



# THE VIEW FROM THE BLUFF

## DECEMBER 2020

SISTERS OF CHARITY OF OUR LADY OF MERCY

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA



*Sister M. Helena Marlow*

&

*Sister M. Bernardine McGinley*

**MEMBER**  
SPOTLIGHT

*Volunteers of Charity.*—Charleston sends to Western Virginia a worthy and acceptable reinforcement of charity. Rev. L. P. O'CONNELL, well known and approved in this city, as well as in Columbia and Pickens District as a pastor, will leave this day for Richmond in the Northeastern Rail Road train, and will proceed as Chaplain to visit and attend the hospitals and camps in Western Virginia. His station and address will be at the White Sulphur Springs. He will be accompanied by sisters from the well known Institution of our Lady of Mercy, who on learning that nurses and attendants were wanted in Virginia, have nobly offered their services. Their names are:

Mother M. Teresa Barry, Superior of the Institution.  
 Sister M. Ignatius, Clarke.  
 Sister M. DeSales, Brunnen.  
 Sister M. Stanislaus, Coventry.  
 Sister M. Bernard, Frank.  
 Sister M. Helena, Marlow.

All hearts will join us in bidding them God speed in their mission and success to their efforts for the suffering soldier.

**Sister M. Helena Marlow**, a forty-year old widow, entered the OLM Community in March 1858. The records state that she was born in Belfast, Ireland, in 1818 or 1822, and baptized Margaret McIver. She was received into the Community on November 20, 1858 and professed on November 21, 1860. Unfortunately, the records do not provide any information regarding her marriage, the death of her husband, or her life in Charleston prior to her entrance. However, we do know that Sister Helena was among the OLMs who served in a Confederate Military Hospital in Virginia during the Civil War. Initially the hospital was located in Greenbrier white Sulphur Springs, VA. Later it was relocated to Montgomery White Sulphur Springs, VA. While there, smallpox broke out among the wounded soldiers. To isolate these cases a crude building was elected and Sister Helena was put in charge of it. She



remained at this post until the last case was discharged in July 1865, several months after the war ended.

**Death of a Good Woman.**

Sister Mary Helena Marlow died in the Convent of the Sisters of Mercy at Charleston, S. C., on Friday, in the seventy-eighth year of her age. Sister Helena, as she was familiarly known, entered the convent in 1858 and has served that community almost in every capacity for the past thirty-eight years. In 1862 Sister Helena was one of the band of the Sisters of Mercy who served in Virginia during the war in caring for the sick and wounded soldiers. During the war the Sisters had to remove from place to place for greater security or to be near the field of operations. At one time they had charge of the Montgomery White Sulphur Springs Hospital. At another time they were put in charge of the Greenbrier White Sulphur Springs Hospital. It was while at the latter post that smallpox broke out among the wounded soldiers. To isolate these cases a crude building was erected, and Sister Helena put in charge of it. She remained at this post of duty until the last case was discharged in July, 1865, several months after the war was ended.

Baltimore Sun 23 Dec 1896, p.3

Following the war Sister Helena returned to Charleston. In August 1869 she was appointed Novice Mistress and served as such for four years. Highly educated, she was appointed Directress of the OLM Academy on Meeting Street (now the Russell House) on August 28, 1873. Apparently, she taught in the Academy until elected Mother Assistant of the Community on August 5, 1878 and held that position until September 1882. When the Community established St. Francis Xavier Hospital in Charleston in October 1882, Sister M. Helena was one of five OLMs chosen to serve there. her responsibilities in the hospital nor of how long she remained on its staff. They do state that she was elected Procuratrix of the Community on October 4, 1890 and held that office until October 7,

1893. Apparently, she had to withdraw from active duty due to failing health. Sister M. Helena died in the Motherhouse on December 18, 1896 and is buried in St. Lawrence Cemetery, Charleston.

### Sister M. Bernardine McGinley



Katherine (Kate) McGinley was born in County Donegal, Ireland, in 1869. The records state that she graduated from the National Secondary School there in 1886. Although we do not know when she arrived in the USA, we do know that she was living in Philadelphia, PA, prior to her entrance into the OLM Community on December 8, 1892. She was received on July 15, 1893 and professed on August 15, 1895. For most of the next fifty years Sr. Bernardine was involved in the health care ministry. According to an entry in Sr. Stanislaus' Diary, Sr. Bernardine was among the OLMs who nursed soldiers at St. Francis Xavier Hospital during the Spanish-American War. Council Minutes note that she was appointed bookkeeper and general accountant at St. Francis in December 1900. The following year she was relieved of her duties as bookkeeper to enroll in St. Francis Xavier Nurses' Training School. Upon graduating as a RN (Registered Nurse) in 1903 Sister

Profession Picture



Sr. Bernadine standing left

Bernardine was sent to Baltimore, MD, to pursue additional training in nursing education in a hospital operated by the Sisters of Mercy. Upon her return she was placed in charge of St. Francis Xavier Nurses Training School in Charleston. In 1910 she was sent to Columbia University, New York City, "to acquire a more thorough knowledge of Infirmary work and management." Three years later (1913) Sister Bernardine was appointed Superintendent of St. Francis Xavier Infirmary. At that time the Neighborhood House on America Street in Charleston also operated under the direction of St. Francis Infirmary.

Sister Bernardine was relieved of her position as Superintendent of St. Francis Xavier Infirmary in September 1918. In September 1920 she was assigned to the faculty of the Academy of Our Lady of Mercy in Charleston. The following year she joined the faculty of St. Joseph's Academy, Sumter. However, in 1928 she was again appointed Superintendent of St. Francis Xavier Hospital and remained in charge until failing health necessitated her resignation in 1941. Sister Bernardine died on December 16, 1945 at St. Francis Xavier Hospital. An obituary in a local newspaper stated: "As Superintendent, Sister Bernardine made St. Francis one of the best operated hospitals in South Carolina. The new wing (1941) was added due to her interest in meeting increasing demands upon the infirmary for accommodations." Sister Bernardine is buried in St. Lawrence Cemetery.



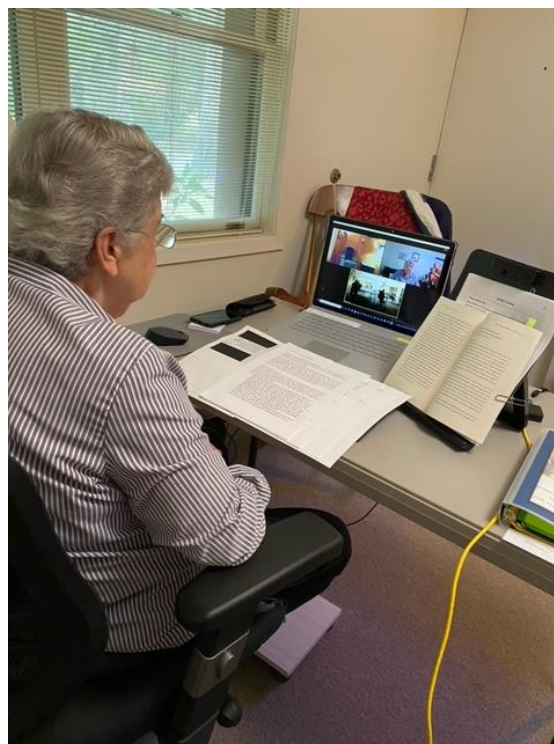
SFX Hospital Sisters

Seated: Srs. Evangelist, Mechtilde, Francis, Thecla

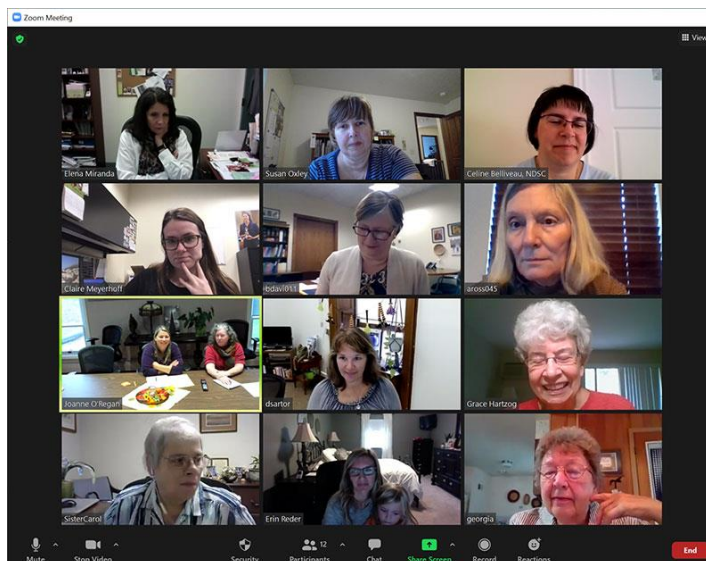
Standing: Srs. Gertrude, Victoire, Josephine, **Bernadine**, Mary Joseph, Baptist, Perpetua, Brendan, Malachy, Margaret Mary



# Time to say goodbye to 2020....



LEARNING  
TO ZOOM  
MEETING,  
RETREATS  
AND PLAY  
JEOPARDY!!



If 2020 was a tattoo



TOP LEFT: Sisters of Charity Federation NGO Liaison Zoom meeting.

Middle: OLM Jeopardy, Sisters of Charity Federation day of prayer.

Bottom Left: Zoom Community meeting with Sr. Lynn Lavin, OSF

Top Right: Sister Ann presenting a Zoom retreat.

Bottom Right: Sisters of Charity Federation Communicators Zoom meeting.



### First, Some Simple Things to Pray For During Advent:

1. Pray for attentiveness to what truly matters, without being distracted by trivial things.
2. Pray for opportunities to learn something new regularly.
3. Pray for discernment of how God would like you to set your priorities and the ability to focus on them consistently to fulfill His purposes in your life.
4. Pray for the grace to be able to rest, become aware of God's presence, and enjoy it.
5. Pray for strong relationships with other people in the bond of a loving community.
6. Pray for peace in all situations, no matter what the circumstances.
7. Pray for an enlivened imagination that helps you contribute to the world in creative ways.
8. Pray for freedom from all that burdens you - past mistakes, fears, destructive habits, hurts other people have inflicted, and more.
9. Pray for joy and a sense of humor.
10. Pray for confidence in God's love for you and trust in His power to work things out for the best in your life.
11. Pray for a clear mind and the ability to clearly communicate what you value to others.
12. Pray for purity so you can grow as a person and encounter God more fully.
13. Pray for openness to the Holy Spirit's guidance.
14. Pray for a genuine awareness of God's grace in your life and the humility to extend grace to others.
15. Pray for a passion to pursue justice.  
~ Edited from Whitney Hopler's "[Pray for Simplicity this Advent](#)"



Our Lady of Mercy Community Outreach is a Sponsored Ministry of the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy. We are very proud of the service they give to people in need on James Island, Johns Island, Wadmalaw Island and the East Side of Charleston through the Neighborhood House. Throughout 2020, during the Covid-19 Pandemic, they continued to serve their neighbors in need.

# OUR MISSION

To encourage and support self-sufficiency and self-worth for people in need in our community through education, health and basic needs services.

HELP US OPEN OUR DOORS



*Now that I got a job, I think  
will be able to manage my bills  
and get back on my feet.*

*- Ms. Hagenberg*



EVEN WIDER FOR THE COMMUNITY



✉ [Kristin.Raymond@olmoutreach.org](mailto:Kristin.Raymond@olmoutreach.org)  
☎ 843-559-4109  
📶 <https://www.olmoutreach.org/donatenow>  
📍 1684 Brownswood Road, Johns Island, SC  
77 America Street, Charleston SC

We are social!



OUR LADY  
OF MERCY   
COMMUNITY  
OUTREACH



### ABOUT MS. HAGENBERG

When the pandemic struck the Lowcountry, Ms. Hagenberg was unfortunately laid off after having a steady job in customer service and security for 12 years. Having never been in this position before, she didn't know what to do or where to go, and was starting to lose her savings she had built up.

Ms. Hagenberg walked through the doors of Our Lady of Mercy Community Outreach for the first time looking for help. Our in-house social services staff worked with her on updating her resume, submitting seven job applications and building confidence in practice interviews. She earned two interviews through our emPOWER job assistance program. This August, she obtained employment for a full-time customer service position. If Our Lady of Mercy Community Outreach wasn't able to help Ms. Hagenberg, she may not have been able to find secure employment, manage her bills or care for her elderly mother.

Some neighbors may not need all of our services; sometimes they just need a helping hand to get back on their feet and build a better life for themselves and their family.



### HOW WE ARE HELPING

2020 has been a year of crisis. Individuals and families in the Sea Islands and Downtown Charleston are struggling now more than ever. Some are facing lost wages, eviction notices, decreased child care options and even hunger. But in the midst of this crisis, your support can bring hope.

Since March, we have:

- ♥ distributed **49,280**lbs of food from our food pantries
- ♥ given **12,762** bag lunches at the Neighborhood House Soup Kitchen
- ♥ provided **\$42,754.94** in financial assistance for utility and housing payments
- ♥ held **416** client meetings with our social workers
- ♥ helped **161** new neighbors for the first time
- ♥ handed out **275** food bags and **300** dental kits at our first Saturday Distribution



\*name has been changed for confidentiality





Two statues, St. Joseph and St. Therese of Lisieux, appeared on our property on the side of the driveway going out to Ft. Johnson Road. They have now found homes outside the chapel and Maria Hall.



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