



THE VIEW FROM THE BLUFF

DECEMBER 2016

SISTERS OF CHARITY OF OUR LADY OF MERCY

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

Meet Our Associates



Carol Lowther

1. Where do you currently live? I live on James Island in Charleston, SC and attend Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church on Folly Beach. I am ten minutes away from the Motherhouse and am blessed to be able to enjoy Mass with our Sisters as often as my schedule permits.
2. Are you currently employed? If so, please describe your responsibilities and how long you have been there. I have been retired from government employment for four years now. During my working career, I had many diverse jobs; lastly being a

Technical Library Manager for the Naval Nuclear Propulsion program.

3. Tell us a little about yourself, including your hobbies, interests. I like to read, exercise and travel. I am involved in a bible study and a Christian Meditation group, both of which meets weekly. I enjoy ministering to the aging population and assist Sr. Cyril in a communion service on Fridays. I also volunteer in the library at my granddaughter's elementary school and love spending time with my three beautiful granddaughters (one of which lives in England).
4. How did you become acquainted with the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy? I became involved with the OLM Sisters at the recommendation of my parish priest, Msgr. Robert Kelly.
5. How long have you been an Associate? I have been an OLM Associate since 1996.

6. What compelled you to become an Associate of the Community? I became an OLM Associate after participating in the gatherings and falling in love with the other associates and Sisters.

7. Do you see yourself touching others' lives as many Associates have touched yours? I hope to be able to mentor others as I have been mentored. I was honored to be asked by Sr. Mary Joseph to take more of a leadership role in the Associate program.

8. In what ways do you feel you carry out the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul and the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy in your daily life? I have always had a heart for helping the poor. While attending college, I volunteered along with other likeminded people and ministered to families in the Hispanic ghetto of New York City by mentoring the children. In my current parish, I have been the Outreach coordinator for the needy in our community and take communion to the sick and homebound. I also make myself available to drive our OLM Sisters to appointments as the need arises.

Mary Kate Horton

1. Where do you currently live? I currently live on James Island. I have lived here for 36 years.

2. Are you currently employed? If so, please describe your responsibilities and how long you have been there. I am a full-time caregiver. I was a fulltime PAC then my father and then mother got sick so for 6+ years I have been taking care of them. Dad died three years ago. Mom needs 24/7 care. Plus, I am trying to volunteer at Stiles two five hour days a week. I work with the 1st graders. I help with reading and math. I had an elementary teaching degree prior to going into medicine. As soon as Mom gets healthy enough I plan to return to teaching. That means taking some refresher courses at the College of Charleston and take my National Teaching Exam again. I want to return to the paying workforce.

3. Tell us a little about yourself, including your hobbies, interests. I grew up in Alaska in the 50's and 60's and as a teen in the Washington D.C. area. I love to read, cook, can and bake. I love to quilt and

belong to the Islands Quilters and modern quilters and my friendships are very important.

4. How did you become acquainted with the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy? Sister Marcella introduced me to the Sisters.

5. How long have you been an Associate? I have been going to the Sisters programs for 16 years. I am not sure how long I have been a pledged Associate.

6. What compelled you to become an Associate of the Community? Kindness and goodness matter. As a human being we need to be accountable for our actions and take care of one another as one person or in a group.

7. Do you see yourself touching others' lives as many Associates have touched yours? I can only hope I touch others in a positive way and make a positive change.

8. In what ways do you feel you carry out the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul and the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy in your daily life? Through kindness and caring. I truly care about all people.



Margaret McCauley

1. Where do you currently live? I live in Charleston, SC one and a half blocks from the new Diocesan Pastoral Center.

2. Are you currently employed? If so, please describe your responsibilities and how long you have been there. I am a retired teacher and restaurant owner.

3. Tell us a little about yourself, including your hobbies, interests. I love being a wife to a wonderful man and I enjoy reading, quilting, baking, visiting with family and friends and doing volunteer work. I was a docent at the Nathaniel Russell House for

years but really found my niche after converting to Catholicism in 2010. My sponsor was an elderly gentleman who was greatly involved in the Saint Vincent de Paul Society. He encouraged my husband and me to become involved.

4. How did you become acquainted with the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy? I learned of the Sisters of Charity of OLM through Sister Miriam years before I became Catholic. She was at the Children's Home on Ingram Road. My employers decided to help the less fortunate have a merrier Christmas one year and chose to buy gifts for the children. I contacted Sr. Miriam and met with her. She brought the children to my restaurant and we fed them and gave them gifts. Bill Sharpe was Santa Claus. Sr. Miriam and I became friends and through her I learned about the OLM Community.

5. How long have you been an Associate? I became an Associate on February 11, 2015.

6. What compelled you to become an Associate of the Community? I attended OLM meetings and Spring Conferences for five years before becoming as Associate. The knowledge I gained at these meetings, especially learning what the OLM Community had accomplished and the example they had set I truly wanted to become a tiny part of and further such a wonderful calling.

7. Do you see yourself touching others' lives as many Associates have touched yours? Yes, Mary Eileen Leonard has been my mentor.

8. In what ways do you feel you carry out the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul and the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy in your daily life? I spend at least thirty hours per month working with the St. Vincent de Paul Society. My work includes collecting food parishioners have contributed and shopping for groceries, stocking shelves in the pantry, distributing food and delivering it to people without transportation. I am part of a team who do home visits to qualify people for energy grants, rent assistance and help to pay for medications. Because St. Joseph Parish is home to all the nursing homes in West Ashley, our church has great responsibilities. I along with many others, take communion to shut-ins. I pray the rosary every Thursday with residents

at Heartland and take communion there one Sunday each month. My husband and I go to Carter May one or two Sundays each month and have a communion service. We provide bingo prizes and call the game at Heartland the last Thursday of each month. I sit with people who are ill so family members may have a break. My husband is beside me every step of the way. Thank God. And I pray for the OLM Community every day.

Alberta Busch

1. Where do you currently live? I live in Mt. Pleasant.

2. Are you currently employed? If so, please describe your responsibilities and how long you have been there. I am retired.

3. Tell us a little about yourself, including your hobbies, interests. I like to bake.

4. How did you become acquainted with the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy? 27 years ago, through Sister Marcella.

5. How long have you been an Associate? I have been an Associate 27 years.

6. What compelled you to become an Associate of the Community? Hurricane Hugo! So much needed to be done.

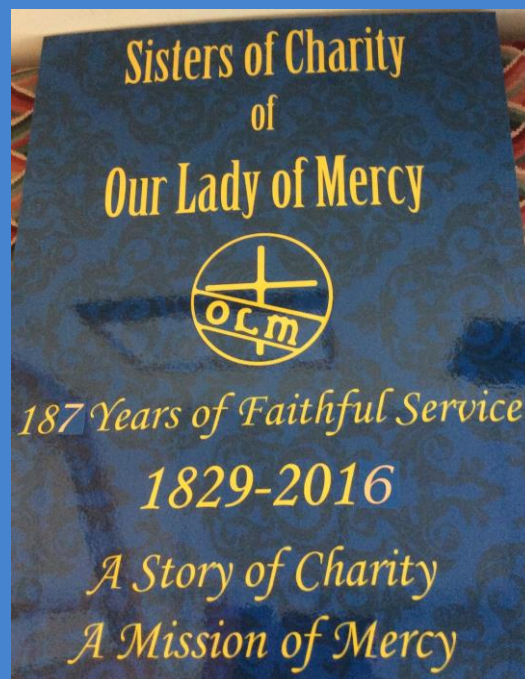
7. Do you see yourself touching others' lives as many Associates have touched yours? Yes, I do.

8. In what ways do you feel you carry out the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul and the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy in your daily life? Through my prayer life.

*Partners in
Ministry*

Happy Founding Day!

December 8, 1829



BISHOP'S HOUSE
114 BROAD STREET
CHARLESTON 4, S. C.

October 31, 1952

Sister deNeri, O.L.M.
St. Catherine School
120 E. Liberty Street
Sumter, S. C.

Dear Sister deNeri:

It would be nice to have for The Catholic Banner a story about the work done by the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in Sumter, especially your missionary trips to teach catechetics to the children in your part of the State. Kindly address it to the Editor of the paper, Mr. Traynor Ferillo, The Catholic Banner, 114 Broad Street, Charleston, S. C.

Thanking you and with every best wish, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

John J. Russell
Bishop of Charleston

A STORY FROM OUR HISTORY

The letter to the left was sent to Sister de Neri Faase, OLM, Superior of St. Catherine Convent in Sumter, by Bishop John Russell.

As a follow up to last month's article in the View From The Bluff on the history of the OLMs time in Sumter, Sr. de Neri's response to the Bishop's letter follows. It offers further insight into the life of our sisters in Sumter once St. Joseph Academy closed and the Sumter Sisters began their missionary catechetical ministry. The second article, by Sr. Mary Bernard Campbell, tells about the OLMs move into the O'Donnell property in Sumter which they named St. Catherine's Convent. These writings offer us an inside look at what must have been an exciting time in our history.

"Three Sisters go our daily into five districts of South Carolina to carry out the injunction of Christ, to 'go and teach'. Six days a week, and on Sunday too, covering Sumter, Cheraw, Camden, Summerton, Orangeburg, and Shaw Air Force Base.

From Saint Catherine's Convent in Sumter the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy have for many a day and many a year been active in the missionary work of the State, teaching the Catholic children who were unable to attend Catholic school. They have covered great distances and cooperated in the religious training of so many of the children of the parishes of this section, with the supplementary work done during the summers at the Religious Vacation Camps. They find satisfaction in their attempts to reach as many souls as possible, and consider the gaining of one soul sufficient reward for any amount of labor entailed.

The number of children now being contacted weekly by the three Teacher-Sisters is close to the three hundred mark. In the Sumter, Camden, Cheraw, and Orangeburg sections, the numbers of youngsters in the Beginners classes are increasing greatly over those of former years.

Once a week each Mission sees the Sisters gathering around them the children who have already been "collected" from schools and homes by the valiant efforts of the zealous Pastor, and the parents of one or more of the children. In this regard, many parents are making unusual sacrifices to bring the children in from great distances for the limited hour or three quarters of an hour which is all the time that can be allotted for a class.

The "Pastorship" of a Pastor becomes very evident on these Missions, where one sees him actually counting and gathering his flock for instructions. Any of our readers who have never lived in "mission" territory, or who have had always available a Catholic School, might be interested in trying to appreciate the effort involved in getting the children off to a four-o'clock instruction class in the middle of a school week, with all the attendant travel and break in school routine, homework and meals. Certainly, there is a crying need for Catholic schools here in many sections of South Carolina. Without such facilities, the work of

imparting a clear and workable day-by-day conception of our Faith is an up-hill pull. A most fair dream would be a catholic school in every fair-sized town.

Gratifying to the Sisters is the eagerness with which the children receive them, and the real, lively interest in the actual class procedure. So often a Sister instinctively will exclaim, "Oh, how I wish I could stay and teach you for two more hours!" Inevitably the answer comes, "We do, too". Highlights of the days on these particular missions, are: the hills around Camden; hearing Mass at four forty-five PM at Shaw Field every Thursday; that ice cream cone at Bishopville every Friday; and a one hundred percent attendance on any day.

Seventy miles- (one way!) Sixty-seven miles-eleven miles- thirty-three miles- they tick off day after day. Yes, they do it in style; in a black, neat little Plymouth-a far cry, you say, from the "footsteps of St. Paul"? But the same spirit and the same zeal which led the same Saint Paul to travel his long mission roads, is giving impulse to the work of the catechetical teachers of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy; that more souls may be led to know Christ, and knowing Him, in turn to grow up teaching others to follow Him."

November 11, 1952, Saint Catherine's Convent, Sumter, SC

OLMs travelling on the mission trails



An account by Mother Mary Bernard Campbell on St. Catherine's Convent, Sumter, 1939-1940

"By the will of Mrs. Neill O'Donnell her home, the imposing residence on East Liberty Street was to become the property of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy on the death of Mr. O'Donnell and was to be named Saint Catherine's.

In his will Mr. O'Donnell left money to be invested by the Sisters for the maintenance of an orphanage in the building. If the Sisters should not conduct therein an orphanage but should use the building for educational purposes, half of the bequest should go to the Bishop of the Diocese for Mission work and for the education of students for the priesthood, the other half to the Sisters for the maintenance of the property.

It was found impracticable, both from the nature of the building and from the amount of the income, to conduct an orphanage so the Sisters decided to open a kindergarten as a beginning of an educational project. Old St. Joseph's was abandoned and the Sisters moved to Saint Catherine's September 10, 1937.

The Sisters on the Sumter Mission at this time were: Pancratius, Consuela, Anastasia, and Virginia. Sister Xavier who had been appointed to Mine Creek was still there and gave much assistance in the labors of those days as did also Sister Catherine who accompanied Mother Bernard and Sister Virginia to Sumter September 8. Sister Rita had gone several days before and she with the Sisters already mentioned had done extensive cleaning and polishing at the O'Donnell house.

Most of the furnishings from St. Joseph's fitted in beautifully but some new things had to be purchased as the house was left utterly devoid of furniture. Sister Rita saw to the purchasing.

On Friday September 10, the Blessed Sacrament was removed from the chapel at St. Joseph's and placed in the little temporary chapel at St. Catherine's. It was with bitter pangs we closed the dear old chapel which represented the sacrifices of many a devoted Sister long gone. We slept at St. Catherine's that night but we had to return to St. Joseph's for breakfast as we had no stove.

During the day, a stove was installed; other conveniences were also procured. The Monaghan family were at hand at all times to help in every way possible and sad to relate they were the only ones in Sumter who gave or offered any assistance. The whole episode was very saddening and the future of the place as a kindergarten center did not appear very encouraging.

It was with scant optimism we returned to Charleston and left the little Mission bank to await the opening of the school. When the day came, six little ones arrived but one tiny Jewish girl would not remain away from her mama so she left the scene. The average attendance for the year was about six but the parents of these were very much pleased.

The Chapel—After much discussion of its location we decided or we were pleased with the Bishop's decision that it should be at the top of the stairs on the second floor. Monsignor Gwynn undertook to design a liturgical sanctuary. Father May, the Monaghans and other friends made substantial contributions towards it. Before the work had actually begun, the Monsignor met with an accident which kept him in bed for months. His first work after his recovery was the carrying out of the chapel plans. He worked daily himself and supervised all that others did. It took nearly two weeks to bring into existence one of the most beautiful liturgical chapels in the diocese.

On the first Sunday of May, 1938, in conjunction with the centennial celebration of St. Ann's Church, the chapel was dedicated by the Bishop. Monsignor Gwynn, of course, was present; so also were Monsignor O'Brien, Fathers Ward, Clancy, McCarthy, and others whose names I have forgotten. From Columbia came the Ursulines, the Dominicans, and the Sisters of Charity; many Sisters from the Motherhouse in Charleston were present and the day was very pleasant.

Old St. Joseph's was taken over for parish activities in November 1937; the parish paid the insurance. This continued for just two years and then they thought they no longer needed the building so they ceased to pay the insurance.

Meanwhile the kindergarten grew and began to bring a moderate income. Parents were well satisfied and the third year saw an enrollment of thirty-three little ones. Mission work continued. In September 1939 Sister Ignatia, a commercial teacher was appointed to St. Catherine's in the hope of building up a business school and of making the place independent of diocesan subsidy. This was only in part accomplished as the enrollment was small and irregular. However, it was possible to reduce the subsidy by one half. Sister Clement assisted with the little ones in the kindergarten and the four Sisters went regularly on the missions in the afternoons, on Saturdays, and Sundays.

So closed the school year 1939-1940 at St. Catherine's."

HEADLINES & HAPPENINGS



Sister Mary Ann Daly, SC-NY, presented a program on ***Living Our Charity Charism*** to our OLM Sisters and Partners in Ministry. A very excellent program was presented by Sister Mary Ann which included time for reflection and sharing. Thirty-nine OLM Sisters, Partners in Ministry, and future Partners in Ministry attended the program.





The Confirmation Class from the Cathedral Parish spent one Saturday raking, cleaning and planting new plants at the Grotto on our Motherhouse entrance road. Hyams Nursery donated many of the new plantings for the project. Thank you Kevin Crosby for organizing this effort!

**Merry
Christmas!**
*and a
Blessed New Year*

"Christmas gift suggestions: To your enemy, forgiveness. To an opponent, tolerance. To a friend, your heart. To a customer, service. To all, charity. To every child, a good example. To yourself, respect." Oren Arnold

"Christmas is not a date. It is a state of mind." Mary Ellen Chase

"At this festive season of the year, Mr. Scrooge," said the gentleman, taking up a pen, "it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the poor and destitute,

who suffer greatly at the present time. We choose this time, because it is this time, of all others, when Want is keenly felt, and Abundance rejoices." Charles Dickens (A Christmas Carol)

"Late on a sleepy, star-spangled night, those angels peeled back the sky just like you would tear open a sparkling Christmas present. Then, with light and joy pouring out of Heaven like water through a broken dam, they began to shout and sing the message that baby Jesus had been born. The world had a Savior! The angels called it "Good News," and it was." Larry Libby ("The Angels Called It Good News" in Christmas Stories for the Heart)

The View From the Bluff will not have an edition in January 2017