September 24, 2015

Note from the Institute Leadership Team
As thousands of people gather this week to greet, meet or see Pope Francis, even from a distance, we can’t help but hope that his words to the U.S. Congress, the United Nations and to each one of us will resound not only in our hearts but also in our actions. Sisters, associates, Mercy volunteers, companions and thousands of coworkers celebrate our Mercy heritage today with deep gratitude and joy. At the same time, we are compelled by Mercy to hold in prayer our concern for our Syrian sisters and brothers and the forces that cause their suffering. How might we respond to their needs? How can we work towards preventing continued crises affecting our world and planet? How can we give flesh to Mercy in the way Catherine, Pope Francis and our vowed and covenant commitments call to us? Let us celebrate Mercy Day recognizing our oneness with all of creation and rejoicing that God’s Mercy endures forever!

Happy Mercy Day!

“We should be as shining lamps, giving light to all around us.”

«Deberíamos ser como lámparas que brillan, dando luz a todo nuestro rededor».

—Catherine McAuley

On this Mercy Day 2015, we recall the words of Catherine McAuley: “We should be as shining lamps, giving light to all around us.”

Today and in the days ahead, let us celebrate and be light for one another, illuminating the way as we seek direction for our Chapter and in charting a course for our Journey of Oneness. Our gift, the light of mercy, is a gift to be shared by all! On this Mercy Day let us pray that the upcoming Jubilee Year of Mercy enlivens a spirit of compassion, charity and love in the hearts of all the faithful, and that this spirit may bring grace and light to all those who suffer in our world. May the charism of mercy be a shining light for all the world!
There’s still time! Join in events celebrating pope’s visit

This morning on Mercy Day, Pope Francis addressed Congress while thousands—including dozens of Mercy sisters and partners in ministry—gathered outside for interfaith prayer. Later today, the pope will head to New York City and address the United Nations on September 25, before visiting Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, from September 26-27 for the World Meeting of Families, a papal mass and several site visits.

Find out how to be a part of this momentous occasion!

- Social media: If you use social media, please share your photos, stories, Tweets, quotes, etc. using these hashtags: #PopeInUSA (in Spanish, #PapaEnUSA) and #MercyDay. Also, be sure to check out, like and share what has been posted already on Mercy social media: Facebook (facebook.com/MercySisters), Twitter (twitter.com/SistersofMercy) and Instagram (instagram.com/mercysisters/).
- If you have attended or are planning to attend any activities related to the pope’s U.S. visit, please contact Marianne Comfort (mcomfort@sistersofmercy.org) to share information, stories and photos.
- Sign up to write a letter to the editor that highlights Pope Francis’ messages during his U.S. visit. Dozens of Mercy sisters, associates, co-workers and friends have already indicated their willingness to write letters on issues related to the Critical Concerns. Email Marianne Comfort (mcomfort@sistersofmercy.org) if you’d like to join them. You will receive talking points and sample letters the day after the pope’s address to Congress so you can respond to any articles appearing in your local newspapers.
- For those in the New York City area: Tonight there will be a multi-faith festival of prayer and music, held 4-5:30 pm across the street from U.N. headquarters. More information is available here (http://ourvoices.net/newyork-lightstheway).

Stay tuned for more coverage on Pope Francis’ U.S. visit in the next issue of Mercy Now.

Treasure your history during Mercy Heritage Week
This week, September 21-25, we celebrate Mercy Heritage Week! Here are a few ways to get involved.

- Mercy Heritage Center in Belmont, North Carolina, will host an open house today (September 24) from 2-4 p.m.
• Share a Mercy memory with someone!
• Reach out to your Community archivist or Mercy Heritage Center to learn more about our Mercy history.
• Stay tuned! During October, Archives Month, Mercy Heritage Center will be sharing blog posts, photos and updates on Mercy’s social media sites.

Your Community archivists include:

• Mercy Heritage Center: Grant Gerlich (ggerlich@sistersofmercy.org)
• Mid-Atlantic Archives: Maureen Keyes (mkeyes@mercymidatlantic.org)
• Northeast Archives: Sister Eleanor Little (elittle@mercyne.org)
• NyPPaW Archives: Sister Jacqueline DeMars (jdemars@mercynyppaw.org)
• South Central Archives: Sister Paula Diann Marlin (pdmarlin@mercywmw.org)
• West Midwest Archives: Monte Kniffen (mkniffen@mercywmw.org)
• CCASA Archives: Antoineta Castilla (anto_castilla@hotmail.com)

Sister briefs Congress on alternatives to detention
On September 16, Sister JoAnn Persch (West Midwest), who serves as executive director of the Interfaith Committee for Detained Immigrants in Chicago, Illinois, spoke at congressional briefings on "The Pope Francis Effect on Immigration: Protecting Families and Advancing the Common Good." The focus of her presentation was alternatives to detention for immigrants awaiting deportation hearings. Read more here. (http://www.sistersofmercy.org/about-us/news-and-events/sister-addresses-us-legislators-on-immigration/?t=news

Pray for UN climate talks
Join Mercy and other Catholics across the globe to pray around-the-clock in the months/weeks/days leading up to the United Nations climate talks in Paris, November 30 - December 11. Invite relatives, friends, coworkers, members of your parish and prayer groups to join us on the Road to Paris and use this prayer chain tool (http://catholicclimatemovement.global/pray4cop21/) developed by the Global Catholic Climate Movement to sign up.
Spread the word! Mercy Volunteer Corps applications available

Mercy Volunteer Corps (MVC) applications are officially available online for the 2016-2017 volunteer year. Priority applications are due January 15, 2016.

Mercy Volunteers work in the fields of education, health care, and social services and are personally placed in sites that utilize both their skills and education. MVC is looking to place applicants in 12 cities across the United States and South America next year. Volunteers receive housing, transportation, food and personal stipends, and student loan deferment. Help MVC recruit the next generation of Mercy by reaching out to a potential Mercy Volunteer!
Applications can be submitted online (www.mercyvolunteers.org/apply).

*Photo:* (From left) Breakfast director, Judy Cohn, with Mercy Volunteers Amy Fox and Bekah Kornblum at Maryhouse in Sacramento, California.

Reminder: Read letter and reflection materials for new member process

As shared in the September 10 issue of *Mercy Now*, a letter from the Institute Chapter Planning Committee and reflection materials for the new member process on the Journey of Oneness are available here (https://images.magnetmail.net/images/clients/SMAI/attach/2015/ICPCLettertoMembers.pdf).

Reminder: Final mega calls to be held September 25, 29 and 30

The final *Women of Mercy, Women of Hope* mega call conversations will be held September 25, 29 and 30 to discuss “Fruits of our Contemplative Dialogues,” available here (https://images.magnetmail.net/images/clients/SMAI/attach/2015/WOH_Year3Phase3_FINAL.pdf).

You are welcome to join any of the remaining mega calls. Times, participant codes and phone numbers are available here (https://images.magnetmail.net/images/clients/SMAI/attach/2015/WMWHMegaCalls.pdf).