

# Community Service

**Sister Mary Cornile Duloher and  
her spiritual leadership in Savannah**

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**Written By Edward H. Morgan  
and Jeanette L. Blackshire**

# Acknowledgement

I first met Sister Mary Cornile Duloherly while visiting my good friend Dr. J.C. Metts, Sr., and knew immediately she was somebody worth getting to know. Over the many years of our friendship we developed a mutual admiration for one another and a healthy respect for the power of compassionate people.

In 1972, while serving on the Board of Trustees for St. Joseph's Hospital here in Savannah I had the privilege of assisting with the Southside move and the creation of the Board of Governors of Volunteer Trustees of not-for-profit hospitals. My fondest memories from those years are of working with Sister Cornile and her successor Sister Mary Faith McKean and of the wonderful strides made toward modern healthcare in Savannah.

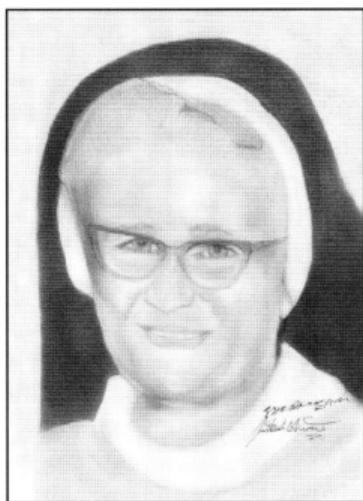
I've attempted to include in this book the significant accomplishments Sister Cornile made over her many years running St. Joseph's Hospital. Having known her as a great friend and a truly formidable administrator it is my hope that her story be as inspirational to each reader as she had been to those that knew her. Included in this book is the story of a great woman. A woman who knew who she was, where she came from and what she thought God expected of her.

In assistance in the compilation of this information and in the writing of this book I would like to thank the following people. For her steadfast assistance in gathering information and for her continued friendship I would like to thank Sister M. Kristen Lancaster and the Duloherly family. Without their help this story would never have been possible. I would like to thank Janet Stone for her keen eye and Judy from Minute Man Press in Savannah for her indelible ink and endless patience. Lastly, I would like to thank my partner in crime, Jan Blackshire. Serving as my artistic inspiration, my ghostwriter and my conscience, Jan has taught me that there are many stories worth telling in this world and most of them are buried deep within a personal diary, waiting to be opened and shared.

Jan and I took a gamble together and decided to become authors. Our first book, *Hymnody and Happiness; Inspirational Stories of F. Bland Tucker*, was finished in the summer of 2006. Our second endeavor, *The Wonderful and Wacky World of Dr. J.C. Metts* was printed in Fall of 2006. Both books were received with overwhelming response and it was this excitement that allowed us to complete the trilogy with this third book. We never intended to become authors; we just wanted to collect the stories and histories that became the evidence of my life. And now, with this third book complete, I feel as if a part of my life has come full circle and those that influenced my life the most have been remembered and honored for their contributions to others and most importantly to me.

I may have lived the life these stories are about but it was Sister Cornile who added the spices that seasoned it just right. May her memory live on and may we all strive to live a life worthy of her memory.

Edward H. Morgan  
Savannah, Georgia



*A Drawing of Sister Mary Cornile  
completed by Jan and myself while  
working on this book.*

# **Sister Mary Cornile Dulohery, RSM**

**Introduction by  
Most Reverend J. Kevin Boland  
Bishop of Savannah**

Not many CEO's walk away from a successful venture to direct a similar operation in a most dissimilar setting. Sister Mary Cornile Dulohery did that in 1953, when she left Saint Joseph's Hospital in Atlanta to take charge of a hospital in a leper colony. Earlier, Sister turned down a flattering offer from Rich's, a large Atlanta department store, to become the company's vice president at a significant salary. An unwavering devotion to her vocation as a religious seems to have come naturally to this amazing nun.

Born to Margaret Berry and Cornelius Dulohery in 1909, Lucille Genevieve Dulohery spent her formative years in Savannah where she attended school. Later, she went off to Sacred Heart Academy in Belmont, North Carolina. In 1932, she graduated from Saint Joseph Hospital's School of Nursing in Savannah. In 1933, she went to Baltimore to join the Sisters of Mercy, a religious order founded in the Irish homeland of her Dulohery ancestors. She later furthered her education by obtaining a Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Nursing and Administration at Catholic University of America.

Sister Cornile's ensuing career in the healthcare field reflected how beautifully prepared she was for her calling. Known as a kind and caring administrator, she was often able to achieve stunning results. Sister Cornile directed two schools of nursing that produced generations of outstanding nurses – those of Saint Joseph's Hospital, Atlanta, and Saint Joseph's Hospital, Savannah. She was a hospital administrator who knew what was needed and what she should do to supply that need. In Atlanta, a new Saint Joseph's Hospital rose under her direction. Saint Joseph's Hospital in Savannah left the limitations of its old building behind, moving to Savanna's southside and a larger, more modern facility when Sister Cornile was in charge.

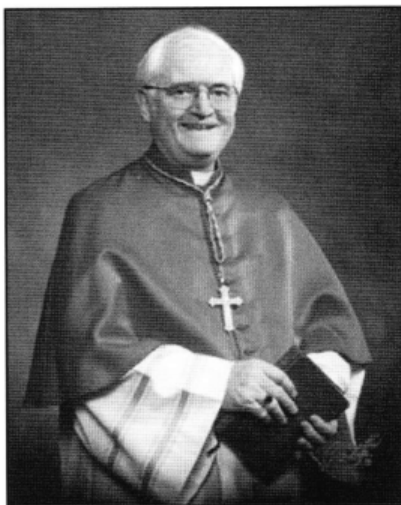
As her career began to wind down in retirement, Sister Cornile directed the planning and development program of Saint Joseph's, Savannah, while continuing her involvement in many civic organizations. Next came a time of doing something she excelled at and loved: visiting and comforting the hospital's sick.

Today, all that remains of the leper colony at Chacachacare, Trinidad, where Sister Cornile served from 1952-1955 are abandoned buildings. What does remain today for those who knew Sister is the memory of her selfless service to the lepers, her years as administrator of both Saint Joseph's Hospitals, and her warmth and intelligence. This booklet relates not only the story of Saint Joseph's Hospital, Savannah, but also that of Sister M. Cornile Duloher, RSM, the remarkable woman who helped to make that hospital the fine institution it is today.

*Yours in Christ,*

*+ J. Kevin Boland*

*J. Kevin Boland  
Bishop of Savannah*





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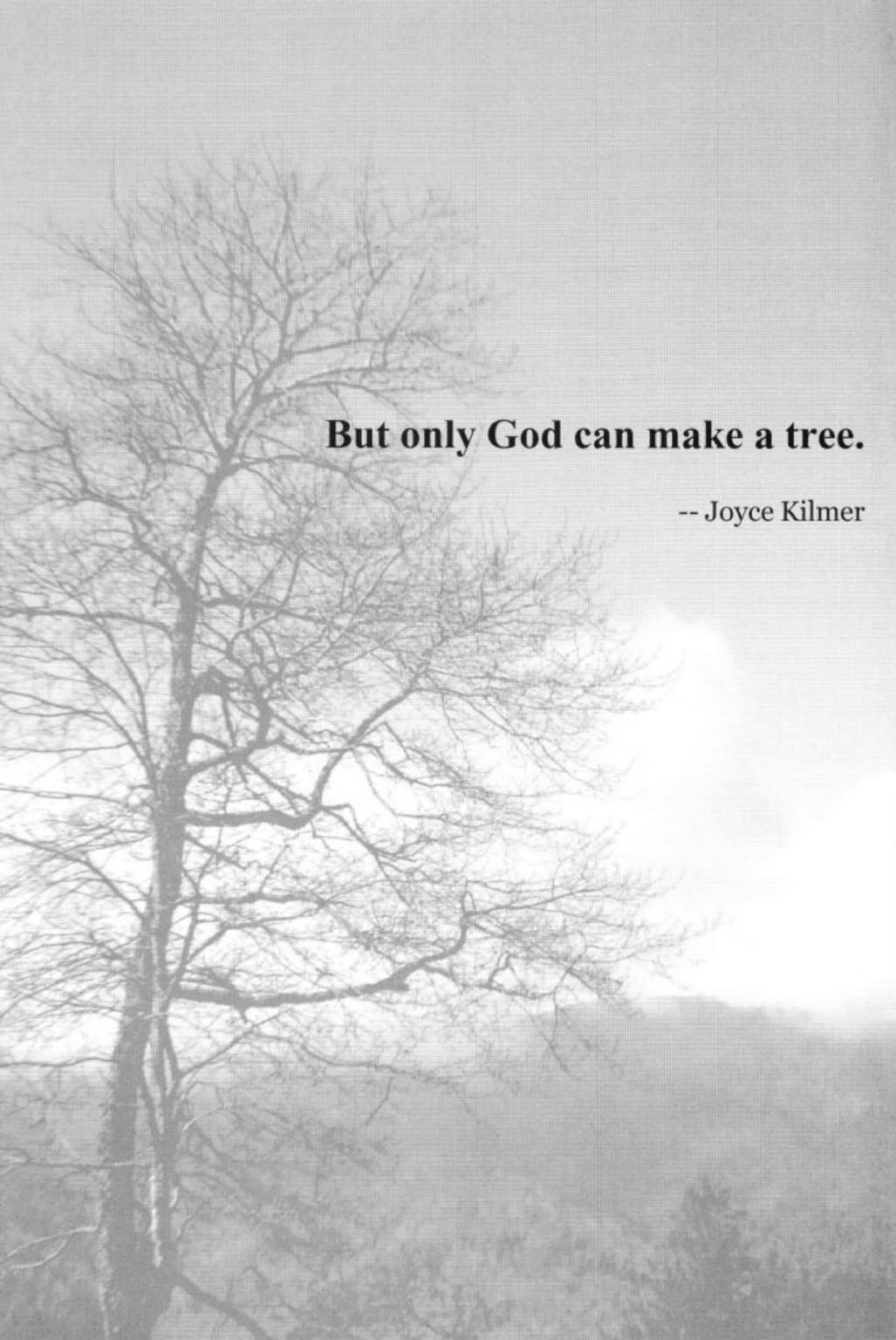
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A black and white photograph of a bare, gnarled tree against a bright, hazy sky. The tree's branches are intricate and spread out, filling much of the frame. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape with hills or mountains under a bright, overcast sky. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

**But only God can make a tree.**

-- Joyce Kilmer

# Part I

## BORN INTO FAITH

### From Humble Beginnings To A Not So Humble Life

Sister Mary Cornile Duloher, RSM was the daughter of Margaret Mary Berry and Cornelius Duloher. She was born in Langford, Kansas on November 10, 1909, during a family visit there and was baptized as Lucille Genevieve.

Her father, Cornelius, owned a grocery store at East Broad and Hartridge Streets, on the edge of what is now the Victorian District in Savannah. Her father was a generous man with a giving soul, known for donating food to those in need. He and his wife instilled values in their children that became

the motivating forces throughout their lives.

Her home was always in Savannah and she couldn't imagine it anywhere else. It was here she received her early education and excelled in everything she did - honor student, champion tennis player and accomplished musician.

Later, she attended Sacred Heart Academy in Belmont, North Carolina and it



*Left: Cornelius and Margaret Mary Berry Duloher, Sister Cornile's parents. Above: The Duloher residence, East Broad and Hartridge Street, Savannah.*

was there, while sitting alone in the auditorium of Sacred Heart Academy that she heard music off in the distance.

It was Joyce Kilmer's "Poems are made by fools like me, but only God can make a tree."

### TREES

I think that I shall never see  
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is  
pressed  
Against the sweet earth's  
flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,  
And lifts her leafy arms as if to  
pray;

A tree that may in summer wear  
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whos bosom snow has lain;  
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,  
But only God can make a tree.

-- Joyce Kilmer

*The Duloherly daughters with  
Lucile in the bottom row on the  
left. Lucile after attending Sacred  
Heart Academy.*

The impact of the words and music awakened a new profound awareness and humbling change in her. From that day forward, her dedication and service to God and the church had never been in doubt.



## Brother and Sisters - It's all in the Family



*Margaret Duloherly Johnson (Mrs. William R.) of Savannah (1905-1996), a beautiful, generous and fashionable lady whose life of good works helped establish a beachside convent on Tybee Island for the Sisters of Mercy on property she owned with her husband. She also assisted with the expansion of Blessed Sacrament School in Savannah. She served as regional head of the National Conference of Catholic Women and was received by Pope Pius XII in a rare semi-private audience in the early 1950's.*

*Josephine Duloherly (1906-1989) became Sister Mary Immaculata, Mother General of the Sisters of Mercy in North Carolina and Guam. Educator and musician she went to Julliard and received a master's degree from Carnegie Mellon Institute in Pittsburg. Although her specialty lay in the field of music, she also had a great interest in literature and modern history. As an educator, Sister Immaculata taught music at Sacred Heart College and Academy until 1947. Infirm much of her life but unflagging in her devotion to her students she was remembered as a wise administrator and a beautiful inspiration to all she met.*



*Gertrude Duloherly, Married Samuel Ford Ledlie Jr and was born in Salina, KS in 1908. She was remembered as a spiritual force in the community and never forgot the inspirational values instilled by her parents while growing up in Savannah. She died in Richmond, VA in 1993 and left a legacy of community service and support that none will soon forget.*

*Cornelius Jerome Duloherly, the youngest of the family was widely read and had a voracious and inquiring mind. After boarding school at Belmont Abbey, NC, he chose to be a plumber. Cornelius became a quiet crusader against the slums in which virtually every black Savannahian lived when he was a child. His sister, Gertrude, helped him start a clinic for blacks in Savannah. He instilled in his children the same values of service and dedication that his parents and sisters learned. He married Mary Clare Lang.*

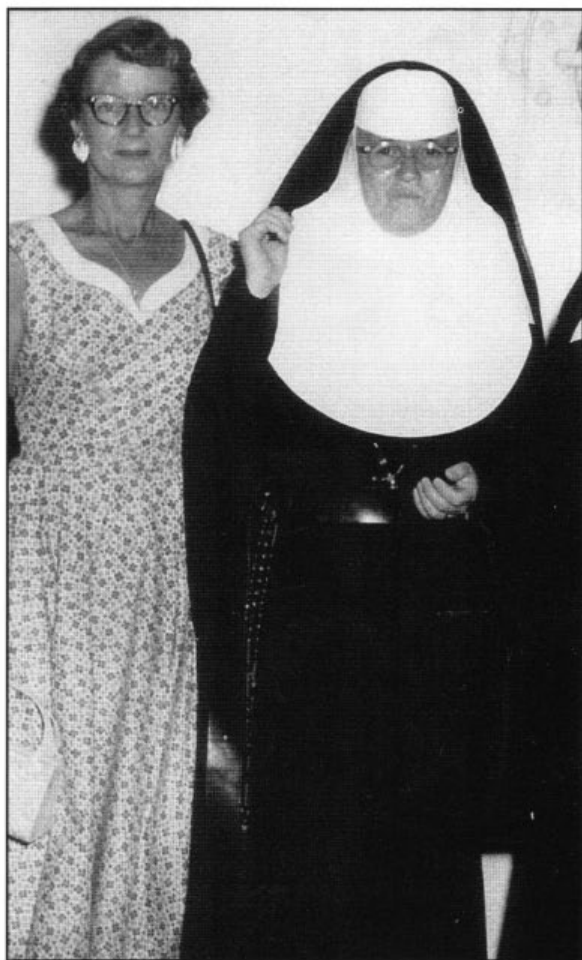


After attending Sacred Heart Academy, Sister Mary Cornile returned to her home town and graduated from St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing in Savannah, Georgia in 1932. She entered the Sisters of Mercy in Baltimore, MD the following year and professed final vows on August 12, 1939.

She earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Nursing and Administration from Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.



*Above - Sister Mary Cornile Duloherly in her 1932 graduation photo from St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing in Savannah.*  
*Left - Margaret Duloherly Johnson with Sister Mary Cornile in traditional black habit.*



*Sisters Immaculata and Cornile boarding a launch in Amersterdam, 1971.*

In 1940, Sister Cornile Duloherly returned to Savannah to take charge of St. Joseph's Nursing School but left the following year to become the administrator of St. Joseph's Hospital in Atlanta, an outdated facility that was in desperate need of funds to survive.



*Early photo of St. Joseph's Infirmary, Atlanta, GA.*

As the new administrator of St. Joseph's Infirmary she created a hospital advisory board that would assist in the renovation and expansion of a new hospital.

Sister Cornile took the reins and refused to be discouraged by something as minor as lack of funds. She started a method of fund raising efforts that would be

the mainstay of her impact on the local communities she had been blessed to help and serve.

She started by writing to a fund-raising consultation firm, who without notice sent a man to visit her. He asked if she could get a group of men together that same afternoon. Without any hesitation, her heart and her mouth replied, "Yes!"

After several well placed calls to an Episcopalian, a Jew, and three Catholics, she got them to agree to come to hear her proposal. They were doubtful about a fund-raising campaign. They were unaware of the influence and power they had in their community, but that was about to change with Sister's help and perseverance.

The fund-raising consultant had been out all morning testing the waters and getting responses from individuals like bus drivers, taxi drivers, shop

and business owners and just plain folk. One person who said "...he'd rather be tarred and feathered..." made his opinion known, but also agreed to assist any way he could! Little did that man know, but Sister Cornile felt the same way.

An article in the *Atlanta Constitution* at the time of renovation told of two nuns seen strolling around the construction site. "Only God could do this," remarked one of the contractors. "Only God and Sister Cornile," the other added.

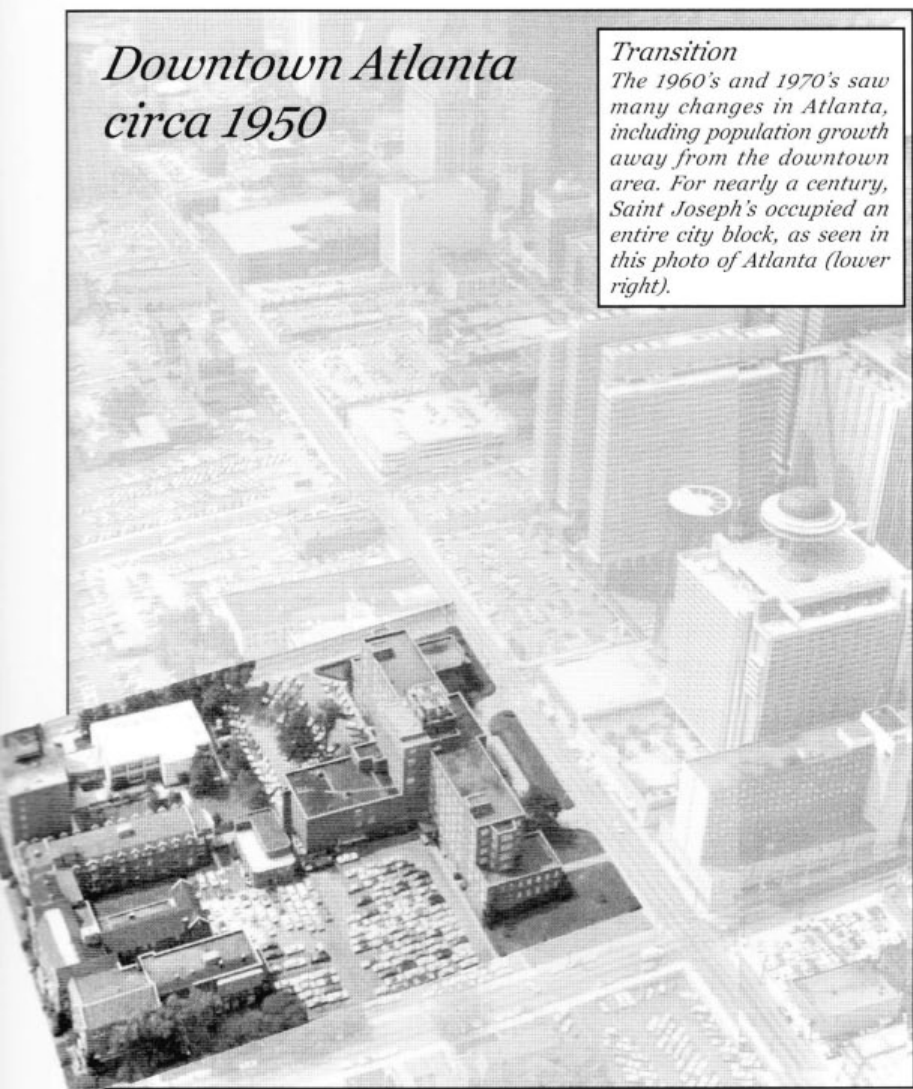


*Sister Mary Cornile Duloherly (far right) with the Atlanta School of Nursing's graduating class, 1945.*

## *Downtown Atlanta circa 1950*

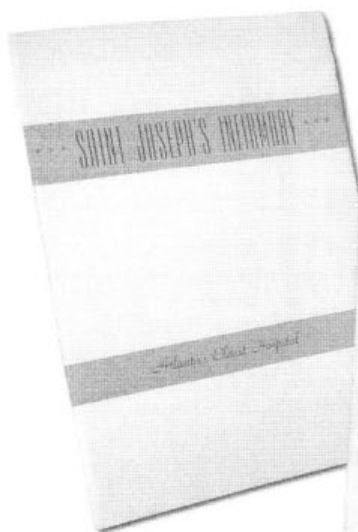
### *Transition*

*The 1960's and 1970's saw many changes in Atlanta, including population growth away from the downtown area. For nearly a century, Saint Joseph's occupied an entire city block, as seen in this photo of Atlanta (lower right).*

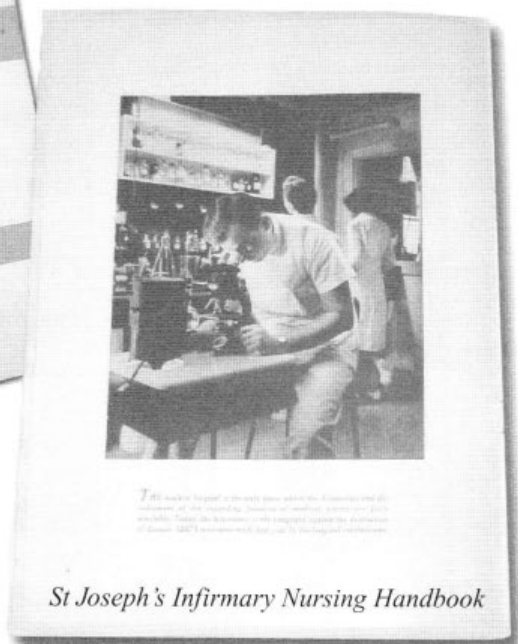


The renovation and expansion of the old hospital at Harris and Ivy Streets in downtown Atlanta (where the Marriott Marquis Hotel now stands) became a multi-year struggle that tested the physical as well as the spiritual patience of all involved. But, in the end the hospital stood tall.

*NOTE: The hospital was later relocated to the northern perimeter and the downtown location was sold for \$21 million.*



Sister Mary Cornile's reputation and successful tenure in Atlanta won her plaudits from business leaders and politicians alike.



Retail magnate Richard Rich of Rich's fame offered her a job as a Vice President of his department store with a starting salary of \$25,000 a year!

Citing her religious vow of poverty, she politely turned him down, but the point had been made. Here was a Sister in the tradition of the very first Sisters of Mercy, uniting a powerful faith with hard work and the practical skills of a very savvy administrator.

Over 448 of Atlanta's finest business and professional men contributed to the progress of their city's health care system. Along with donations of land and support from prominent Atlanta families like the Havertys and the Spaldings Atlanta has become one of the leading cities in quality healthcare and innovative procedures.

Isn't it amazing what the hand of God and one nun can do with a little faith and a lot of support from the community!

In 1960 Sister Mary Cornile Dulohery became administrator of St. Joseph's Hospital in Savannah. Her true calling was never more questioned than here, in her home town, where the downtown hospital location no longer served the community.

Outdated and in need of expansion for the growing city the hospital no longer served its purpose. So, in a bold stroke of thoughtful genius and despite the skepticism of members of her order and outcries from the community, the new administrator decided to relocate St. Joseph's Hospital to the suburbs.

A dynamic spirit whose energy level seemed unparalleled, she oversaw the construction of the new St. Joseph's and opened its door to her community in 1970. Her persistence and dedication had its rewards and the hospital completion stemmed a new growth for the surrounding area and brought community awareness to healthcare in the coming years.

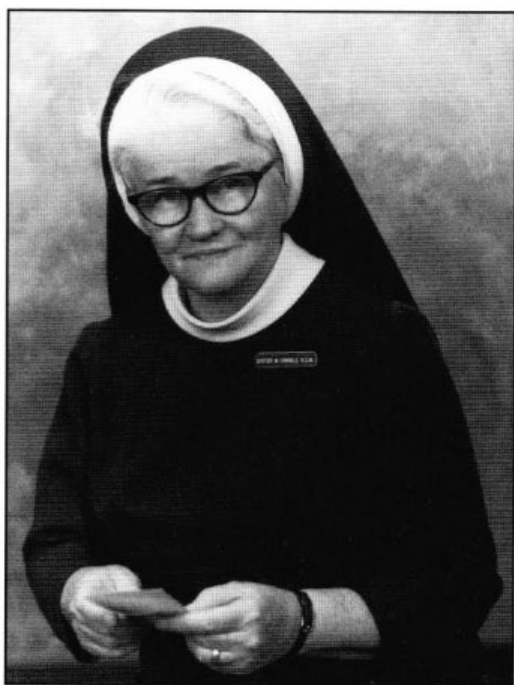
She retired in 1982 as president/CEO of St. Joseph's but laying low and relaxing was never her strong suit. She became head of the planning and development program at the hospital and maintained a regular regiment of visiting the sick, much like she did in Trinidad.



One of her biggest, yet least known accomplishments was done while serving as CEO of St. Joseph's Hospital in Savannah. She was instrumental in establishing a board of volunteer trustees of not-for-profit hospitals so that they could be an effective voice in the forums, policies and by-laws where health legislation and regulations were being created. The success of this board, as well as the quality of hospital care under her guidance, attested to the skill of her administrative ability and the care and love she possessed for her fellow man.

In later years, she was often seen buzzing around the hospital and grounds in an electric-powered car. To the many individual lives she touched, she was always thought of as the 'little engine that could.' She gave hope, strength, understanding and compassion to all who knew her and her dedication of community spirit will never be surpassed.

Often, those that knew her would speak of Sister Cornile as a paradox. Gentle but firm; meek, but assertive; compassionate, but lovingly admonishing; fragile, but strong; long-suffering, but patient; eager to return to her Father's house, but resigned to God's will for her life. And, Sister Cornile Dulohery reminded us every day, through her example and her compassion, that it is this paradox that lives in us all- waiting for us to resign to God's will so that we can live the life we were destined to live.



Born of three sisters and a brother, Sister Cornile Duloherly quickly learned the gracious give and take of a soul destined to belong to service and God. That service received two from her family, herself and her older sister, Sister Mary Immaculata and both, having dedicated their life to others, left a legacy that touched thousands.

Sister Mary Immaculata was actually born in Savannah but lived most of her service in Belmont, North Carolina. She was an excellent musician and lover of fine music. She studied at the Catholic University of America and Julliard School of Music. She received her Master's degree in music from Carnegie Tech in Pittsburgh, PA. In light of all her accomplishments, she deemed most important the measure of her love of the Lord and His most blessed Mother for whom she had great devotion.

The virtue of life is not in the measure of our accomplishments but in the gift of ourselves to others. Never do these words hold more meaning than in our choice to serve God and his community. Sister Mary Cornile knew this choice as well as her sister and they both devoted their lives to serving as best they could.



*Top photo show a rare shot of the two sisters together. The photo on the right shows Sister Mary Immaculata with Bishop Vincent Waters.*



*Sister May Immaculata Duloherly.*

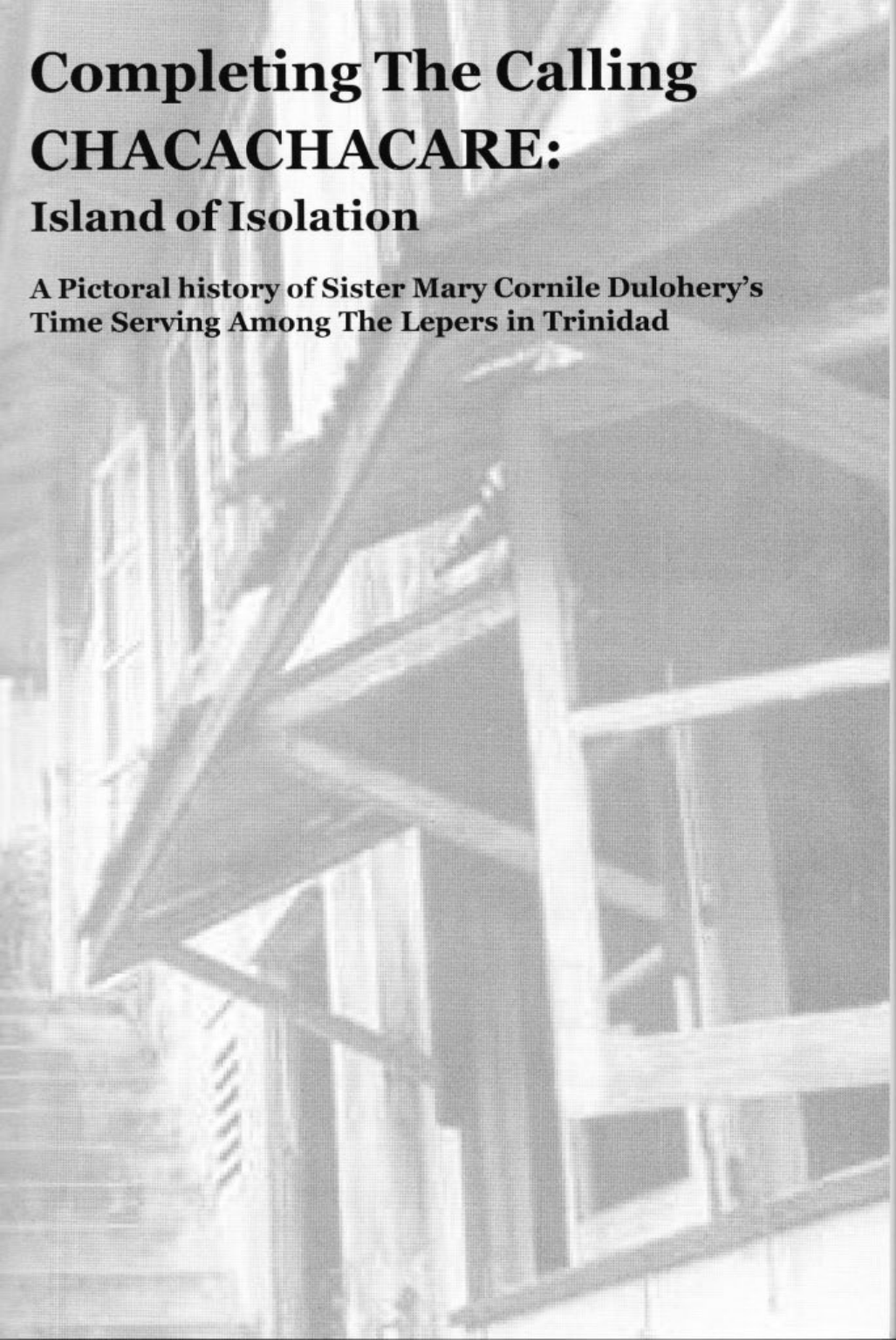


# **Completing The Calling**

## **CHACACHACARE:**

### **Island of Isolation**

**A Pictorial history of Sister Mary Cornile Duloherý's  
Time Serving Among The Lepers in Trinidad**



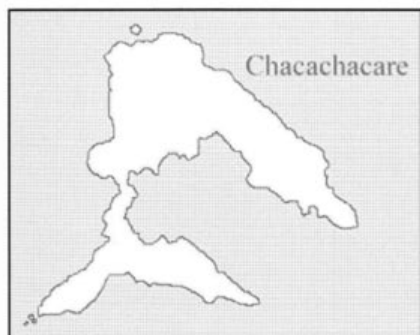


When Sister Cornile left Atlanta and ventured to Trinidad a thousand thoughts must have been going through her mind. Always maintaining her optimism and sense of humor, she was asked by one of her friends if she would be flying to the Caribbean on the luxury airliner known as "El-Presidente"?... "No" she answered dryly. "I'll be flying General Flunkey." Without that humor and her sense of God's hand working through all living things, her time among the lepers would have most certainly seemed like a burden beyond bearing.

Scenic and accessible, just five miles off the northwest coast of Trinidad, Chacachacare Island boasts a beautiful lighthouse and a colorful history. But less than a century ago, it's isolation became its own 'sentence of death.' Over 150 years ago, Trinidad, like numerous other hot, humid locales, had problems with nature, problems that seemed more medieval than modern. Hansen's disease, better known as leprosy, had erupted in the capital, Port of Spain. As late as the early 20th century, the only method of controlling an outbreak was isolation. For the bacillus, which attacks the body's peripheral nerves, there was no cure.

With Hansen's Disease spreading in Trinidad, the British authorities systematically rounded up and shunted all those infected to an island five miles off the northwest tip of the 1,800-square mile mainland. Chacachacare became, for over 70 years, the home, and often final destination, of more than 2,000 sufferers of leprosy. The first patients arrived in 1922, along with the materials needed to create a hospital and other outbuildings. Later, the Dominican nuns arrived, and eventually, U.S. Sisters of Mercy.

The island was closed over 30 years ago, when the advent of antibiotic cocktails made isolation unnecessary. Today, accessible only by boat or private yacht, the area has become quite a fascinating history



lesson. Among the ruins, it is possible to see the effort made to ease the lives of the lepers. The local Trinidadians don't visit very much. Maybe it is because of the isolation, maybe its morose history. Some even say it is because they fear the germs might still be there. Either way, they're scared to set foot on the island.



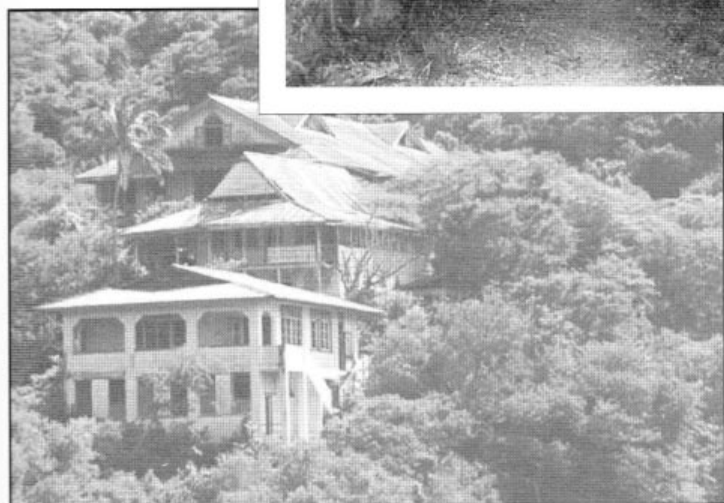
Christopher Columbus discovered the island in 1498, but stayed close to shore when his crew was attacked by monkeys. Over the following centuries, the island served no particular purpose, passing through several different countries of ownership only to become part of the British Empire.

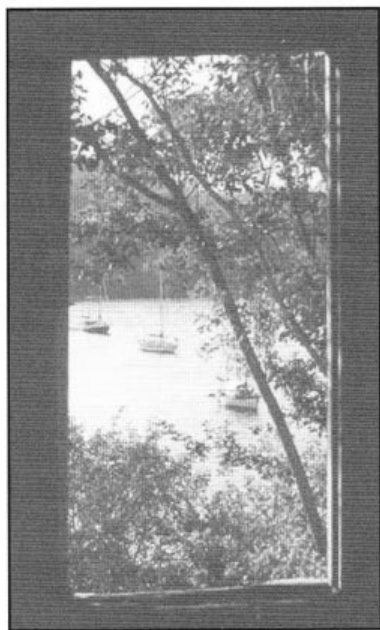
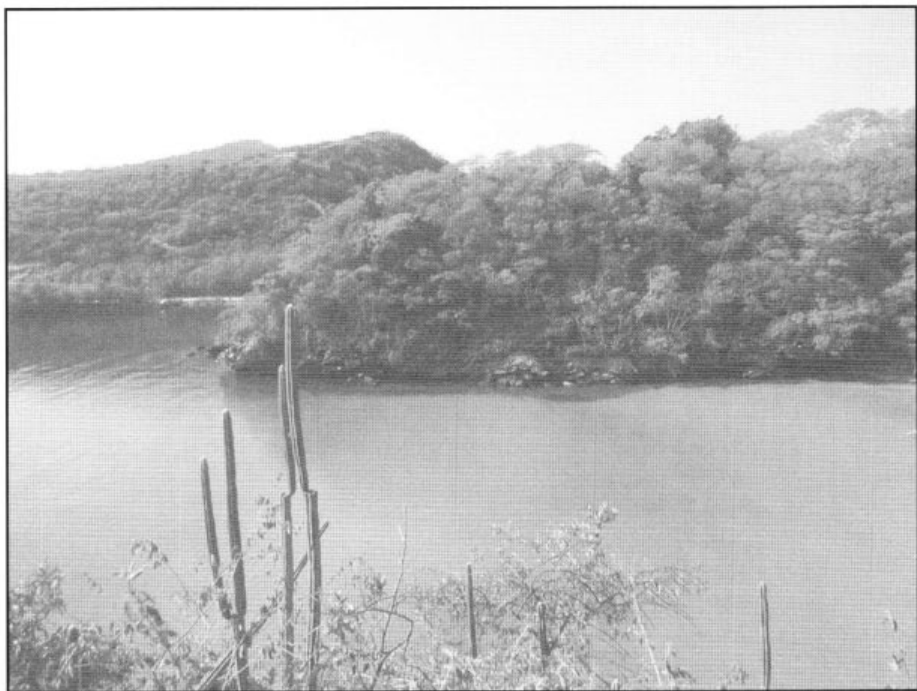


In 1942, about 1,000 U.S. Marines landed on Chacachacare. They built nine military barracks, installed coastal defense guns and built a road to the top of the 865-foot main peak. It might have seemed like progress to the local residents but even the Marines couldn't keep out destiny. Hansen's Disease would not be considered treatable for at least another 40 years. The 'Island of Isolation' would continue to hold their futures and spread fear of contagion to the mainland.

Thank God the nuns didn't feel the same as the rest of the world. They came by the hundreds, ready to ease the lepers' pain and do God's work. Without a care for themselves or even fearing the germs and the inevitable outcome of death, they served with a joyful and gracious heart. Sister Cornile was once heard talking to a friend about her experiences in Trinidad. "With isolation one feels despair." She said she was amazed at the high spirits of the lepers and concluded,

"Leprosy is only infectious. Not contagious. The less people have, the less it takes to make them happy...and vice versa...and rejoicing is contagious."





*Nestled in among lush foliage are vacant buildings which were once part of the leper colony where Sister Cornile was the administrator. Today, the island of Chacachacare, Trinidad, shows only the physical remains of buildings and pathways.*

*In the blue waters off this small, pretty island, several yachts ride at anchor, eager to come ashore and stroll the abandoned and dilapidated buildings once home to thousands of nuns, workers and lepers.*

Imagine what the residents of Chacachacare Island would have missed without the nuns to make their journey bearable; the roaring 20's, the stock-market crash, a world war, a moon landing, and more war. If isolation destroys hope, then companionship must surley restore it.

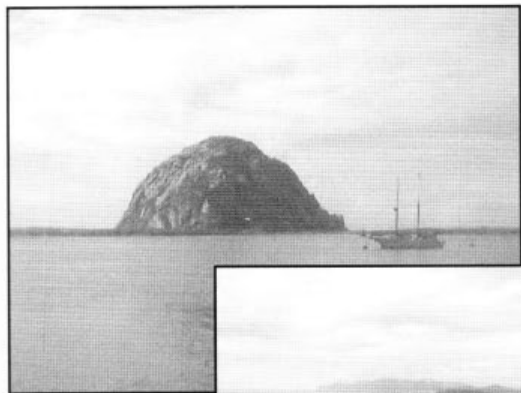
Today it is possible to see the effort made to ease the lives of the lepers. Scattered on the steep mountain and along the shore are the electrical generators, two churches, a school, a cinema, a hospital and the residence of the nuns, like Sister Cornile, who cared for them.

It is easy to let your imagination spin. What would it be like to spend over 3 years helping those sick and condemned lepers? What must it have been like to be a leper?

A Dominican sister who must have worked in the school wrote in 1947, "Wash their sins, wash their souls, and let them be born again." And in smudged black charcoal, not far from the Sister's graffitti is this addition, "When I grow up I will be a teacher. I can read the best in my class."

What hope the nuns must have installed in the lepers for a child to be so determined to fulfill her own future, regardless of her current reality.

"Serving the sick and infirmed is knowing God." Sister Cornile spent her whole life catering to the sick - physically, emotionally, spirtually and administratively. Truly, no other soul should have a better relationship with God than Sister Mary Cornile.



*Sister Retout in the Trinidad Guardian newspaper said, "Let us transform the island into a beautiful natural park so everyone can enjoy its beauty. Let the past take care of itself and let us celebrate the future."*

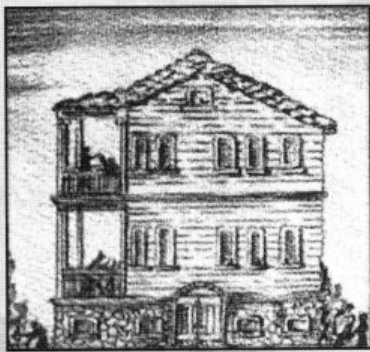
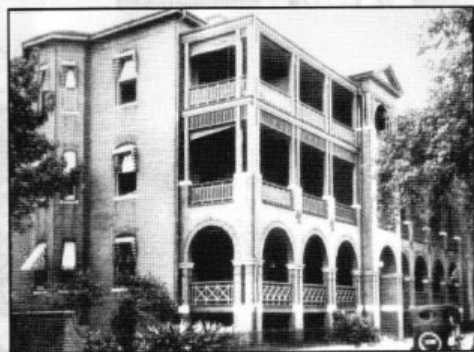
*I think Sister Mary Cornile would like that very much.*

# **Part II**

# **THE IMPOSSIBLE**

# **DREAM**

**Building Legacies In Savannah**  
**A Brief History of St. Joseph's Hospital**



# The Impossible Dream

## From rope ladders to elevators

Basic to the Spirit of the Sisters of Mercy who operate St. Joseph's Hospital in Savannah is an unrelenting, wholehearted response to the needs of the people whom they serve. The story of the first one hundred thirty years of the hospital is a remarkable testament to the dedication and service inherent in those selected to respond with mercy and love in the care of the sick.

## Forest City Marine Hospital

The present seven-story hospital on Savannah's southside is far removed from the ramshackle, twelve-room, frame building located at East Broad and Gordon Streets in downtown Savannah.

Mother M. Jane Frances Burke, Mother Superior of the Sisters of Mercy at St. Vincent's Academy on Liberty Street, responded to the Bishop's plea for help by assigning her assistant, Sister Mary Cecilia Carroll, to lead a small band of Sisters in assuming responsibility for the Marine Hospital.



Sister M. Cecilia Carroll  
First local Superior and  
Superintendent

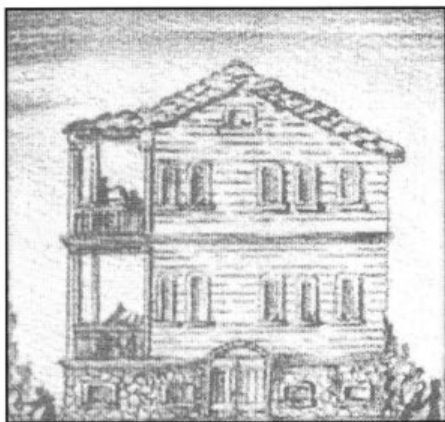


Sister M. Ursula Bowe  
Pioneer Sister

Under contract with U.S. authorities the Sisters undertook the task of alleviating the suffering of the sailors infirmed at the building.

Community records tell of the hardships of the early days.

From the memoirs of Sister Mary Ursula Bowe, who served the better part of her ninety-three years at St. Joseph's, can be learned of the difficulties of reaching the 'second floor' patients by means of a rope ladder; drawing water from a yard pump and boiling it on a wood stove before bringing it to the pa-



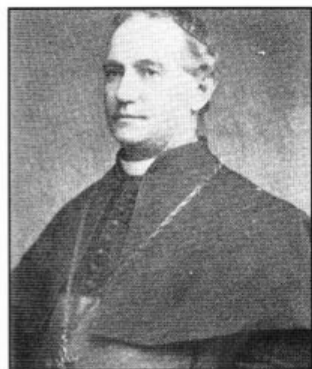
*Drawing of Old Marine Hospital, East Broad and Gordon Streets, 1875.*

tients; and walking fifteen blocks to and from the Motherhouse at St. Vincent's Academy to work at the hospital.

## Saint Joseph's Infirmary

The necessity of finding a better facility for the care of the sick sailors and the desirability of having a hospital under Catholic auspices led Bishop Gross to negotiate with the Sisters of Mercy an exchange of a building for a parcel of land.

It was in March of 1876 that the Sisters moved the seamen, together with a number of destitute elderly men and women, affectionately termed "our first and dearest patients," to the new location.



*The Most Reverend Gross, Bishop of Savannah, 1875*

The building on the corner of Taylor and Habersham Streets was formerly the Savannah Medical College and had, since 1872, been used by the Catholic Diocese of Savannah to house orphan boys. The land deeded over by the Sisters was adjacent to St. Vincent's, now the site of the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist.

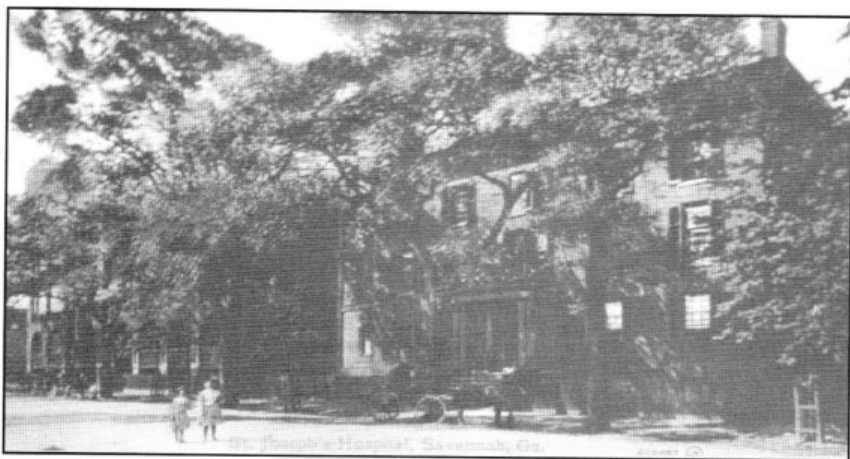
This building, secured from Bishop Gross, was a vast improvement over the original Marine Hospital and slowly received the support and backing of Savannah's growing community.

However, St. Joseph's Infirmary (it was not until May of 1901, when the infirmary had increased its work and enlarged its facility that the name was changed to St. Joseph's Hospital.) was by no means elegant, and the Sisters set to work scrubbing, painting, and soliciting funds for improvements. The generous response of persons of all persuasions was the first of many which proved that support of care of the sick knows no denominational barriers.



*St. Joseph's Infirmary - 1876*

If there had been any doubt as to the need for St. Joseph's and its capability to care kindly and efficiently for the ill, it was dispelled during the Yellow Fever epidemic of 1876. Records show that 938 patients were treated in 1876; 562 of these were Yellow Fever patients. Of these, 442 recovered. The heroic epidemic work took its toll: two physicians, four priests, and three Sisters were among its victims.



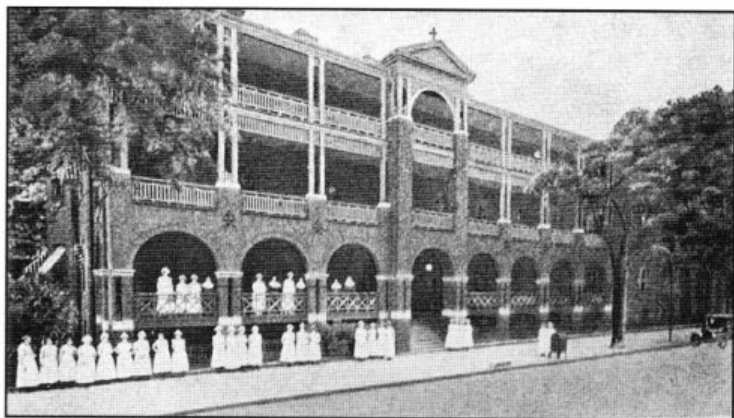
*Reproduction of 1901 postcard.*

# The Twentieth Century Arrives

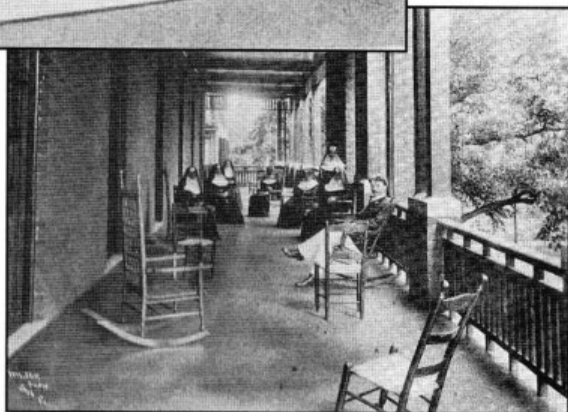
The hospital's slow expansion can be explained in part by the fact that it always extended itself to the limit in caring for poor patients sent by city and county authorities until the opening of Memorial Hospital in 1955. At times the reimbursement was as low as fifty cents a day for each patient. And yet, in spite of this, the hospital did enlarge in 1901 with an annex.

Complete in all details of construction and equipment, the addition was designed by Mr. Henry Urban. It was at this time that the 'broad verandas' - so long a landmark of the old building - were built for the convenience of the convalescents.

The red brick structure of over 40 rooms, together with the original Savannah Medical College building, served as St. Joseph's for the next decade.



*Top; 1901 view of the Annex with nurses.*



*Right; Sisters enjoying a break on the Veranda.*

# Fifty Years of Prosperity and Growth 1912-1965

Almost ten years had passed since the completion of the Annex and much had been accomplished. In 1902 the Medical Staff was formally organized with Dr. Matthew Dunn as first Chief of Staff. In the same year, the School of Nursing (which was to graduate over 700 nurses through the years) was opened.

But, it was becoming increasingly apparent that the community was outgrowing its current state of healthcare once again.

As the obvious needs of a growing city began to take its toll on the health and welfare of the community the Sisters of Mercy determined that the older building was no longer suitable for repair and adaptation and resolved to replace it with a totally new structure.

In 1912, through the generosity of Mrs. Kate Flannery Semmes, the Flannery Memorial Building was built. This wonderful gift was given as a memorial to her



*Flannery Wing Stained Glass*

parents, Capt. and Mrs. John Flannery, and to her brother, John McMahon Flannery.

The Flannery Memorial Building replaced the original Savannah Medical College building and provided the Flannery Memorial Chapel, patient quarters, private rooms and the most modern of operating rooms.



*Flannery Wing Stained Glass*

Although major renovation and reconstruction of the entire hospital took place both in 1930 and in 1942, it was impossible to provide additional beds in the existing facility. The activities of the war years had brought about a drastic increase in population in the area and with that, an acute shortage of hospital facilities.

Once again, the Sisters found themselves faced with keeping up with the times. So, in 1943, under the guidance and inspiration of Sister Mary Gloria McNally, another chapter in the history of St. Joseph's was written when the Mother McAuley Wing, costing \$145,000 was dedicated.

Made possible by an outright grant from Lanham Act Funds, through the Federal Works Agency, this five-story wing housed the administrative offices, nurses' utility rooms, obstetrical departments, a surgical division, X-ray Labs and fifty additional patient's rooms. With this addition, the hospital covered a complete city block.

The addition of the Mother McAuley wing seemed almost a catalyst for the changes that would occupy the remainder of the first 100 years of service. St. Joseph's centennial in Savannah began as a celebration of achievement and ended with a continuing masterplan of change and progress towards quality healthcare.



*Stained Glass from the modern St. Joseph's Hospital on Savannah's Southside.*

The new century of work began with the purchase of land for the erection of an adequate Nurses' Home. In 1951, the Sisters purchased one block of house property on Habersham Street directly across from the hospital. It was here that Madonna Hall (since 1971 the Red Cross Building), a handsome and efficient nurses' home, was dedicated in 1955. In addition to housing, the building provided classroom space, assembly rooms and a student chapel.

One of the most significant developments of the 1950's was the opening of St. James Hall, the first psychiatric unit in Savannah, made possible largely through the support of the George K. Gannam Post #184, American Legion, Dr. James Craig and Sister M. Bride Canty, RSM. Prior to this time, mentally ill patients were detained in the county jail while awaiting transfer to the state facilities for mental illness at Milledgeville, Georgia.



*Right; Sister Mary Cornile  
examines a \$10,000 check from  
St. Joseph's Auxiliary.*

Another decade, another crisis and once again, the Sisters of Mercy responded to the motivating spirit of their congregation - Savannah's growth.

With the advent of the 1960's came another crisis - will there ever be enough mercy in proportion to need?

Never a money-making enterprise, the hospital always operated with a threat of bankruptcy 'around the corner.' The nagging questions of operation and outdated facilities began to take their toll and soon the Sisters began to ask themselves: How does this hospital, in these outdated facilities, continue to operate? How much longer will this hospital be able to deliver quality health care?

It was inevitable that St. Joseph's was to outgrow the space available at the Taylor and Habersham location and that the building would become obsolete beyond any remedying.

So, in 1965, after five years of serving the community in Savannah, Sister Mary Cornile Duloherly, appointed Administrator, read the signs and dreamed the dream and orchestrated one of the most daring chapters in St. Joseph's history - a new beginning.



*The new hospital after all the hard work.*



Kick-off of campaign for new hospital - 1965

Once it became inevitable that the hospital needed to expand the process of finding funding for a \$600,000 Expansion Drive began. The slogan: 'Ninety men for ninety days for ninety years of mercy' was so effective that the campaign workers reached their goal in thirty days.

*Sisters inspect the new site chosen for expansion.*



*Below; the front nameplate on the new St. Joseph Hospital, Southside.*



The creation of St. Joseph's Hospital in Savannah was an amazing journey of struggle and growth. The many hardships and sacrifices by those dedicated individuals so long ago are all but forgotten for the modern work that exists today.

But, let us not forget the driving force behind their loving work. Responding over and over again with compassion, love and concrete solutions, the Sisters of Mercy have given back to their community a dignity and compassion so needed in our modern, everchanging world.

In the midst of enjoying our beautiful, modern healthcare facilities we must remember those individuals so strong in faith and love that nothing could stand in the way of their unshakable belief in the dignity of human life.

The ways of the next century are kindly hidden from view. After all, if we saw what difficulties lie before us, many of us would never begin the journey. And that, sadly, would be a suffering for mankind that even the Sisters could not make better. It is with gratitude for the past and courage for the future that we all must begin the journey- from rope ladders to elevators.



# **Part III**

## **A LEGACY LEFT TO SERVE OTHERS**

**Mother Mary Catherine McAuley and  
a Short History of the Sisters of Mercy**



*Catherine McAuley*

## **The Sisters of Mercy and Their Founder, Catherine McAuley**

Catherine McAuley was born near Dublin, Ireland, in September, 1778 to a prosperous Catholic family. Her family's wealth was unusual at the time as Catholics were not allowed to own property or hold good jobs. Though her father, James McCauley (sic), died when Catherine was just 10 years old, his compassion for the poor, especially children and families who lived nearby and worked for the family, was a lifelong example for his eldest daughter.

Ten years after her father's death, Catherine was orphaned in 1798 and sent to live in the homes of relatives who were non-Catholic and had little tolerance for her pious practices. In 1803 Catherine was invited to live in the home of William and Catherine Callaghan as a companion to Mrs. Callaghan. The Callaghans were childless and upon Mr. Callaghan's death in 1824, Catherine inherited their fortune.

With her inheritance, Catherine leased property in a fashionable neighborhood for the purpose of building a large house for religious, educational and social services for women and children. Other women, intrigued by the house and the work for which it was intended, were attracted to Catherine and began to join her preparations for the ministry she planned.

On September 24, 1827 the Feast of our Lady of Mercy, the first residents came to live in the House they called House of Mercy in honor of the day. Two years later the Chapel was dedicated and the presiding clergy began an ongoing presence in the affairs of the group, ultimately recommending they form a religious Institute. Though this was not her original intention, Catherine accepted their advice and began the founding of a new religious congregation of women dedicated to the service of the poor.

Catherine and two of her associates entered the Convent of the Presentation Sisters on George's Hill in Dublin and began their Novitiate in December, 1830. One year later the trio pronounced vows of poverty, chastity and obedience and to persevere until death in "the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy." Thus the new community was founded.

Catherine lived only ten years as a Sister of Mercy but in that time she established 12 foundations in Ireland and two in England. Shortly thereafter, small groups of Sisters left Ireland at the invitation of bishops in Newfoundland, New Zealand, Argentina, Australia and the United States.

The Sisters of Mercy of the Americas now serve in North, Central and South America; the Caribbean; Guam and the Philippines, with thousands of Sisters responding faithfully to the needs of the poor and the will of God.



***“May God bless the poor Sisters of Mercy and make them very humble that they may not be unworthy of the distinguished blessings God has bestowed upon them.”***

*Catherine McAuley, July 28, 1840*



## ***Mission***

Sisters of Mercy are women who commit their lives to serving God's people, especially those who are sick, poor and uneducated. In the spirit of the Gospel, our mission is to help people to overcome the obstacles that keep them from living full and dignified lives. A life of prayer and community animates and supports us in our mission.

Animated by the Gospel and Catherine McAuley's passion for the poor, the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, are impelled to commit their lives and resources to act in solidarity with

- \* The economically poor of the world, especially women and children;

- \* Women seeking fullness of life and equality in church and society;

- \* One another as we embrace our multicultural and international reality.

## ***This commitment impels them to***

- \* Develop and act from a multicultural and international perspective;
- \* Speak with a corporate voice;
- \* Work for systemic change;
- \* Practice non-violence;
- \* Act in harmony and interdependence with all creation;
- \* To be called to continual conversion of their lifestyle and ministries.



## ***Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy***

*"The spiritual and corporal works of mercy which draw religious from a life of contemplation, so far from separating them from the love of God, unite them more closely to Him and render them more valuable in His holy service."*

*Catherine McAuley*

### **The spiritual works of mercy:**

Instruct the ignorant;  
Counsel the doubtful;  
Admonish the sinner;  
Bear wrongs patiently;  
Forgive offences willingly;  
Comfort the afflicted;  
Pray for the living and the dead.

### **The corporal works of mercy:**

Feed the hungry;  
Give drink to the thirsty;  
Clothe the naked;  
Welcome the stranger;  
Visit the sick;  
Visit the imprisoned;  
Bury the dead.

The Sisters of Mercy have always identified and focused their ministries on unmet needs. Mercy service is extended in schools, healthcare facilities, affordable housing developments and programs, emergency shelters, retirement centers, women's centers and retreat centers.

It goes beyond institutions to serve people in parish settings, rural areas, inner cities, prisons, and detention and treatment centers in the eleven countries and one territory in which they live and work.

Mercy and healthcare have gone hand-in-hand since the first Sisters of Mercy began tending the sick poor in Dublin, Ireland, in the nineteenth century. Since the 1847 founding of the first Mercy hospital in the U.S. in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas have served in every capacity from scrub nurses and doctors to CEOs, CFOs and trustees.

Today, the healthcare institutions in which they work are recognized as leaders in healthcare quality and innovation.

The Sisters of Mercy of the Americas sponsor or co-sponsor six health systems and many health-related facilities throughout the United States, including hospitals, long-term care facilities, rehabilitation centers, and family care and outreach centers, making them one of the largest health care providers in the country. There are also Mercy-affiliated hospitals and health clinics in Belize, Guam, Guyana, Peru and the Philippines.



# **Part IV**

# **THANKS FOR THE**

# **MEMORIES**

**Stories and remembrances  
of a true spiritual friend  
by Edward H. Morgan**

From building a hospital to holding Margaret Mitchell's hand on her deathbed, Sister Mary Cornile Duloherly has touched many lives, including my own. Over the years I've met very few people who have left an impression on my soul as much as Sister Cornile did and here are just a few stories from those days when a humble Sister became a true spiritual friend.

## FOR THE GREATER GOOD OF ALL - The creation of the Volunteer Not-For-Profit Hospital Board of Trustees

When I became a member of the board of St. Joseph's Hospital, I had been working with Sister Cornile on various projects for quite a while. We became great friends and I enjoyed working with her.

It was an era when the hospitals needed to work with the Federal Government more to understand what our current health care system was all about.

We were a not-for-profit hospital and when our volunteers decided to form this new organization

we thought it was a good thing because being volunteers, we had full access to talking with the government people because they were not always understanding what the hospital needed.

In addition, the government had a lot to learn in regards to the Medicare programs. Sister Cornile and I were on the board from St. Joseph's and we began to see if there was any other interest throughout the country in establishing this organization.



*John Sinn at the grand opening of the Barbara Sinatra Children's Center in Palm Springs. Left to right; John Sinn, John Vende Kamp, Barbara Sinatra, Frank Sinatra, President Gerald Ford.*

Not for profit hospitals were treated differently than profit hospitals. Most of the time it was a matter of staffing and services, but the lines of communication with the federal government were needing to be established if the 'not for profits' were to be treated fairly.

This board was formed on November 19 and 20th, 1979 in New York City at the Waldorf Astoria and we ended up with about 12 board members. The head of the board, Mr. John Sinn, was from the Eisenhower Medical Center in Palm Springs and as members of the executive board, we would travel all over the country visiting hospitals to see what their needs were.

In addition, we would go to Washington to meet with legal aids and congressional personnel to help us with the 'grass roots' terminology and policy. Most hospitals had trustees, but none of them were speaking in a unified voice regarding their problems and possible solutions.

The Volunteer not for profit group was created to give volume to that voice so that federal and state legislators would not be able to create restrictions and regulations without our knowledge and input. If we were recognized as a cohesive whole rather than thousands of individual voices, the media and politicians could not help but hear our concerns.

We had succeeded in creating the board and over the years became very strong in our unity and we hired a wonderful woman to assist with our legal creation. Her name was Linda Miller and she was the head of HEW which was the Health, Education and Welfare organization in Washington D.C.

This allowed the board to use her connections with legislators and politicians to advance our concerns and insure the right people were seen to get the job done. She actually became our lobbyist.

John Sinn's letterhead from the Eisenhower Medical Center.  
This list was the current board of Trustees in 1984.



## EISENHOWER MEDICAL CENTER

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HONORARY TRUSTEE

*Walter H. Annenberg*  
TRUSTEE EMERITUS

*Mrs. Bob Hope*  
CHAIRMAN

*John L. Sinn*  
PRESIDENT

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PAST PRESIDENTS  
Mrs. Bob Hope  
Peter Kiewit

We ended up with by-laws and hospitals in over 28 states became involved.

The organization is still in existence today and it is still called the Board for Volunteer Not For Profit Hospitals. It is still their job to keep current on the medical problems in keeping up with the progress of medicine today.

I was on the board for about twelve years which was a reasonable amount of time for someone to serve and then I stepped down. It was a marvelous adventure and I'm glad I was a part of creating what we did.

### VOLUNTEER TRUSTEES

*VOLUNTEER TRUSTEES, 818 18th  
Street, N.W. #410 Washington DC  
20006*

\*EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



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FEBRUARY 1980

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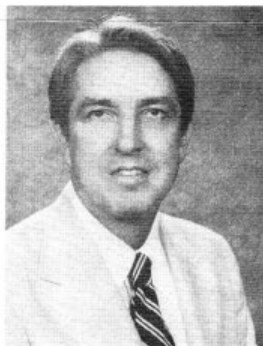
### MR. EDWARD H. MORGAN ELECTED To Board of Governors of Volunteer Trustees Organization

Mr. Edward H. Morgan, a member of St. Joseph's Hospital board of trustees in Savannah, was among the newly elected board of governors of the volunteer trustees of not-for-profit hospitals when concerned trustees from voluntary hospitals throughout the country met in St. Louis, Missouri recently. The organization, headquartered in Washington, D.C., seeks to encourage greater involvement of hospital trustees in political and public relations activities.

Mr. Morgan stated: "I heartily endorse the concept of our new organization. We are all volunteers with no self-serving interests. Our purpose is to organize and involve volunteer trustees of not-for-profit hospitals so that we may be an effective voice in the forums where health legislation and regulations are acted upon in order that we may provide the highest quality medical care at the lowest possible cost. Our ultimate responsibility is cost effective quality patient care."

Mr. Morgan, who has been a member of St. Joseph's board of trustees since 1972, is president of Morgan's, Inc., an industrial supply company with headquarters in Savannah. Mr. Morgan has been active in setting up the new hospital organization. He has attended meetings related to its formation in January, 1980.

The officers elected by the founding board of governors are: chairman, Mr. John L. Sinn, president, board of trustees, Eisenhower Medical Center, Rancho Mirage, California; president, Mr. Francis J. Sorg, Jr., trustee and former president, North Shore University Hospital, Manhasset, New York; vice-president, Mr. Harry J. Blumenthal, Sr., president, board of managers, Touro Infirmary, New Orleans, Louisiana; secretary, Mr. Nathan C.



Mr. Morgan

Tanner, chairman, governing board, McKay-Dee Hospital Center, Ogden, Utah; treasurer, Mr. Alfred R. Stern, chairman, board of trustees, The Mount Sinai Medical Center, New

York, New York; and three members at large, Mr. William R. Brown, trustee, Lutheran General Hospital, Park Ridge, Illinois; Mrs. David M. Davis, vice-chairman, board of trustees, Cape Cod Hospital, Hyannis, Massachusetts; and Sister Patricia Lorenz, St. Joseph's Hospital, Kansas City, Missouri.

In addition to Mr. Morgan, Mr. James R. Lientz of the Candler General Hospital board of trustees was also named to the board. It is a significant honor for the Savannah community to have two members on the board of this national organization.

The executive director elected by the board of governors is a veteran legislator, Mrs. Charlotte T. Reid, who represented the Fifteenth District of Illinois in the United States Congress for five terms and for five years served as a commissioner on the Federal Communications Commission. Mrs. Reid attended the dedication ceremonies of the new St. Joseph's Hospital held at the site on August 15, 1970.

According to Mr. Morgan, the next meeting of the board will be held in Chicago, Illinois on April 29th to review progress and set goals.



I found this article written by Sister Cornile announcing my election to the Board of Volunteer Trustees Organization in 1980. Although I don't think it is the most flattering photo of me, I never regretted being elected to the board or the valuable work we accomplished. I served for a number of years and resigned in 1984. I remember fondly working with John Sinn and the other hospital board members but my fondest memories are of Sister Cornile.

## **Dealing with Politicians; Let them eat Quail...**

I took a trip to Washington D.C. with Sister Faith, Sister Mary Cornile's assistant. This trip was necessary because there was confusion between the volunteer trustees' not for profit hospitals and the profit hospitals.

At that time the profit hospitals were getting paid extra nurses for taking care of elderly people. The not for profits were not getting paid. It takes extra people to assist with those types of patients, especially the day to day, constant physical care.

We thought that was very unfair. This was HCA, the Hospital Corporation of America, and it was a national corporation which was the biggest profit type hospital in the country at that time.

We went to appear before a House of Representatives board in reference to this. We had a lawyer and we had Sister Faith and we stayed through the whole thing.

The head of the committee was Representative Dan Rostenkowski from Chicago. He was the leader and we had two

representatives from Georgia and about 10 or 11 other people present.

We ended up winning the case which I will never forget because it meant we were beginning to be treated equally with the profit hospitals. That was quite an achievement.

I also remember that trip with fondness because of the circumstances surrounding my departure from Savannah... I was scheduled to arrive at the airport early Sunday morning but wanted to attend Christ Church services first. I was running a little behind schedule because I had stopped at a friend's house for a short visit after church. She had intended to serve lunch and had prepared some beautiful quail as the main course.

Not knowing about my trip she offered to wrap them up in brown paper so I could enjoy them on the plane.

When Sister Faith and I boarded the plane I handed the stewardess this greasy bag and requested she serve them to us on some toast during the meal. She looked a bit confused but smiled and about an hour into the flight the smell of quail on toast was wafting throughout the plane. They were delicious.

**Congress of the United States**  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**NINETY-EIGHTH CONGRESS**

**COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

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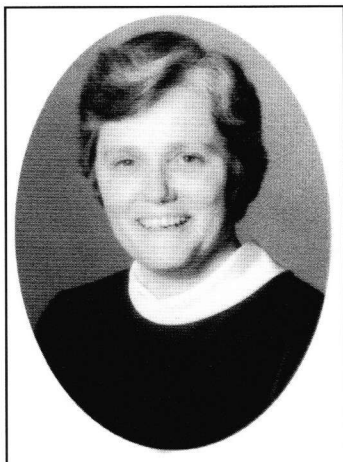
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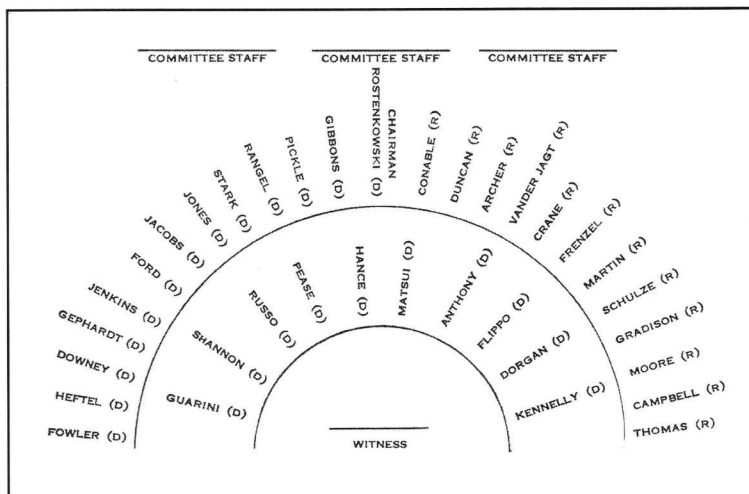
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*Above; Sister Mary Faith McKean. Sister Faith was on the board of St. Joseph's Hospital and had taken over from Sister Cornile who had stepped down due to health reasons. Having had such a great teacher in Sister Cornile, she knew all the ins and outs about hospital operations.*

*Top and bottom; The Congressional Cards from the 98th Congress*



## Lost in Los Angeles

Not much on the Richter Scale but enough to notice.

When we arrived in California for the trip we landed at the Los Angeles Airport and we acquired a car and began to drive to the meeting in Palm Springs.

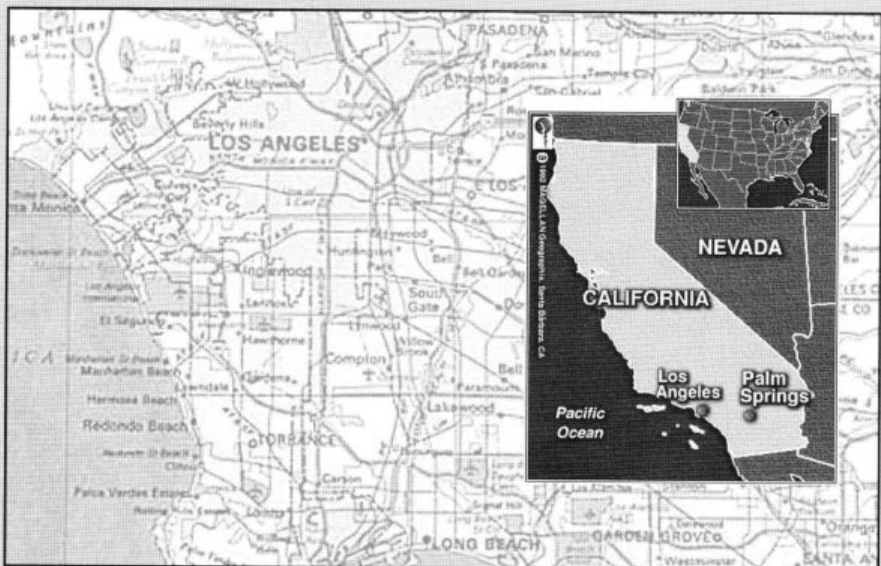
Never having been to California, Sister Graziana and Sister Cornile, along with myself and my wife, didn't exactly know where we were going.

Sister Cornile volunteered to do the driving and asked me if I could ride up front and do the navigating. My wife and Sister Graziana

Summer were in the backseat.

We started and I said 'Sister, I think you made the wrong turnoff. The Pacific Ocean is West and we're supposed to be going East.' She said, 'No, we're all right.' Well, I didn't argue with her, I never did argue with a nun.

But, I kept saying, 'Sister, I think we are still heading in the wrong direction.' She eventually saw it my way and we turned around, but not until we got a very nice scenic tour of southern California and Long Beach. We all had a good laugh about that little turnaround.



## Did you pack a swimsuit?

We started toward Palm Springs and stopped at a hotel. Sister Graziana loved to swim but didn't have a bathing suit.

In fact, she never even thought to bring one. She would always be swimming when she was in Savannah. Jack Riley built a swimming pool in the Sisters of Mercy Home where she lived just for her.

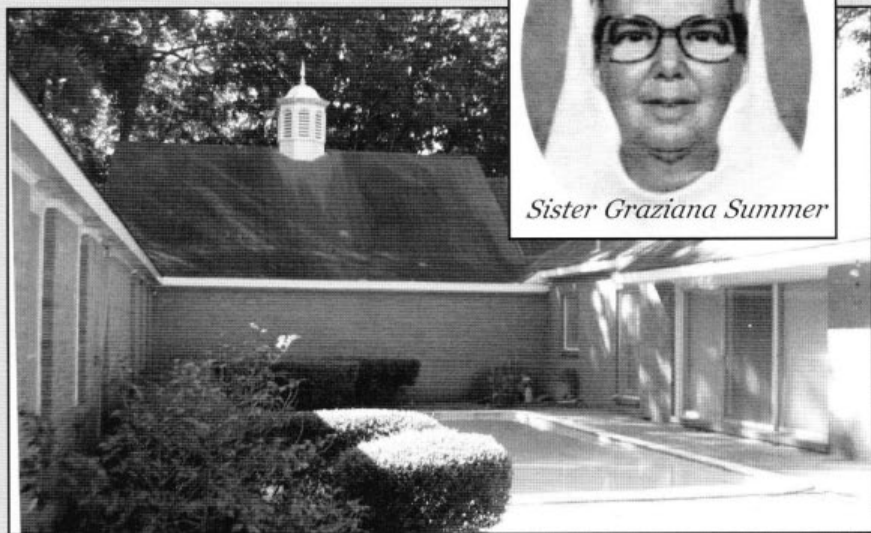
You could find her there every day swimming back and forth. Anyway, since she didn't have a suit, my wife suggested we stop and go shopping for one.

So, we did. Tootsie took her into a store and had some sales woman show her some suits. After about the third suit, she realized she was in the wrong store.

Sister Graziana was not going to wear a 'California' suit with not much material to it. It's actually quite a shame, because she never did get a chance to go swimming on that trip but it was very funny to see the look on a nun's face regarding modern style bathing suits.



*Sister Graziana Summer*

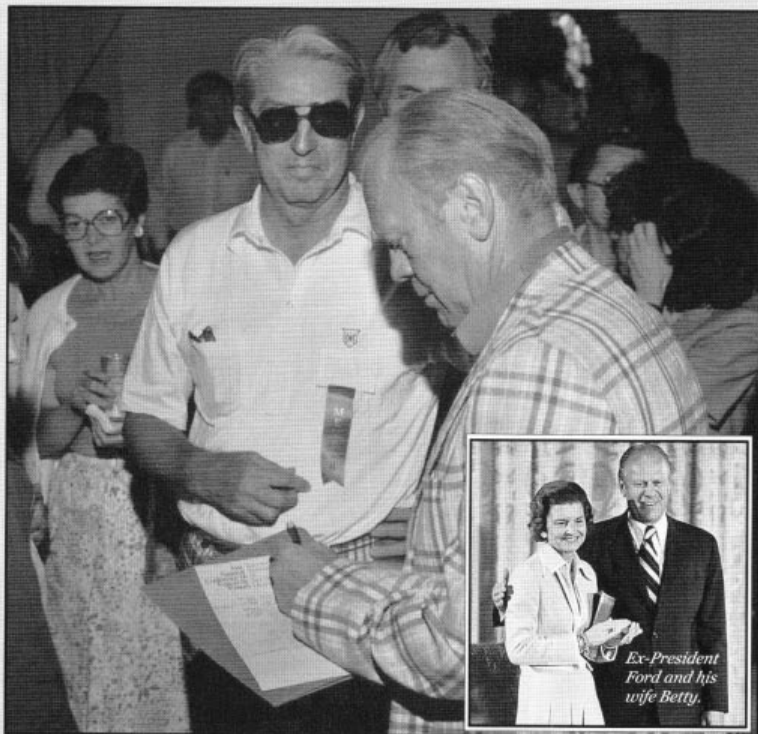


*The pool built for the Sisters of Mercy at the Riley residence in Savannah.*

## Meeting Bob Hope AND Gerald Ford all in the same trip...

On of the great joys as member of the Volunteer Trustees was taking trips and meeting such wonderful people. It became a very interesting job and on one of our trips we went out to the home of the head of the Eisenhower Hospital in Palm Springs, California. We went out there for the meeting and we had lunch with ex-President Ford and his wife Betty.

We had a chance to visit the hospital and we received an invitation from Bob Hope and his wife Delores for cocktails and dinner at their home that evening.



*Meeting ex-President Ford at the luncheon held at the Eisenhower Medical Center during our trip to California has always been one of my favorite moments in life. He was a very generous and caring man and having his wife on the board of the Volunteer Not-for-profit was such a great addition.*

We went up to the Hope home that night and I remember coming onto the property and being amazed at the home. It was built into the side of a small mountain and was very beautiful. He had guards and security and Sister Cornile spent most of the time talking with Mrs.

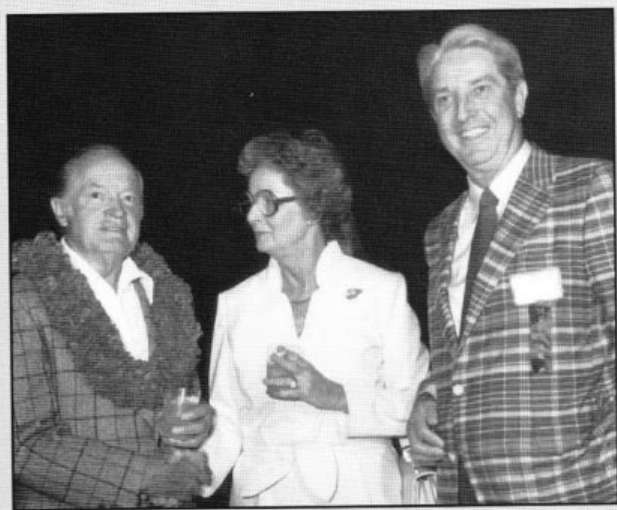
Hope. They had built a little chapel in the back of the home right out of the side of the rock. It was actually quite lovely.

My wife had met Bob Hope and had her picture taken with him. She told him, "Mr. Hope, you have made my day!" Well, he was kind of speechless and didn't know what to say but they both couldn't have been more pleasant. It was his wife, actually, who had connections to the hospital board and meeting Bob Hope was just an added pleasure.

We did have a slight earthquake while we were there. My wife woke me up in the middle of the night and I told her it was probably just planes taking off. Well, we found out the next morning we did have a very small quake.



*A postcard of the Hope home in Palm Springs.*



*My wife Tootsie and I at the Hope home in Palm Springs. He was so gracious during the evening and when his wife came down the stairs to greet us she was singing, "Thanks for the Memories."*

## Florida Trips and Fishing Bits - Travelling Highway A1A

When the Volunteer Trustees was started and I was still on the board at St. Joseph's I took a lot of trips with Sister Cornile and Sister Graziana. My wife went with us on a lot of the trips, too. One of the big trips we took was down to Palm Beach where we stayed at the world famous Breakers Hotel on Worth Ave. It was a beautiful hotel. It's was built by Flagler and is where Rockefeller used to come and play golf. We went to that hotel because Representative Rostenkowski was speaking there and he said he would listen to our concerns.

Anyway, before we got down to The Breakers, we began our drive from Savannah and when we arrived in Florida we headed for A1A. I asked Sister Cornile "How far do you want to go today?" Since it was such a long journey we didn't want to drive all the way down to Palm Beach in a day. It would have been exhausting. Well, she wanted to drive about half way there and so we stopped a little above the Daytona Beach area. The funny thing about Sister Cornile was that she was such a devout person that she never wanted to miss church. Her faith was one of the most important things to her. She had already planned where she wanted to go to church. She knew where all the Catholic churches were up and down Florida's coastline. It was like she had some type of spiritual 'radar'. When we settled in for the night, she told me she was going to church in the morning. She said, "I want you to go with me!" It wasn't a request. When we got into the church the following morning, Sister Cornile was trying to help me follow the Catholic Liturgy. Well, being a Episcopal I had no problem following along. I told her, "You don't have to help me follow along. Our churches are so similar I know exactly what's going on."

THE BREAKERS  
PALM BEACH





*Henry Morrison Flagler built the world's finest resort in 1906 but several fires destroyed his dream. Finally, in 1926 his heirs were determined to follow the same dream and the Breakers remains an unrivaled masterpiece, even today.*

She was always so interested in everything. All she wanted was new experiences and to meet new people. She didn't care who you were — she would walk right up to you and start a conversation. She loved people and got along with everybody she ever met. I don't know how she did that. She loved history and nature and when we would go on

trips together, even though I might have been to that place before, it was almost like a new journey for me too.

Coming back from Palm Beach, my wife Tootsie started talking and she said, "Sister Cornile...the last time Edward and I came down this way, Edward had to stop at every fishing place along A1A. We stopped at so many places on A1A that when we got to our destination people wanted to know if we had taken the back way through 'Texas' to get to Miami. It took about three days, really." Sister Cornile spoke up and said she'd love to see some of those places. So, I told her I would take her to a really good fishing place to eat lunch because I had eaten there many times. So, we crossed the St. John's river where the big air craft carriers were near Jacksonville and went to the little fishing place for lunch. Well, I'll tell you - I walked into that little fish joint with my wife and two nuns and all these fishermen were looking around like it was the end of the world or something. I knew a few of the staff and such, but it was still pretty funny. Sister Cornile had such a great time on that trip. We had some beautiful shrimp straight off the shrimp boats and I don't think Sister enjoyed any part of the trip more than that stop at the little fish place.



# John R. Riley

## **First Lay Chairman - Board of Trustees and Benefactor of Saint Joseph's Hospital**

Jack Riley was my friend and when I got elected onto the Board at St. Joseph's hospital, he was the Chairman. He was a very brave and wonderful person and he ran a big fertilizer company here in Savannah. He had plenty of time to spend with Sister Cornile and he loved her dearly. He ran the Board and she ran the Hospital -- they were a great

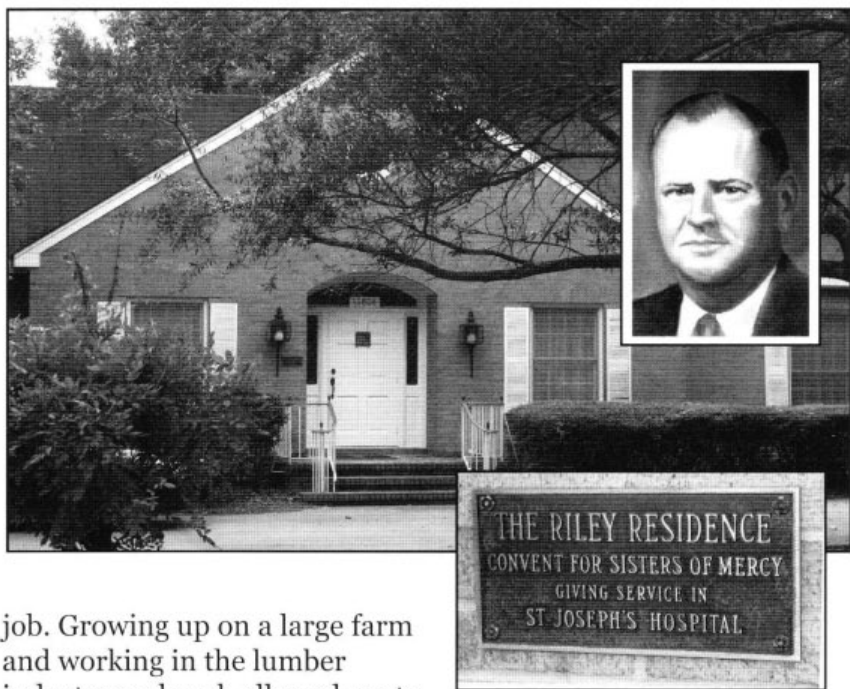
team together and they really enjoyed each other's company. Sister

Cornile was the President and CEO of St Joseph's but Jack was the political person. He was a Georgia Senator and helped immensely with the move and funding. I met Jack while serving on the Board and I didn't waste any time getting to know him either, he was just so easy to talk with.

After I got on the board, Jack had asked me to take charge with Stewart Nurseries for the planning of the entrance of the hospital. He gave me the drawing and I brought them down to the office to study them and I got with the nursery and we worked out what plants and such would work best in that area. We discussed when they were going to start and the total cost of the job.

It was my plan to put oak trees near the entrance of the hospital and we did but, to this day there is still one spot that we were not able to plant oak trees. I go by there even today and see the empty spot and wonder what else we could have done.

Jack had known that I knew how to read blueprints and planting plans and I had an interest in planting so he gave me the



job. Growing up on a large farm and working in the lumber industry and such allowed me to understand the complex workings of nurseries and contractors. I really enjoyed doing this and by Jack letting me oversee the planting plan I felt I could contribute to the project.

Sister Cornile and Jack made it so much fun to work with that I enjoyed all the projects they put me in charge of. I remember those days like they were yesterday and miss both individuals terribly. I often wonder, in hindsight of course, if people like Jack and Sister Cornile would have been able to see the future needs of healthcare today like they did in moving Saint Joseph's. Just think of where we might be today if administrators could have foreseen some of the current problems we have in medicine today. They may not have been able to fix it - but, I do know they would have had some strong opinions and constructive ways to alleviate some of the burden.

I worked on acquiring a well on the property so that if the city ever cut water off, the hospital would have it's own water source. I also assisted with putting in another stand-by electrical generator.

## The Best Laid Landscaping Plans...

St. Joseph Hospital was in the process of moving to the southern part of the city, and Senator Jack Riley who had become head of the board asked me if I would serve and I told him I would be glad to serve.

Sister Cornile and I became such good friends and I enjoyed working with such wonderful people.

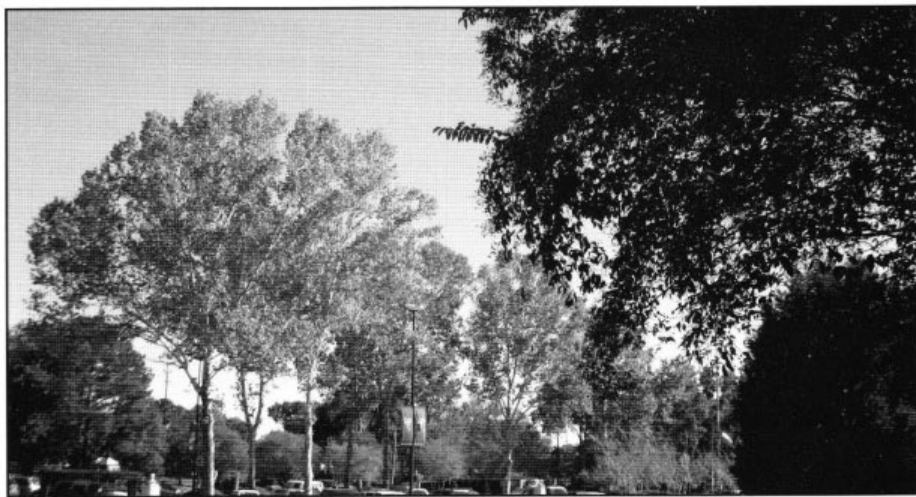
When we first met the hospital had not really been completed yet and the grounds were not finished yet. Jack Riley asked me if I would take charge of seeing to the grounds keeping and landscaping. The nursery plans

had pretty much been laid out but he gave me a map of what was to be done.

One day Sister Cornile called me down here at my office and she said 'I understand you have the original landscaping plans?' She had a nice way of saying could you bring them down to me and right away.

I found out shortly, that being subtle about things was her way of letting me know she was really the boss at that hospital and that nothing left that place without her knowing it.

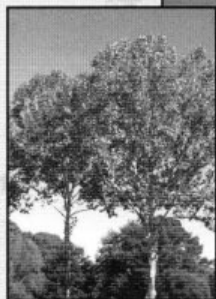
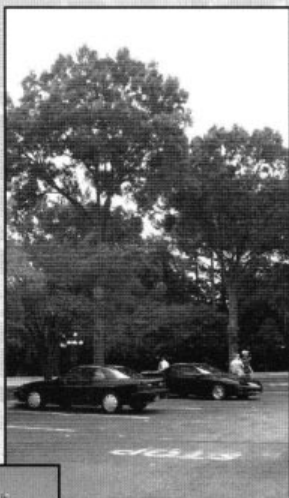
Well, she later found out that Jack had given me the plans and put me in charge of the landscaping and we had a lot of laughs over that.



## Planting the trees story

I worked with Stewart Nurseries for the planning of the entrance of the hospital. Jack gave me the drawings and some of his ideas and I got with the nursery and we worked out what plants and such would work best in that area. We discussed when they were going to start

and the total cost of the job. It was my plan to put oak trees near the entrance of the hospital and we did but, to this day there is still one spot that we were not able to plant oak trees. I go by there even today and see the empty spot and wonder what else we could have done.



## **Building Saint Joseph's Hospital**

### **Trials and Tribulations, but that's another story!**

Jack Riley had known what I could bring to the Board of Directors at St. Joseph's Hospital. Sister Cornile knew, too. They were both so good at reading people and getting to the heart of what people were capable of doing.

The task of moving the hospital across town was almost overwhelming at times, but it soon became the mission of Sister Cornile. Whatever she put her mind to accomplishing was never left unfinished. The hospital was very well laid out and extremely efficient in the way the halls and rooms worked out. And, with the Riley Residence being next door it was a perfect operation.

The project was not without problems, however, and the contractor hired to build the hospital went bankrupt. Eventually, things worked out, but even after the work was done there were problems.

We found out that all the windows were leaking. The architect didn't supervise the contractor and the 'tie' clips they put in the brick which tied it into the building were left out. They had to come back with air hammers and drills and put those tie clips back in which was a mammoth job. When we put the addition on the building the steel borings they used weakened the foundation and the vibrations were causing windows to fall out and other architectural problems. They had to come back with concrete and re-stabilize the building.

Eventually, all the problems got addressed, but the noise and mess involved with having to do it a second time really stressed the new hospital. But, Sister Cornile, always the true administrator, oversaw all the repairs and made the contractors live up to their promises.

I remember a funny story Sister Cornile told me that could have been a huge problem had it been an oversight.

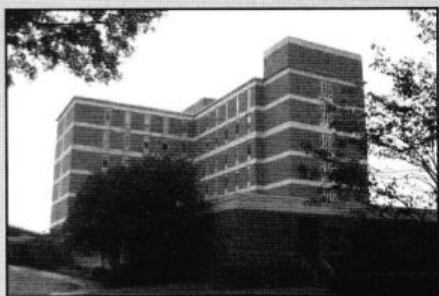
The original building was only supposed to be 6 stories, but Jack Reiley thought it wouldn't effect the budget very much if another floor was added for a total of 7 floors. The top floor could be used for storage or additional offices or whatever needs might arise in the future. He was right; the budget wasn't effected that much and they went ahead and built the seventh floor. As a matter of fact he guaranteed the note for the added expense as well as building the Riley Residence for the Sisters of Mercy next door.

Of course The Sisters of Mercy came down to oversee the final stages of the building and represent the Catholic Diocese since they were the one funding the construction. One of the Sisters came down from Baltimore with Sister Cornile and Sister Graziana. She repeatedly kept counting the floors and came up with seven. Over and over again she would count her fingers and every time she would get to seven. Well, she panicked and told Sister Cornile there were only supposed to be six floors and this was going to turn into a huge problem. Sister Cornile had to go into great detail to explain that the board had approved the additional floor and it wasn't a problem.

I remember hearing Sister Cornile telling me that story and all I could imagine was a group of frustrated nuns, counting their fingers over and over again, shaking their heads. The image still puts a smile on my face.

I assisted with other projects throughout the years including working with the initial contractors to dig a separate well on the site to ensure water if the city pumps failed. It always pays to plan ahead and I appreciated being given the confidence to assist in any way I could. I worked a total of 12 years with The Sisters of Mercy and the St. Josephs Hospital board. It was a wonderful time and I remember meeting some very outstanding people along the way.

*This recent photograph of Saint Joseph's in Savannah clearly shows the seven floors Jack Riley requested. Imagine the shock on the Sisters of Mercy's faces when they counted seven floors on a building they thought had six - and, it was already paid for...!*



*In 1967, while working at St. Joseph's Hospital in Savannah, Sister Cornile assisted in helping Cubans fleeing Castro's regime start a new life in America. Here is the story of that daring escape.*



The Georgia

## BULLETIN

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF ATLANTA

The joined hands of Protestant and Catholic workers spelled a happy ending to the rough voyage of 15 Cuban refugees who arrived in Savannah Jan. 23, said Father Raphael L. McDonald, O.F.M., Resettlement Director for the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

"It was the ecumenical spirit in action," the priest said, who spent two days with Major G.C. Watson, commander of the Salvation Army in Savannah collecting clothes, visiting hospitals to arrange for the release of the injured men, and coordinating plans to relocate the refugees in New York and Miami.

"The whole town was alerted to the needs of the refugees," said Father McDonald. "Job offers flowed in, the Salvation Army center was stacked with clothes - one bed was piled five feet high- and someone sent down 11 rosaries blessed by the pope." People were concerned for the plight of the refugees and wanted to help them, the priest said.

The 15 men and boys, ranging in age from 12 to 60 years, left Playa de Cuanaybo, Cuba at dusk, Jan. 18. "This seashore area is only a half-block from one of the busiest highways in Cuba," the priest said. "The men chose this location because they thought it was so bold a plan that nobody would dream of it. Their destination was Miami."

The makeshift raft about five feet wide and 16 feet long, was built of angle irons fitted to drums filled with compressed air. The small sail was soon in tatters, and 'the motor conked out the first day', said Father McDonald. "The men spent most of their time standing up with waves washing continually over them," he said.

The next morning the men could still see the shores of Cuba. Ships and planes passed by, but the raft went unnoticed. The refugees took turns paddling, but that afternoon waves washed the food and water supplies overboard. The tanks of compressed air that held the raft afloat began leaking, and during the days that followed, the men lost most of their identification papers and clothing, Father McDonald said.

A Philippine cargo ship, the J.A. Santos, on a regular run from Yokahama to Savannah sighted the men on a Sunday morning off the

Florida Keys. Capt. Carlos B. Lunas directed rescue operations. The crew threw lifelines to the men. "The seas were choppy, and two of the older men were injured trying to keep the sinking raft from smashing against the side of the freighter," said the priest. One man fell overboard and two companies on the raft jumped into the shark infested waters to rescue him.

All 15 refugees were saved, and "they came aboard screaming water," said Father McDonald. "The sailors spoon-fed them milk mixed with water and gave them clothes. All the men wanted to do was sleep."

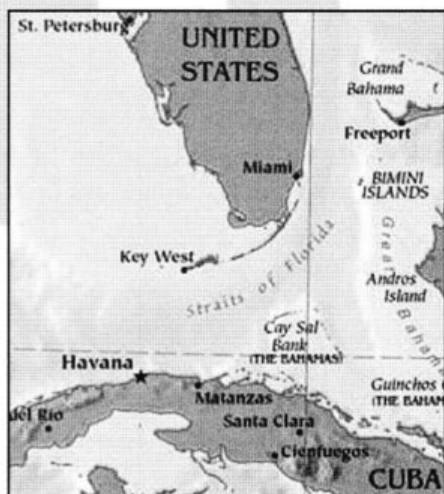
Capt. Lunas radioed U.S. Government officials in Miami for permission to dock there, but was told to proceed to Savannah due to rough weather. Hugh McLoone, Cuban Refugee Director in Miami notified Father McDonald Monday morning, Jan. 23, that the ship would arrive that day in Savannah and asked him to go to Savannah and take charge of the refugees.

Sister Mary Cornile Dulohery, R.S.M., of St Joseph's Hospital, Savannah, called Dr. Robert Carter, who came to the ship to examine the men. Candler, St. Joseph's, Memorial and Public Health Service hospitals provided medical care for the refugees who needed hospitalization.

The transient room of the Salvation Army was opened to the 11 men and boys who were being processed to go to the Refugee Center in Miami for further questioning and medical care. One refugee, 12 year old Barbaro Avelindo, made such an impression on the nursing staff and assistants at the hospital that they wanted to adopt him.

The maritime company that served as the local agent of the A.J. Santos, assisted with arrangements to send the refugees by train to Miami early Thursday morning. "There were constant phone calls, red tape, confusion and schedules to meet," said the priest. "I never ceased to marvel at the hand of God moving."

With Major Watson, Father McDonald escorted the refugees to the train at 1 a.m., Thursday, Jan. 26, and they arrived safely in Miami later that day. The refugees who had planned their escape for two years began their new life in this country.



## **Margaret Mitchell and Sister Cornile Friends Forever...**

For years I've heard little components of the story connecting two favorite people in my life. One surrounds Margaret Mitchell, the author of the novel *Gone With the Wind*, which, of course, became the basis of the celebrated film. The other concerns our Sisters of Mercy, the Roman Catholic order so well-known in Baltimore.

I've always been fascinated by Mitchell, who died in 1949 after being hit by a Peachtree Street taxicab in Atlanta. Once in a while, I would even catch myself falling into a bit of a daydreaming style while crossing streets. And no matter how many times I've seen *GWTW*, I cannot help but think of Margaret Mitchell and Sister Mary Cornile.

Sister Mary Cornile Dulohery, who died in 2000 was a close friend of Margaret Mitchell and was at her bedside at the time of her death.

Mitchell lay unconscious at Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta. Sister Mary Cornile clutched her hand and said, "If you can hear me, squeeze my hand." The sister felt a little response. Mitchell died several days later.

I also found out that Sister Cornile lived in Baltimore's Mount Washington, at Mount St. Agnes, where she received her religious education for about three years in the middle 1930's. She also nursed at Mercy Medical Center on Calvert Street for several years. She went on to oversee financing and construction of two hospitals, one in Atlanta, the other in Savannah. By all accounts, she was a remarkable woman.

In the 1920's, Mitchell would often visit with the Sisters of Mercy at the convent attached to St. Joseph Infirmary in downtown Atlanta. Mitchell heard stories the aged sisters spun of their Georgia childhoods in and after the Civil War. Many of the sisters were of Irish parantage. Think of it - Scarlett O'Hara.

What a wonderful legacy to leave behind for both women. One a timeless story of loss and rebirth and the other a life that touched so many souls at their hour of need.

*Through the years, people from all walks of life have supported Saint Joseph's, including one of Atlanta's best-known residents, Margaret Mitchell. Below is a letter written to Sister Cornile regarding the raising of funds for the expansion of St. Joseph's Infirmary in Atlanta.*



MARGARET MITCHELL

Atlanta: 5 - November 5, 1948

Dear Sister Cornile:

John and I thank you for sending us the report of the building fund of Saint Joseph's Infirmary. We, like many others, are disappointed that the hospital cannot proceed to its expansion immediately. Often John and I ride by the Ivy Street lot and think how fine it will be when you have your new building.

We were very interested in all the information in your letter and we hope so much that it will not be long before the necessary funds are in hand.

As you can gather from the fact that John is able to ride by Saint Joseph's, his health has improved. He can go downstairs once a day, can ride, can go to an occasional movie and, as long as he does not tire himself, can lead an almost normal life.

Cordially  
*Margaret M. March*

# *This Is It*

*Original verses by Mel Prouty*

**The Merciful Old**

**To**

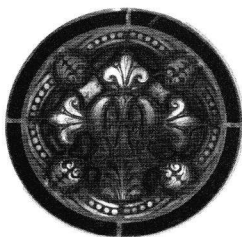
**The Miraculous New**

*Many were the prayers from the old to the new;  
Begging for miracles are so few.  
From beginning to end, a gigantic task;  
When things needed doing, she would humbly ask.*

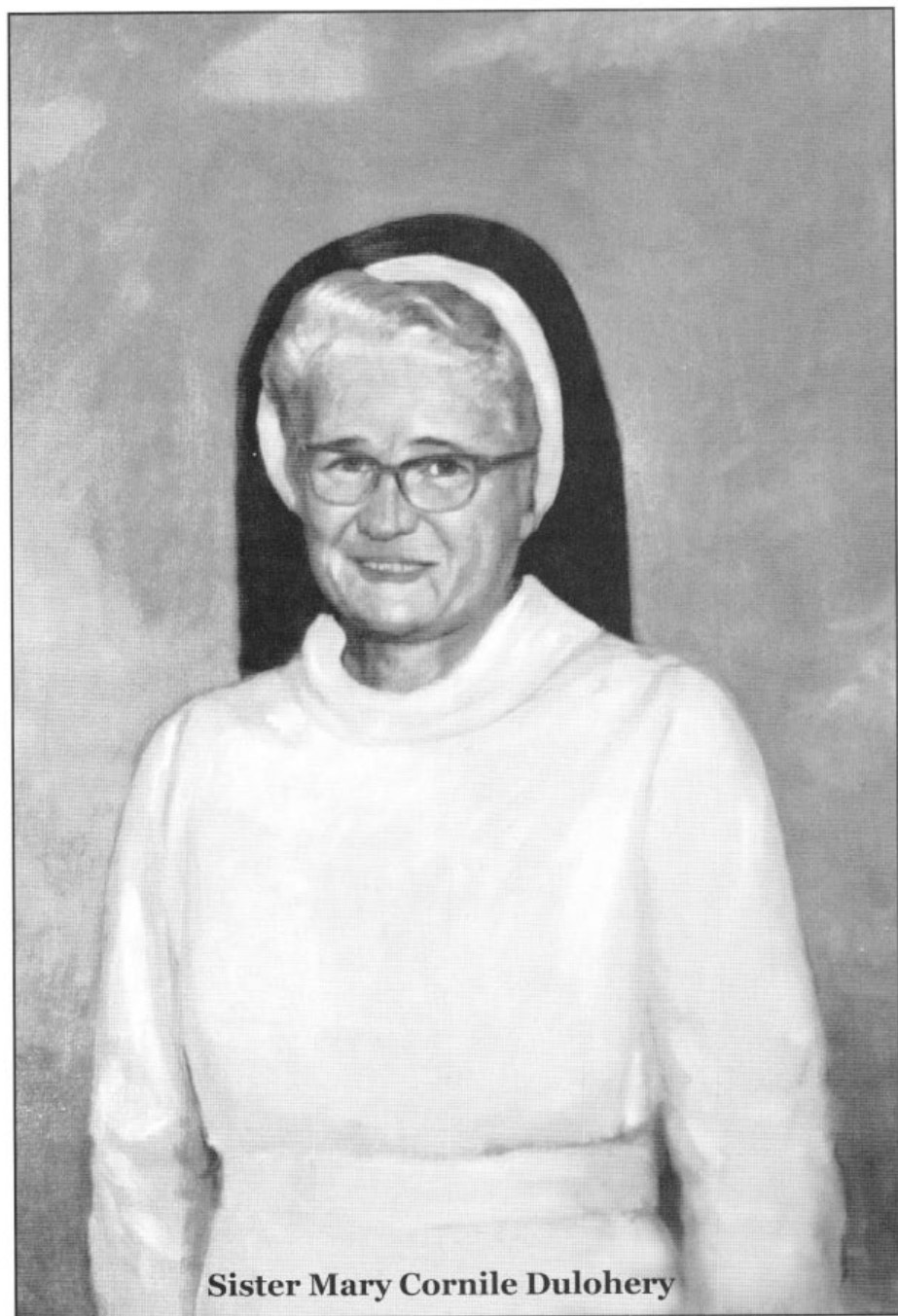
*Heartache and tension, the order of the day;  
Hours were spent to work and pray.  
Some days were so hectic, the thought she would hold;  
She herself went from the new to the old.*

For Sister Cornile gave all of herself;  
Her own human wants went right on the shelf.  
She dreamed great dreams when ere she did nod;  
And her dreams came true with the help of God.

Presented to Sister M. Cornile  
By the Employees of St. Joseph's Hospital, Inc.  
July 20, 1970



**These were Sister Cornile's favorite words**



**Sister Mary Cornile Duloherly**

*In Memorium...*

*Sister Mary Cornile Duloherly, RSM  
1909-2000*



*A rose garden created and named in Sister Cornile's honor was dedicated April 29, 1999 at St. Joseph's Hospital. Also, on December 3, 1998, the second floor outpatient meeting rooms in the hospital were officially dedicated "The Sister Mary Cornile Duloherly Conference Center."*







St. Joseph's/Candle





The humble beginnings of Savannah's St. Joseph's Hospital is a story of sacrifice, love and persistence. There is no doubt that its presence today stands as testament to the many dedicated individuals who endured many hardships and hurdles to make it a reality and there is no doubt that Sister Mary Cornile was one of those people.

This is her story. Written by those of us who were there with her, believing in her vision and drawing faith and inspiration from her unwavering spirit. Sometimes our paths cross with individuals that not only touch our souls but contribute far beyond our understanding or realization. Sister Mary Cornile's concern for her community and her service to God have left a legacy to Savannah and serve as an inspiration to us all.

