

MERCY WELLSPRINGS

FORMATION MOMENT



Mercy
Wellsprings

Fuentes de la
Misericordia

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Self - Reflection:

If Catherine were alive today, she might choose email or WhatsApp as a way of keeping in touch with us.

- What do you think she might say to you?
- What would you say to Catherine?

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A word from Catherine...

“Generosity is not in bestowing gifts ... but in bestowing ourselves.”

Keeping in Touch: The Letters of Catherine McAuley

Catherine McAuley was a prolific writer and kept in touch with her ever-growing network of Sisters of Mercy through letters. She wrote about everyday events. She shared news that would keep the sisters in touch with each other. A great number of these letters have survived, allowing us to learn much about Catherine and the lives and work of the early Sisters of Mercy. We are indebted to Mercy historian, Mary C. Sullivan RSM, for her research and scholarship in making these letters accessible to the Mercy family.

**How do you sign off on your letters or emails?
Catherine’s usual way to end her letters was,
“Affectionately yours...”**

Here is Catherine’s account of a terrible 1839 windstorm that caused damage in several convents:

We remained in Bed all night – some in terror, others sleeping... The Community Room a compleat ruin in appearance... the Prints and pictures all on the ground – only two broken. The maps and blinds flying like the sales [sic] of a ship... 16 panes broken... The windows are still boarded up...

Sometimes, Catherine shared snippets of wisdom that are as valuable today as they were when they were written. For example, to *Mary de Sales White*, February 28, 1841 she wrote:

The simplest and most practical lesson I know, my Dear Sister de Sales, is to resolve to be good today, but better tomorrow. Let us take one day only in hands at a time, merely making a resolve for tomorrow, thus we may hope to get on taking short, careful steps, not great strides.

To read more letter excerpts follow this link:

<https://www.mercyworld.org/library/your-ever-affectionate-catherine-mcauley179/>



“IT IS BETTER TO RELIEVE A HUNDRED IMPOSTORS – IS THERE BE ANY SUCH – THAN TO SUFFER ONE REALLY DISTRESSED PERSON TO BE SENT AWAY EMPTY.”