

# Sisters of Mercy, Melbourne Congregation

1857 – 2011

**Other Names:** • Melbourne Sisters of Mercy

## Details

---

The Sisters of Mercy, Melbourne Congregation was a Catholic religious order of women who arrived in Victoria in 1857 from Western Australia. The Sisters operated orphanages, children's homes, foster care programmes and family care centres. In 1907 other Victorian congregations merged into the Melbourne Congregation. In 2011, the Sisters of Mercy, Melbourne Congregation was dissolved and merged with 15 former Australian congregations to become the Institute of Sisters of Mercy Australia and Papua New Guinea.

The Sisters of Mercy, Melbourne Congregation began its work in 1857 when three Sisters arrived in the colony of Victoria from Perth. They settled in the suburb of Fitzroy and began their works, including education of the poor and young women, the care of orphans and newly arrived immigrant Irish girls and visitation of the needy.

The Sisters took responsibility for St Vincent de Paul's Orphanage in South Melbourne in 1861. In 1872 the Sisters established a Domestic Training Institute in their former House of Mercy in Fitzroy. It had previously accommodated newly arrived Irish female migrants who were waiting to gain employment in the colony. Older orphan girls were transferred to the Institute from St Vincent de Paul's Orphanage to be trained in domestic work. This training involved 'acting as servants for the adjoining boarding school', the Convent of Mercy, Nicholson Street, Fitzroy.

In 1907, all the other Victorian Sisters of Mercy congregations, with the exception of Ballarat, amalgamated to form the present Melbourne Congregation. The Sisters continued to support children in care through orphanages and children's homes in Melbourne, Geelong and other regional locations.

The Melbourne Congregation became a province of the Australian Union of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in 1954 and a member congregation of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Australia in 1981.

In 1997, records of the Sisters of Mercy were transferred to MacKillop Family Services. These included records of the various orphanages, homes and other residences run by the Sisters of Mercy. While custodianship of the records about people in 'care' became the responsibility of MacKillop Family Services at this point, it was formally agreed that the intellectual property in these records would not change hands.

## Gallery



## Convent of Mercy and Academy of Mary Immaculate

**Description:** This is an image of the Convent of Mercy and Academy of Mary Immaculate, at 88 Nicholson Street, Fitzroy. This image is one of a series of photographs available from the Victorian Heritage Register.

---

## More info

---

### Chronology

- **Sisters of Mercy, Melbourne Congregation (1857 – 2011)**
  - Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea (12 December 2011 - current)

### Related Entries

#### Ran

- [St Catherine's Children's Home \(1960 - 1975\)](#)  
Date: 1960 - 1975
- [St Vincent de Paul Child and Family Services \(1992 - 1997\)](#)  
The Sisters of Mercy, Melbourne ran St Vincent de Paul Child and Family Services.  
Date: 1992 - 1997
- [McAuley House \(1942 - 1965\)](#)
- [Santa Casa \(1918 - 1961\)](#)
- [St Catherine's Orphanage \(1912 - 1960\)](#)  
Date: 1912 - 1960
- [Colac Foster Care \(1975? - 1997?\)](#)  
The Sisters of Mercy, Melbourne ran Colac Foster Care.  
Date: ? - 1997
- [Geelong Foster Care \(1974 - 1997\)](#)  
The Sisters of Mercy, Melbourne ran Geelong Foster Care.  
Date: ? - 1997
- [Mercy Family Care Centre \(c. 1975 - 1997\)](#)  
Date: 1975 - 1997
- [Our Lady's Orphanage \(c. 1862 - 1912\)](#)  
Date: 1862 - 1912
- [St Vincent de Paul Orphanage \(1857 - 1874\)](#)  
Date: 1861 - 1874
- [St Vincent de Paul Girls' Orphanage \(1874 - 1962\)](#)  
Date: 1864 - 1962
- [St Vincent de Paul Children's Home \(1962 - 1992\)](#)  
Date: 1962 - 1992

#### Related Organisations

- [MacKillop Family Services \(1997 - current\)](#)  
In 1997 MacKillop Family Services was formed to continue providing services to children, young people and families formerly run by the the Sisters of Mercy.  
Date: 1997 -
- [Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea Archives and Heritage Centre \(2012 - current\)](#)
- [Sisters of Mercy, Geelong Congregation \(1859 - 1907\)](#)  
The Sisters of Mercy, Geelong Congregation became part of the Sisters of Mercy, Melbourne Congregation  
Date: 1907 - 1907

## Resources

- Twigg, Karen, [St Vincent de Paul Orphanage](#), eMelbourne: the city past and present, 2008
- Allen, Maree, [Sisters of Mercy](#), eMelbourne: the city past and present, 2008
- Heritage Victoria, [Convent of Mercy and Academe of Mary Immaculate: Victorian Heritage Register \(VHR\) Number H0507](#), 15 December 2011
- Allen, Maree G., *The labourers' friends: Sisters of Mercy in Victoria and Tasmania*, 1989
- [St. Vincent de Paul's Orphanage](#), Advocate, 23 May 1929
- Catholic Diocese of Ballarat, [New era for Sisters of Mercy](#), Diocesan e-news, 2012

## Records

---

### Records

- [MacKillop Family Services Records, Victorian institutions \(1857 - current\)](#)
- 

You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/sisters-of-mercy-melbourne/>