



**SISTERS OF
MERCY**
WORLDWIDE

Today, Sisters of Mercy, through Mercy International Association, use their resources to respond to issues of **global poverty** demonstrated in the massive displacement of **persons** worldwide.

Mercy Day Greeting 2017

Welcome to all who are joining us in whatever part of the world you are to celebrate Mercy Day. Céad Míle Fáilte – a hundred thousand welcomes!

Today we celebrate the 190th anniversary of the opening of this house- a house as Mary Wickham says that was *'dreamt with daring, built with love and founded on Mercy'*. In describing her dream, Catherine herself said that all she wanted was *'to make some lasting efforts for the relief of the suffering and the instruction of the ignorant'*. Having invested all her inheritance in the realisation of her dream, the house soon assumed the status of a modern sheltered workshop, an employment bureau, a night hostel, an orphanage, an adult education centre and an elementary school catering for poor children from the local lanes and alley ways. Her aims were remarkably similar to the theme of the 2017 International day of peace, which is also liturgically celebrated today. That theme is expressed as: *'Together for Peace: Respect, Safety and Dignity for All'*.

This house has seen many developments over the past 190 years, among them the founding of Mercy International Association, MIA, 25 years ago and the establishment of this house as Mercy International Centre. Mercy International Centre, known to many as MIC, is a place of welcome and hospitality and home to the great heritage of Catherine. Together with its communications infrastructure, it has become a centre for the development of mercy theological reflection and spirituality and a place of renewal and nourishment of Mercy charism and ethos. In addition, it directs MIA's global mission and ministry of response to global poverty.

We have been reminded by the authors of *Tender Courage* that if Catherine were here today, instead of the cry of the poor children of Dublin haunting her dreams, the cries of a suffering world would trouble her sleep. Throughout the Year of Mercy, almost five thousand Sisters of Mercy and partners in Mercy participated in the Reflection Process on what the cries of that suffering world might be in our time.

Out of the sacred listening and contemplative dialogue in which the groups engaged came a number of critical issues which can be gathered into two, often intersecting, theme areas: (i) displacement of persons, and (ii) degradation of Earth. In addition, there emerged a new vision for Mercy Global Presence- an organic entity linking congregations/institutes, individual Sisters of Mercy and Associates, partners in Mercy, and Mercy International Association in creative and energizing ways. It is our aim that *'in a world of displacement,*

Mercy Global Presence will champion inclusion. In a world of degradation of Earth, it will realize its oneness in the sacred communion of all creation. In this broken world, it will dare Mercy in a new way'.

Today as we celebrate 190 years of the ministry of Mercy in this house, we join with Mary in saying:

Our souls proclaim the greatness of the Lord,
Our spirits rejoice in God our Saviour for he has looked with favour on us.
He has done great things for us, and his mercy is from age to age.

As we thank God for all that has been, we look to the future with hope. Catherine's words of encouragement are as true for us today as they were for her companions in this house: *'We ought to have great confidence in God in the discharge of all the offices of Mercy, Spiritual and Corporal, which constitute the business of our lives'.*

Mary Reynolds rsm

E: director@mercyinternational.ie

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