



THE VIEW FROM THE BLUFF JUNE 2019

SISTERS OF CHARITY OF OUR LADY OF MERCY

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA



Mother
Loretto Quinlan
1900 – 1911

On July 2, 1865, just two and a half months after the Civil War ended, seventeen year old Johanna Quinlan entered the OLM Community. Our records state that she was born in New York City to Irish parents. Little else is known of her life prior to her entrance. At that time the sisters in Charleston were living in houses provided by Mr. W.M. Tunno, a benefactor, while the Motherhouse on Queen Street, which had been damaged during the War, was being repaired. In September 1866 they moved back into their old home where Johanna Quinlan became a novice and received the name, Sister M. Loretto on November 21, 1866. She was professed on September 24, 1868. Shortly thereafter, she was assigned to St. Joseph's Academy, Sumter, SC, where she spent the greater part of her religious life.



In 1891 she became the Directress of St. Joseph's and held that position until she was elected Mother Superior in 1900 following the death of Mother Teresa Barry.

Mother Loretto's accomplishments during her first 2 terms in office (1900 – 1906) included:
The establishment of St. Francis Nursing School in Charleston.



Merging of the girls' and boys' orphanages on the Queen Street property and leasing the property to the Charleston City Orphan Asylum in return for annual appropriations to support the children .

Relocating the Motherhouse from Queen Street to 51 Meeting Street (known as the Russell House).

Moving Our Lady of Mercy Academy from Meeting Street to Calhoun Street, the former site of the boys' orphanage.

Loretto Cottage, Sullivan's Island, was built in 1902 on land purchased and given to the Community by Msgr. D.J. Quigley, Ecclesiastical Superior.



Agreeing to provide OLMs for St. Peter's and Immaculate Conception Schools in Charleston. The schools were established with financial assistance from Mother Catherine Drexel to offer Catholic education to colored children. Providing OLMs to staff St. Patrick's parochial school in Charleston upon the departure of Franciscan Sisters who conducted the school from 1887 to 1903.

Acceptance of St. Angela Academy in Aiken, SC, upon the withdrawal of the Ursuline Sisters who had established the school in 1900 and conducted it until 1906.

Closing St. Mary's Free School in Charleston in 1906. Attendance decreased following the establishment and growth of parochial schools in the City.



On May 16, 1907, the OLM Council informed Bishop Northrop of the advisability of giving Mother Loretto a third term in office. To do so required a dispensation from the rules governing the Community. To assure that a large majority of the Community wanted this, the Bishop asked each Sister to vote yes or no on a piece of paper enclosed in an envelope and returned to the Secretary of the OLM Council. The vote was almost unanimous in favor of a third term for Mother Loretto. During her third term the Community sold the Meeting Street property and built a new Motherhouse at 68 Legare Street directly

behind the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist. In December 1909 the Sisters moved in. On May 19, 1910 the OLM Council nominated Mother Loretto for a fourth term. Again, with the approval of a majority of the Community, and a dispensation from the Bishop, Mother Loretto was re-elected.

Mother Loretto began her fourth term in office in June 1910. Among her concerns was the need to modernize St. Francis Xavier Hospital in Charleston. To build a completely new plant was her ideal. Unfortunately, she became ill early in 1911. Although she lingered for three months, she died at St. Francis Xavier Hospital on May 22, 1911. According to the newspaper account: "Bishop Northrop, several of the clergy, together with the sorrowing Sisters of Mercy, who were all fondly attached to their Spiritual Mother, knelt at her bedside in prayer." Funeral services were held at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist followed by burial in Saint Laurence Cemetery.



While exploring the world of Google for information about our Sisters and the Civil War, the Editor came upon the name of a Civil War hospital where our Sisters gave care to injured Union prisoners of war. In this article I would like to share some pictures and information about some of the places where our Sisters served during the Civil War.

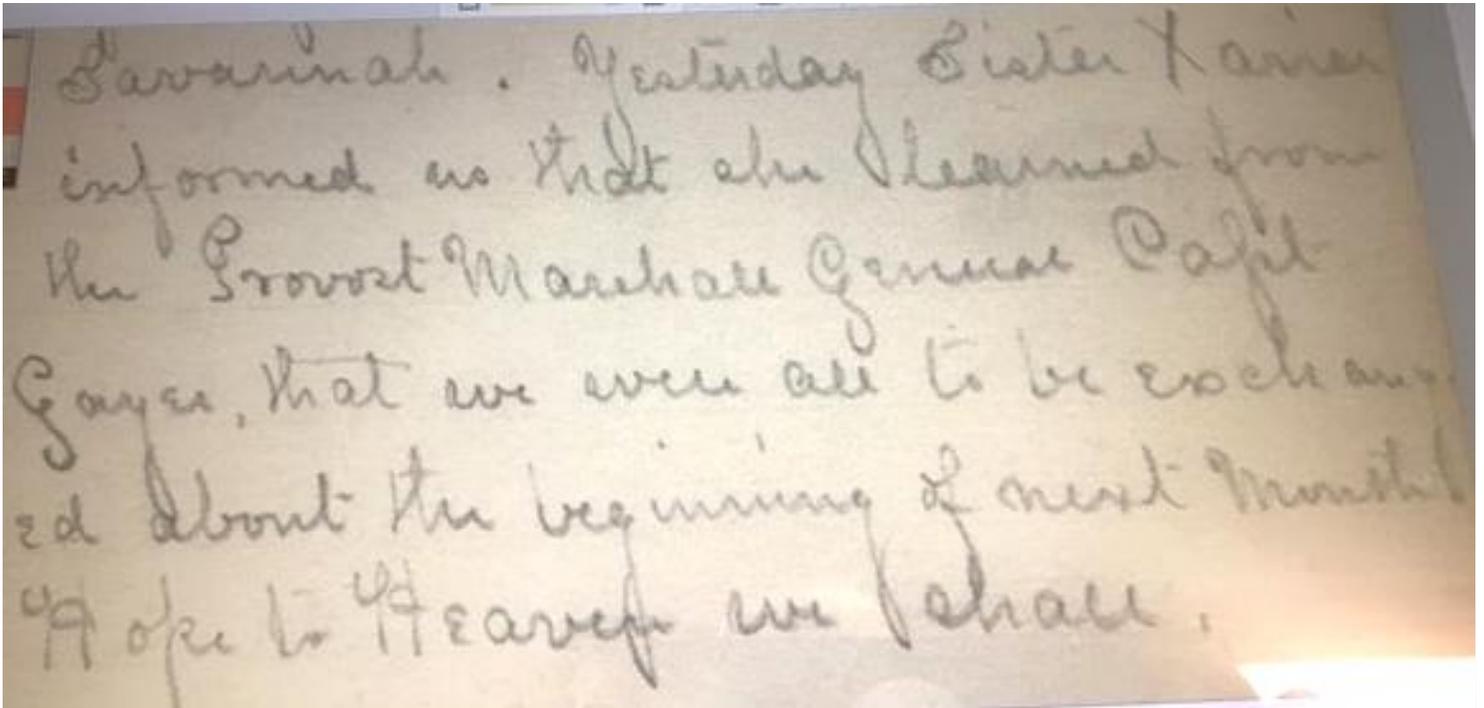


The Prisoners Hospital in Rickersville was located 4 miles outside of Charleston.



Capt. Heber S. Thompson kept a pocket diary while he was imprisoned at this hospital. He wrote about the conditions of the soldiers, food rations and many other things. On p.4 there is an excerpt where he mentions our Sister Xavier Dunn.

The First South Carolina Hospital at Rikersville (also known as Rickersville) was established on the grounds of an industrial village developed by David Riker, located just a few miles outside of Charleston. In addition to a sawmill, wheat mill, blacksmiths' shops, and other industrial buildings, the property also included a large building and shooting range owned by the German Rifle Club. In early 1862, Riker and the club granted the Confederacy the use of the property and buildings for the care of wounded Southern soldiers. By 1863, however, the hospital had been designated a prisoner's hospital under the command of Dr. George Rogers Clark Todd. A native of Kentucky and skilled surgeon, Todd was the youngest brother of Mary Todd Lincoln. Dr. Todd despised his presidential brother-in-law as well as all other abolitionists. Todd was cruelly abusive to the Union prisoners at the facility, resulting in his eventual removal from the post. (Source: Charleston Renaissance Gallery)



"Yesterday Sister Xavier informed us that she learned from the Provost Marshall General Capt. Gayer, that we were all to be exchanged about the beginning of next month. Hope to Heaven we shall." Note: How she learned about the exchange God only knows!



This sketch of Castle Pinckney is from the **Diary of Robert Knox Sneden (1832-1918)**

He was captured in November of 1863 and spent 13 months as a POW in various Confederate prisons. He was exchanged in December 1864, discharged and returned to New York City where he compiled his diary and scrapbook of images of his service in the Civil War.

Our Sisters visited prisoners at Castle Pinckney and also took care of Robert Sneden while he was in Old Roper Hospital.



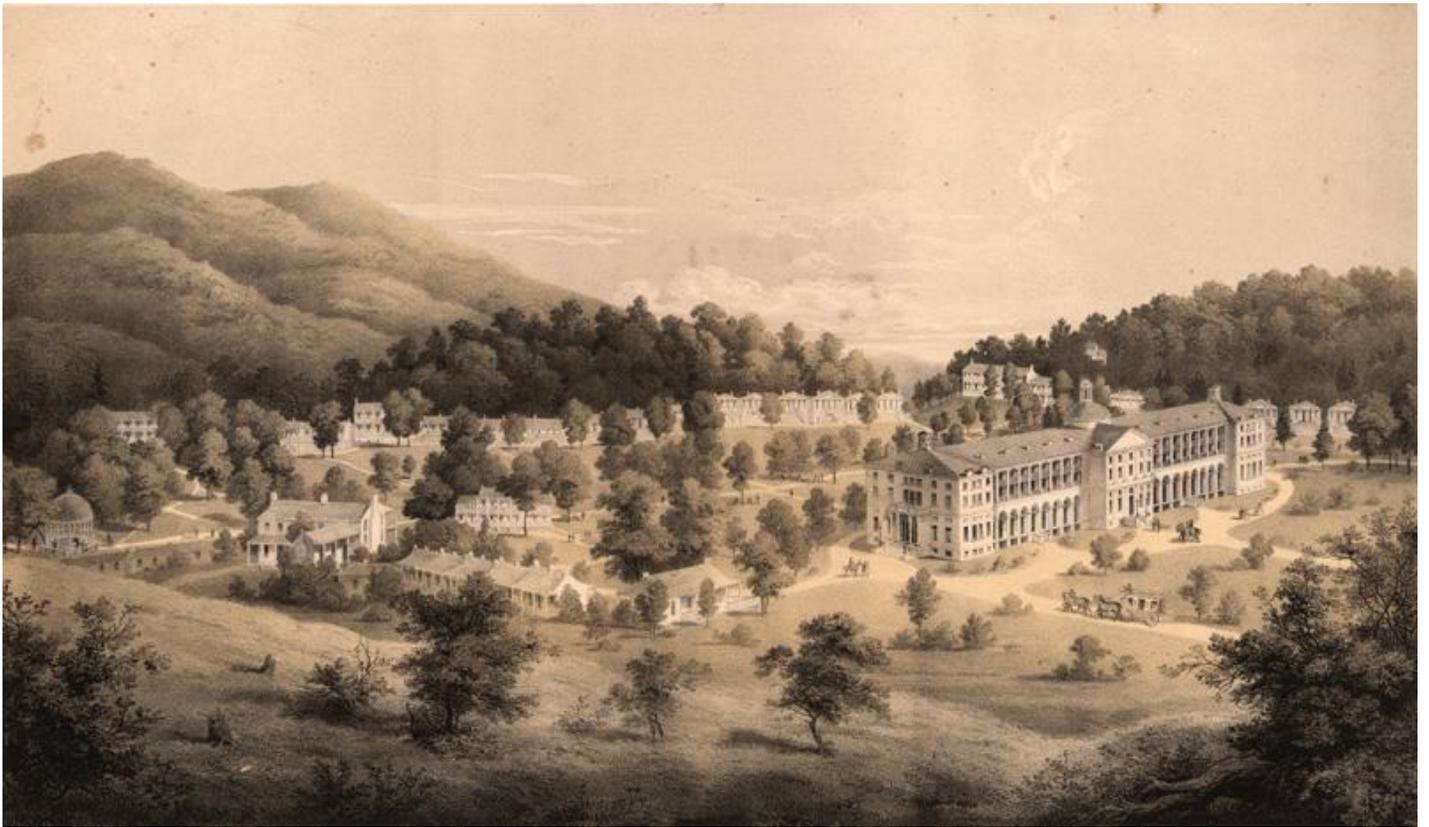
Sketch made under fire from the roof of Roper Hospital, Charleston, SC while a prisoner of war, Dec. 1864.



Roper Hospital, 1863

Source: Amazon.com

"The visits of Mother Teresa to the hospital in Charleston did me more good in the soothing influence of her deportment and conversations (although she never spoke on religious matters) than did the unvarying kindness of a mother and sister to my diseased body." A wounded Southern soldier whose fortune it was to have been nursed by Mother Teresa Barry.



GREENBRIER WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS VIRGINIA



MONTGOMERY WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS VIRGINIA

Montgomery White Sulphur Springs was once a thriving resort located in a valley in Montgomery County, Virginia. It opened in 1856 with the capacity to accommodate 1000 guests. It became the place to go. It was close to the Virginia-Tennessee Railroad, so had easy access.

In the spring of 1861, resort representatives started negotiations with the Confederate government to turn Montgomery White Sulphur Springs into a general hospital. General Hospitals received the injured, seriously wounded, and postoperative patients. Because patients were usually sent by train, location of a general hospital near railroad access was vital. Thus, the location of Montgomery White Sulphur Springs resort was ideal.

Once plans for converting the resort to a hospital were completed, medical supplies and doctors were assigned. The Sisters of Mercy, originally from Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy in Charleston, S.C., and all medical personnel were moved to the hospital from the Greenbrier Hospital in western Virginia because of Northern forces in the area. Local women were employed or volunteered to care for the patients, and slave labor was used as needed. In May 1862, the hospital officially opened.

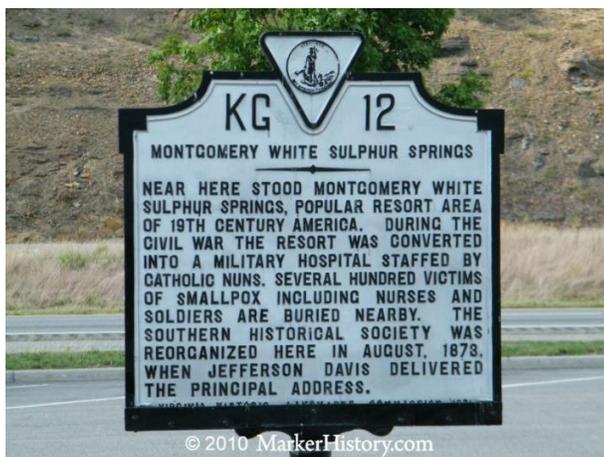
At the time the hospital opened, General Robert E. Lee and his army were fighting in the Shenandoah Valley and the need for a nearby hospital was great. By August, 1862, this hospital was at its capacity of 400 sick and wounded soldiers when the order for 300 more patients was issued. With so many to care for, soldiers as well as recovering patients were detailed to help with nursing duties.

In November, 1862, the hospital received its first smallpox case. In January 1863, five more soldiers with smallpox arrived and there were eleven reported smallpox deaths between January and March 1863. However, there has been no evidence to support an oral tradition that there were 100s of deaths due to smallpox.

Records list soldiers from many Confederate states and some from the Union Army. There were battle and gunshot wounds, smallpox, typhoid, amputees, and those too sick to remain with the army. Designated to accept 400 patients, numbers were often greater. For example in December, 1863 there were 873 patients.

When the war ended there were more than 300 sick and wounded still being cared for at the hospital. Sixty of those were listed as Union soldiers. When the last soldier left, the remaining nuns and others packed what few possessions they had and left the hospital on May 22, 1865.

From article "Montgomery White Sulphur Springs", "UDC Magazine, United Daughters of the Confederacy", March, 2013, by Lynn Reed, pages 17-18.



Race Course Union Prison, Hampton Park Area

Indeed, I feel confident that had it not been for your efforts in my behalf, I could not have survived the winter in that terrible stockade at Florence. When I came to Charleston I was almost naked; so much so that when you came to the camp on the "Race Course" I was ashamed to make my appearance before you, but you noticed my condition and clothed me. Those clothes kept me from freezing at Florence. How anxiously I watched day by day for the arrival of that most welcome of ambulances with the good Sisters, at the Race Course. It encouraged me to hope and keep up my drooping spirits. Joseph V. Kendall, Union soldier, Letter to Sr. Xavier Dunn



Although most Catholics and most religious communities were in the North, there were convents in the South. About 35 sisters of Our Lady of Mercy from Charleston, S.C., served in the city's hospitals. Food was in short supply in the South, especially during the final months of the war. Whenever an ambulance stood idle, Sister Xavier Dunn drove around Charleston, begging butchers and grocers for meat or produce they could not sell. One of her greatest triumphs was the day a butcher gave her the head of a steer, which she used to make beef stock. (Unstoppable Charity for sure!)

So great was the confidence in the sisters and so thoroughly did the Confederate officials appreciate their services, that they had a pass to go within the lines at all times and places. The following is a copy of the pass given to the sisters at Charleston:

Headquarters
Department of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.
Charleston, S.C., Oct. 1, 1864

The "Sisters of Mercy" have permission to visit the "Federal Prisoners of War" confined in this city, without distinction, until further orders.

By command of Major Lane Jones,

Letters from former prisoners who were cared for by our Sisters

Military Prison, Columbia, S.C.

December 6, 1864

Sister M. Xavier

Dear Sister—I have been sick ever since my removal from Charleston to this place, and I now beg to remind you of your promise, to use your influence to get my name on the exchange list as I am told there will be an exchange of prisoners next week. I sincerely thank you for the money (dollars) which I received through Father McNeal. I assure you, it was very acceptable, and I hope, if I live, to repay you for all your kind favors.

Gratefully and respectfully yours,

John Dunn,

1st Lieutenant, Co. I, 164th Regt., N.Y. Vols.

New York, June 7th, 1867.

I hereby certify that on the night of the 17th of June, 1864, I was captured by the enemy, in an attack upon their works, in front of Petersburg, Virginia, and, with many others, was soon after taken to Macon, Ga., general rendezvous for officers, prisoners of war, from whence (in August) was taken to Charleston, S.C., and confined in Roper Hospital, on Queen St., and immediately under fire from our batteries. During my stay there, the building was several times perforated by shot and shell and the Orphan's Asylum, standing on the opposite corner of the street, was almost demolished. Being very sick, I was taken to general hospital at Rikersville, near Charleston, which was filled with officers and men of our army and navy, the great majority of whom were dying for want of stimulating food and proper care. It was at this time that I met the Sisters of Mercy, from Charleston, who almost daily visited the hospital, not only cheering us with words of consolation, but substantially administering to our wants, by bringing us food and clothing, procured by them at their *own* expense, and furnished to us gratis. They saw that our letters were deposited in the proper channel, through which they would reach our friends at home, and attended to the delivery of letters and boxes which came from the North for us, and, in fact, exerted themselves in every conceivable way to render us comfortable and happy. I most cheerfully pay this tribute to the Holy Order of the *Sisters of Mercy* of Charleston, S.C., who were instrumental in many instances in saving the lives of our officers and men, and whose repeated acts of kindness were so grateful to us—as they were disinterested on the part of the sisters.

John S. Hammell,

Late Colonel of 66th Mich. Vols.—and Brvt. Brig. General U.S. Vols.

Grand Rapids, Michigan, July 12, 1865

A young man from New Hampshire, named Wm. Merrill, who lived sixteen days in the Queen St. Hospital, and died from the effects of a wound above the knee, asked, when near death, one of the nurses, to bring him the sisters' minister. He had never been baptized. Father Moore was called in, and the young man received all the Sacraments, and died blessing the sisters for their kindness to him and his comrades. He was only one out of hundreds who, of their own accord, made choice of the faith wherein they had found charity.

State of Connecticut, County of New Haven, ss.

I hereby certify that I, F[rederick] R. Jackson (formerly a sergeant in company F, 7th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry), lost my left arm in battle, on James' Island, South Carolina, June 16th, 1862, and was then and there taken prisoner by the enemy. I was carried from the battlefield to Charleston, South Carolina, June 19th, 1862, and was then and there placed in a building known as "Mart Hospital" on King or Queen Street (I am uncertain which) in which were confined all of the prisoners taken June 16th, who were seriously wounded. Soon after our arrival in Charleston we were visited by Sister M. Xavier, accompanied by another Sister of Mercy, each bearing comforts

for us, the wounded Union prisoners. Sister Xavier came to the hospital prison daily, accompanied each time by another sister, and each day went to all our number and gave fruit, corn bread, cake, meat, gruel, arrow root, and sometimes chicken and chicken broth. She brought me daily either a bottle of wine or of brandy—generally a bottle of old Malaga wine. There were eight wounded men confined in our cell, only one of whom, Captain Lawler, was a Roman Catholic. All received the same attentions at the hands of Sister M. Xavier and [her] companion. The great majority of our number were of the Protestant faith, but there was no distinction made between us on account of religion or nationality. The sisters were, day and night, unremitting in their attentions to us. They provided for all of our wants, and made our prison life in Charleston a perfect heaven on earth, compared to what we experienced after leaving that place. Sister Xavier often brought interesting books of all kinds. Lint, medicines, and money were furnished by her to those in need, and nearly all, if not *all*, were daily supplied with wine, cordial, brandy, or some stimulating liquor. This kind treatment continued without intermission during the two months we were prisoners at Charleston. I have not the command of language wherewith to sufficiently attest the great benevolence and kindness of the Sisters of Mercy who were in Charleston; South Carolina, in 1862, ministering to the every want of our wounded Union prisoners, nearly all of whom, myself included, were Protestants.

F. R. Jackson,
Formerly Sergeant Co. F, 7th Conn. Vols.

An extract from a statement of Lieutenant Colonel L. S. Payne, 100th New York Volunteers, now residing at Lockport, New York.

While acting under special orders of General Gillmore in the attempt to intercept the enemies communication between Charleston City and Cummings' Point, on Morris Island, on the night of the third of August, 1863, I was attacked by a superior force, wounded and taken prisoner with nine of my men, four of whom were also wounded. The wounded of my party were taken to Queen Street Hospital, Charleston, where there were a large number [of patients]. Several hundred of those had previously been at the bloody assault on Battery Wagner, and in other operations on Morris' Island, where they had been wounded, and had fallen into the hands of the enemy. This hospital was assigned exclusively to wounded prisoners, and all citizens were forbidden permission to visit it. The Sisters of Mercy, after much opposition, succeeded in obtaining permission to visit the hospital for the purpose of dispensing their truly Christian charity, and relieving the sufferings of the wounded and dying. I need not particularize, but I will state that the attention of these Angels of Mercy to our wounded soldiers were at this time incessant and unceasing, never failing to call daily and some one or more of them—for there seemed to be many of them—calling oftener, and administering to the severer cases. In their supplies of palatable food and changes of clothing furnished to those destitute, and in all their ministrations, they made no distinction between rank, color, or creed, but their relief was directed to all alike.

The excessively hot weather, the insufficient supplies of medicines and other necessaries, together with the little nursing help, induces me to believe that through the aid of these kind people the lives of many of our soldier-prisoners were saved.

After being transported from Charleston to Columbia, and since my return home, I have met with many of the officers and soldiers, who had been in Charleston as prisoners, and they all universally speak of the unbounded kindness and goodness of these 'Sisters of Mercy' of Charleston. The lives, occupation, and mission of these 'Sisters of Mercy' is truly one of mercy and charity indeed."

weaving together
unstoppable charity



Assembly of the Whole • Sisters of Charity Federation • June 13-16, 2019

Our Sisters' ministry during the Civil War is surely a fine example of Unstoppable Charity which continues today through us!



The UN Environment Programme (UNEP, or UN Environment) annually organizes events for World Environment Day, which encourages worldwide awareness and action for the protection of the environment. It is celebrated on 5 June in over 100 countries. In 2019, China will host the global World Environment Day celebrations on the theme, 'Air Pollution'.

we can
end gun violence
**wear
orange**

People across the country will be wearing orange on Friday, June 7 to mark the 5th annual National Gun Violence Awareness Day. The "Wear Orange" campaign was inspired by a group of Chicago teens who asked classmates to commemorate the life of their friend, 15-year-old Hadiya Pendleton, who was shot and killed one week after marching in President Obama's second inaugural parade. By wearing orange, a color that hunters use to protect themselves in the woods, proponents hope to make orange a symbol for the value of human life and honor the 88 American lives cut short by gun violence every day.

LCWR Update



In a world where violence forces thousands of families to flee for their lives each day, the time is now to show that the global public stands with refugees.

On World Refugee Day, held every year on June 20th, we commemorate the strength, courage and perseverance of millions of refugees. This year, World Refugee Day also marks a key moment for the public to show support for families forced to flee.

International Widows Day is a global awareness day that takes place annually on 23rd June. The day was launched by the United Nations in 2010 to raise awareness of the violation of human rights that widows suffer in many countries following the death of their spouses.

In many countries with traditional societies, women find themselves left in poverty when their husband dies. In some countries, these women find themselves denied of inheritance and land rights, evicted from their homes, ostracised and abused. The children of widows also often find themselves affected, withdrawn from school and more vulnerable to abuse, especially in the case of girls.

International Widows Day works to encourage action in achieving full rights for widows, highlighting the need for more research and statistics into violence, discrimination and poverty suffered by widows and develop policies and programs to address the problem.

The ultimate goal of the day is to develop resources and policy to empower widows and allow them to have access to education, work, healthcare and lives free of violence and abuse. Enabling them to create a life for themselves and their children following the death of their husband and ending a cycle of poverty and abuse.





Class of 2019 Graduates from Bishop England High School whose education from Elementary School through High School was sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy. All are going on to college.
 Agustin Carapia, Kimberly Tovar, Jesus Hernandez, Esmeralda Sanchez



Sister Rosemary still has a Nativity Scene craft Jesus Hernandez made for her when he was in elementary school. Jesus attended the Yes, I Can! Afterschool and Summer Camps at Our Lady of Mercy Community Outreach on Johns Island.