burlingame)
- 1859** Ottawa, Illinois foundation from Chicago is made by Mother M. Francis Xavier McGirr. (Chicago)
- 1861-62** Major floods hit Sacramento. The sisters minister to the victims going out by boat from their own flooded convent. (Auburn)
- 1863** On September 3 Sister Mary Baptist Russell accompanies six Sisters to Grass Valley to begin the care of orphans, education of children and care of the sick in that city. The Grass Valley, California foundation is the oldest foundation in the Omaha Regional Community. (Omaha/Burlingame)
- 1864** Omaha, Nebraska foundation is made by Mother Mercy Ignatius Lynch (Omaha)
- 1867** DeWitt, Iowa Foundation is made from Chicago by Mother Mary Borromeo Johnson. (Chicago)
- 1868** From August until the following May the Sisters nurse victims of the small pox epidemic in the designated "pest houses." In gratitude the City Fathers exempt all religious from paying fare on public transportation. (Burlingame)


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- 1869** Independence, Iowa foundation is made from Davenport/DeWitt, Iowa by Mother Mary Francis de Sales Monholland. It begins as a branch house of the Davenport Community. (Detroit/Chicago)
- 1870** Foundation is established in Janesville, Wisconsin from Davenport, Iowa. (Chicago)
- 1871** The great Chicago Fire destroys the city, including St. Xavier Academy and the House of Mercy. Mercy Hospital provides care and shelter for the injured and homeless. (Chicago)
- 1871** Our Lady of La Salette Home for the Aged opens on Rincon Hill. The Magdalen Asylum, House of Mercy, and Industrial School for Girls are combined into one institution on property at 23rd and Potrero (renamed St. Catherine's Home in 1904.) (Burlingame)
- 1873** Grand Rapids, Michigan foundation is made by Mother Mary Joseph Lynch. (Detroit)
- 1875** St. Joseph School, Sacramento, California opened in 1857, becomes incorporated as St. Joseph Academy, a high school and Normal School for women. (Auburn)
- 1875** Three Sisters of Mercy from Independence, Iowa and four Sisters from Davenport, Iowa make the foundation in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. (Cedar Rapids/Chicago)
- 1877-78** Lourdes Academy (St. Anthony's Parish), Oakland, and St. Peter's Academy, San Francisco open. (Burlingame)
- 1879** Dubuque, Iowa foundation is made from Davenport, Iowa by Mother Mary Agatha Murphy. (Detroit/Chicago)
- 1879** Mother M. Joseph Lynch moves her community to Big Rapids, Michigan where they open a hospital and a school. (Detroit)
- 1881** The Davenport diocese is created, leaving the Cedar Rapids community as an independent congregation. This was also true for the Davenport branch houses of Independence, Iowa and Dubuque, Iowa. (Cedar Rapids/Detroit)
- 1881** Red Bluff, California foundation made from Manchester, New Hampshire by Mother Mary Helen Dickson. (Omaha)
- 1882** Durango, Colorado foundation made by Mother Mary John Baptist Meyers. (Omaha)
- 1883** Sister Mary Agatha Mulany was appointed the first Mother Superior by the Bishop of the Davenport diocese. (Cedar Rapids)
- 1883** Mother M. Catherine Feehan and five companions arrive from Nashville, Tennessee to open a boarding school and Motherhouse on Chicago's west side. (Chicago)
- 1884** Belcourt, North Dakota foundation made by Mother Mary Genevieve Sheridan. (Omaha)

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- 1884** Independence, Missouri foundation made by Mother Mary Jerome Shubrick. (Omaha)
- 1885** Joplin, Missouri foundation made by Mother Mary Ignatius Walker. (Omaha)
- 1885** Mother Mary Evangelist Holcomb and two companions respond to the request of Bishop Heiss to extend the Fond du Lac community to Milwaukee. (Chicago)
- 1887** Kansas City, Missouri foundation made by Mother Mary Agnes Dunne. (Omaha)
- 1887** Council Bluffs, Iowa foundation made by Mother Mary Vincent McDermott. (Omaha/Chicago)
- 1887** The Sacramento Community becomes an independent congregation with Mother Mary Vincent Phelan as its first Mother Superior. (Auburn)
- 1889** Mercy Hospital Catholic Training School for Nurses in Illinois opens. (Chicago)
- 1889** Colorado motherhouse is moved to Denver, a foundation from St. Louis. (Omaha)
- 1893** Des Moines, Iowa foundation made by Mother Mary Xavier Malloy. (Omaha)
- 1894** The mayor of Milwaukee asks the Sisters to provide housing for working women. Milwaukee foundation begins with Mercy Home for Women (later St. Catherine's Residence). (Chicago)
- 1896** Portland, Oregon foundation made by Mother Mary Joseph Lynch. (Omaha)
- 1896** Sisters purchase Ridge Home to open the first Mercy hospital in Sacramento. This marks the beginning of a 100 year tradition of Mercy healthcare in Northern California. (Auburn)
- 1897** Sacramento, California Sisters build new hospital, Mater Misericordiae, and open a nursing school. (Auburn)
- 1900** Sisters open Stanford Home as an orphanage for young children. (Auburn)
- 1900** Mercy Hospital in Cedar Rapids opens. (Cedar Rapids)
- 1906** The Sisters lease part of the Green estate and rename the mansion Sacred Heart Convent and Academy. It was the first step toward the purchase of the mansion and the acreage surrounding it. (Cedar Rapids)
- 1907** Mercy Home in Milwaukee is moved and renamed St. Catherine's Residence for Women. (Chicago)
- 1908** North Dakota motherhouse moves to Devil's Lake from Belcourt. (Omaha)
- 1910** At the request of Bishop Muldoon (Rockford Diocese), the Aurora, Illinois foundation is made by six Sisters of Mercy from Council Bluffs, Iowa. (Chicago/Omaha)
- 1911** St. Mary's Hospital is rebuilt and reopens on Stanyan Street near Golden Gate Park on February 22, replacing the building on Rincon Hill destroyed in the 1906 earthquake and fire. (Burlingame)

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- 1911** The Mercy Communities in Joplin, Independence and Kansas City, Missouri amalgamate and become the Kansas City Community. (Omaha)
- 1914** The Michigan Sisters move their motherhouse from Big Rapids (after three fires) back to Grand Rapids, Michigan and build Mount Mercy which is both a motherhouse and a girls' academy. (Detroit)
- 1915** Jackson, Michigan foundation is made the Grand Rapids, Michigan Community. The first superior is Mother Mary Assisium Hynes. (Detroit)
- 1916** Pocatello, Idaho foundation is made by Mother Mary Vincent Mahoney and Mother Mary Ignatius Brady. (Omaha)
- 1922** The San Francisco Sisters of Mercy amalgamate with three groups of Sisters of Mercy from Phoenix, Arizona; San Diego, California; and Los Angeles, California, doubling the number of sisters and adding four hospitals and six schools. The Motherhouse of this new entity is moved to the Kohl Mansion in Burlingame, California on February 25, 1924. (Burlingame)
- 1922** Raton, New Mexico foundation made by Mother Mary Angela Hostetter. (Omaha)
- 1924** Mount Mercy Academy in Cedar Rapids, Iowa opens. Sacred Heart Academy continued as a grade school.(Cedar Rapids)
- 1928** Mount Mercy Junior College opens in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. (Cedar Rapids)
- 1929** 10 foundations become the Omaha Province with the amalgamation and the formation of the Union of the Sisters of Mercy of the United States of the America. Mt. Loretta Novitiate is established in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Mother Mary Leo Gallagher is elected the first Mother Provincial. (Omaha)
- 1929** Six foundations in Illinois, Wisconsin and Iowa amalgamate and become the Chicago Province. (Chicago)
- 1929** The motherhouses in Grand Rapids and Jackson, Michigan join the Union of the Sisters of Mercy of the United States as part of Cincinnati Province. The Dubuque, Iowa Community joins the Omaha Province. (Detroit)
- 1930** The Dubuque, Iowa Community joins the Cincinnati Province and the Novitiate for the Cincinnati Province is established at Mt. St. Agnes in Dubuque. (Detroit)
- 1931** Mercy High School, Burlingame opens. (Burlingame)
- 1931** Red Bluffs, California joins the Union and the Omaha Province. (Omaha)
- 1934-68** These were years of expansion in education. By 1968, the Sisters were in twelve educational institutions. (Auburn)
- 1940** The Detroit Province is established. Mercy College of Detroit (now part of the University of Detroit Mercy) is built as motherhouse and women's college. Mother Mary Carmelita Manning is the first Mother Provincial, and Sister Mary Patricia Garvey is the first college president. (Detroit)

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- 1940** The Motherhouse is moved to Auburn, California, site of today's Convent of Our Lady of Mercy and Mercy Center. (Auburn)
- 1944** Sisters move to Shasta County opening Mercy Hospital. (Auburn)
- 1945** Our Lady of Mercy High School opens on the campus of Mercy College/Detroit Provincial House. (Detroit)
- 1947** The new Constitutions for the Cedar Rapids Community is approved by Rome. (Cedar Rapids)
- 1949** Sisters open pre-postulancy house at Ardfert in County Kerry, Ireland. (Auburn)
- 1952** Mercy High School, San Francisco opens. (Burlingame)
- 1961** The Sisters of Mercy in Buenos Aires, Argentina join the Detroit Province of the Union of the Sisters of Mercy in the United States. (Detroit)
- 1964** In January the first four sisters leave from Burlingame for the Altiplano of Peru to begin ministry in the Prelature of Juli. In the next 40 years, 14 sisters have ministered there. An indigenous community is developing with three Aymara women professed as Sisters of Mercy by 2006. (Burlingame)
- 1964** The Sisters gather in Omaha to celebrate the first 100 years of the Sisters of Mercy in Omaha.
- 1965** Mercy College of Detroit takes over the entire Mercy campus in Detroit. The Provincial Offices and Our Lady of Mercy High School move to Farmington (Hills), Michigan. (Detroit)
- 1966** Mercy High School, Carmichael is opened. (Auburn)
- 1975** The Mercy Community observes its centennial year with the civic community. (Cedar Rapids)
- 1976** The 17 hospitals in Michigan, Iowa and Indiana sponsored by the Detroit Province join to form the Sisters of Mercy Health Corporation. (Detroit)
- 1978** The first gathering of Sisters and partners in ministry of the entire Province. Over 300 attend. It is held in Estes Park, Colorado at the YMCA of the Rockies. (Omaha)
- 1980** The Chapter passes a proposal adopting housing as a sponsored ministry. (Omaha)
- 1982** Mercy Spirituality and Retreat Center opens in Burlingame.
- 1986** The Burlingame Sisters of Mercy join with the Sisters of Mercy of Auburn to form Catholic Healthcare West. (Burlingame/Auburn)
- 1988** The Assembly establishes a ministry fund for the service to the poor with a commitment of significant funding. Ministry funds evolve to the present McAuley Ministry Fund. (Omaha)
- 1989** The Auburn Community becomes a co-sponsor of Mercy Housing, Inc. (Auburn)

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- 1989** Sisters of Mercy of Burlingame enter into sponsorship of Mercy Housing, Inc. with the Omaha Regional Community. In 1993 they form Mercy Housing of California. (Burlingame)
- Mercy College of Detroit joins with Jesuit University of Detroit to become University of Detroit Mercy. (Detroit)
- 1991** *Sixteen independent Mercy Communities including Burlingame, Auburn and Cedar Rapids join the nine Provinces of the Union of the Sisters of Mercy in the United States including Detroit, Chicago and Omaha to form the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy in the Americas, each becoming a Regional Community of the Institute.*
- 1991** By Assembly action, the Detroit Regional Community establishes the Mercy Education Project for girls and women in the inner city of Detroit. Sister Mary Canice Johnson is the first director. (Detroit)
- 1992** Mercy Center Auburn is opened as center for spirituality and retreat. (Auburn)
- 1992** Mercy Education Resource Center is established to continue the education ministry of the Sisters. (Auburn)
- 1993** The Cedar Rapids Regional Community takes the first steps down the road to re-imagining and re-configuring. (Cedar Rapids)
- 1996** The Omaha Regional Community participates in the West Midwest Collaborative Mercy New Membership Team. (Omaha)
- 1997** The Chicago Regional Community becomes co-sponsors in the formation of Provena Health System. (Chicago)
- 1998** The Chicago Regional Community joins with members of LCWR, Region 8 to form Project Irene: Illinois Religious Engaging in Nonviolent Endeavors. (Chicago)
- 1999** Fox Valley Sisters celebrate their 90th Anniversary in Aurora, Illinois. (Chicago)
- 2000** The Cedar Rapids Community celebrates its 125th anniversary year. (Cedar Rapids)
- 2003** The Chicago Regional Community becomes a co-sponsor in Mercy Housing, Inc. (Chicago)
- 2004** *The Regional Communities of Chicago, Cedar Rapids, Burlingame, Auburn, Omaha and Detroit agree to work together to form the West Midwest Community in the re-imagining and reconfiguration of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas.*
- 2004-07** Sisters of Mercy of both the Auburn and the Burlingame Regional Communities join together to celebrate 150 years of service to the people of California. (Auburn/Burlingame)
- 2005** The Sisters become co-sponsors of Cristo Rey High School for economically and socially at-risk students. (Auburn)



2006 The Sisters of Mercy in Argentina celebrate their 150th Anniversary of their coming to Buenos Aires. (Detroit)

2008 *In March, the West Midwest Community holds its first Assembly.*

2008 *On July 1, the West Midwest Community comes into existence.*

Hurrah for new foundations! They make the old, young and the young, merry!