

Entry type: Organisation  
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# Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia

(1981 - )

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**Born** 1 January, 1981, Sydney New South Wales Australia

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**Occupation** Religious organisation

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## Summary

The Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia evolved from the seventeen individual congregations operating in Australia before 1981. It forms part of the world-wide network of Mercy Sisters. Catherine McAuley founded the Sisters of Mercy in Dublin, Ireland in 1841. In 1846 the Sisters of Mercy came to Australia. Ursula Frayne, a friend of Catherine McAuley, arrived with six Sisters and settled in Perth , Western Australia, later moving to Melbourne. By 1954 the seventeen distinct autonomous groups had emerged through the processes of amalgamation and division. In 1953 eight of the autonomous groups formed the Australian Union of Sisters of Mercy, and in 1957 the remaining nine groups joined to form the Australian Federation of the Sisters of Mercy, which by 1981 became the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia. The Mercy Sisters describe this structure as ‘a unique mode of governance continuing to express the traditional Mercy thrust towards decentralisation and unity but giving a clearer sign of the equally strong concern for a deep unity of spirit.’ The Sisters of Mercy are committed to those most vulnerable in our society and wish to share God’s loving kindness with others.

## Details

The Congregations are located in Adelaide, S.A., Ballarat East, Vic., Bathurst, N.S.W., Brisbane, Q’land, Cairns, Q’land, Goulburn N.S.W., Grafton, N.S.W., Gunnedah N.S.W., Melbourne, Vic., North Sydney, N.S.W., Parramatta, N.S.W., Perth, W.A., Rockhampton, Q’land, Singleton, N.S.W., Townsville, Q’land, West Perth, W.A., Wilcannia-Forbes, N.S.W. and Papua New Guinea.

## Published resources

### Book

The advent of the Sisters of Mercy, Bathurst, 1866, Meagher, Michael, 1931

Centenary, the Sisters of Mercy, South Australia, 1880-1980, Astbury, Helen, 1980

The labourer's friends: Sisters of Mercy in Victoria and Tasmania, Allen, Maree G., 1989

A delicate balance: pictures reflecting the living and working of the Sisters of Mercy, North Sydney, 1865-1990, Doherty, Catherine M., and Thompson, Nola A. ( Compilers), 1991

Centenary of Sisters of Mercy, Branxton-Greta Parish, 1886-1986, Bendeich, Fay B., 1986

Beginnings 1902-2002: 100 years of the Sisters of Mercy and Catholic Secondary Education in Shepparton, Murphy, Kierin, 2002

The Sisters of Mercy in the south east, 1880-1980: a local history of the Sisters of Mercy in the south east of South Australia, Sisters of Mercy ( compiler), 1980

Valiant women: letters from the foundation Sisters of Mercy in Western Australia, 1845-1849, Byrne, Geraldine ( Compiler), 1981

Beyond our dreams: a century of the works of Mercy in Queensland, O'Donoghue, M. Xaverius, 1961

Channels of Mercy: a history of Mercy schools in the South West of Western Australia, Cabrini Fontana, Mary, 1996

Held in our hearts: a story of the Sisters of Mercy of the Goulburn congregation, Casey, Eileen, 2000

These women?: women religious in the history of Australia, the Sisters of Mercy, Parramatta 1888-1988, McGrath, Madeleine Sophie, 1989

Ursula Frayne: a biography, Killerby, Catherine Kovesi, 1996

### Resource

Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia, Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia, 2003,  
<http://www.mercysisters.org.au/>

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

### Edited Book

Music on the hill: one hundred years of the Sisters of Mercy and catholic education, Casterton, 2002, Wickham, Mary, 2002

## Archival resources

### Australian Historic Records Register

[Australian Federation of the Sisters of Mercy of Australia: community organisation records](#)

[Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia: community organisation records](#)

### Author Details

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