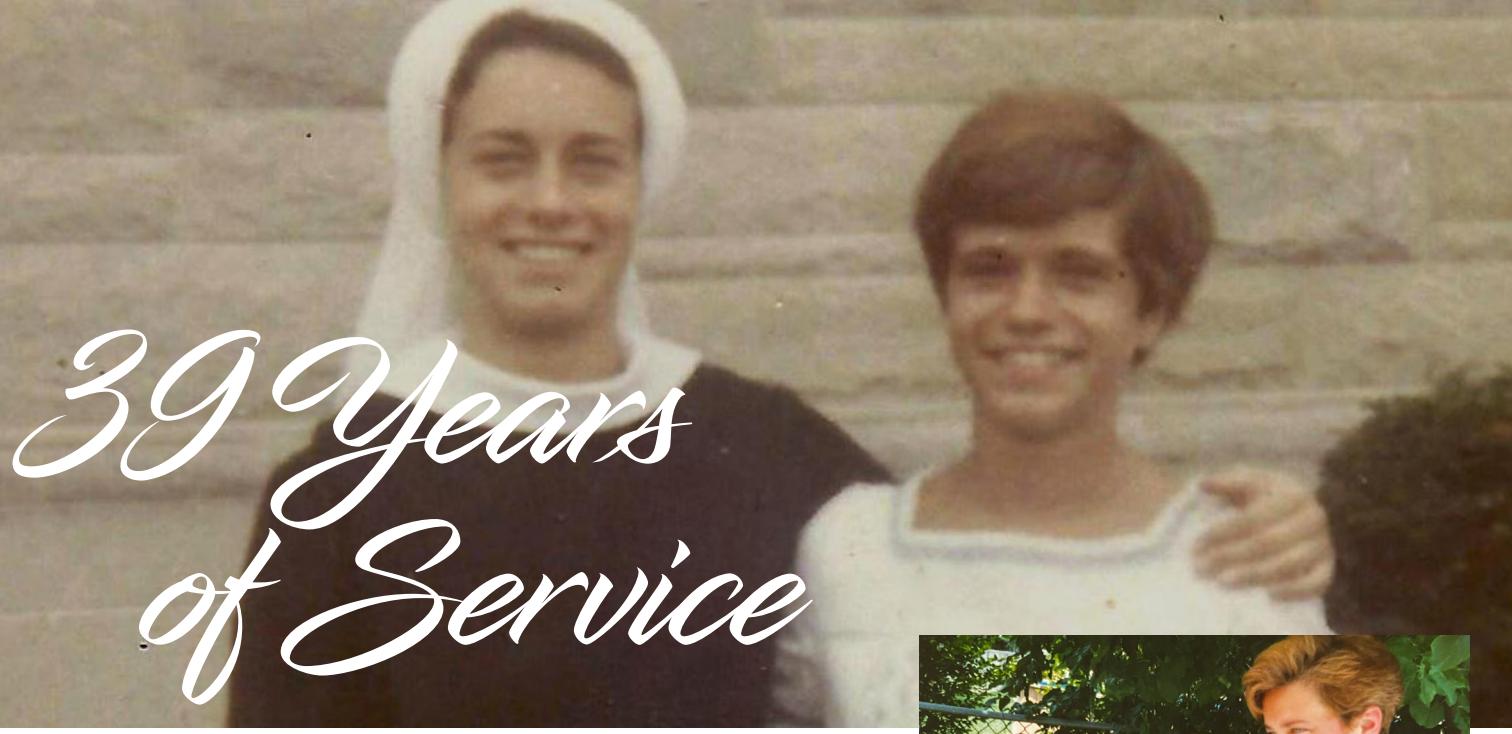




The Impact of
Sister Carol Ann Henry

FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MERCY CENTER, 1982-2021





Sister Carol's journey to Asbury Park began in the early 1980s, when she saw that the City by the Sea was suffering.

"After meeting with members of the city council, it became clear there was a great need to help people who were hungry and battling mental illness – many of them living in the city's overpopulated boarding homes," said Sister Carol.

In 1986, with a loan from the Sisters of Mercy, 1106 Main Street was purchased and Mercy Center was established. Mercy Center's Emergency Services was its first program that offers food, clothing and utilities assistance in order to help sustain families facing financial difficulties.

After ministering for nearly a decade, Sister Carol became aware that Mercy Center was now serving the daughters of the women she had helped years before. "Generational poverty was evident and the cycle was repeating itself within families," she added.

To address these concerns, Sister Carol researched new ways to help families and empower young women to become self-sufficient. "I was convinced that appropriate guidance for families and an education of excellence for young women were the best ways to create systemic change," she said.

Under the leadership of Sister Carol, Mercy Center is now a comprehensive social service agency that includes the Family Resource Center (FRC) and Sisters Academy of New Jersey (SANJ), both of which were created in 1997.

Mercy Center's Board of Trustees, dedicated staff and committed volunteers ask you to join them in celebrating and honoring Sister Carol's work in Asbury Park. Sister Carol will retire as Executive Director in 2021.



By the Numbers

Today, 39 years later, Mercy Center is a comprehensive social service agency and an integral part of the community, offering programs and services that empower children, families and individuals to live a better life.

What makes Mercy Center unique is that it can immediately offer and refer clients to its on-site programs or collaborate with community agencies to address the issues that contribute to financial hardships. Through access to wrap-around services, Mercy Center can holistically address the unique circumstances and needs of an individual or family.

- ✓ **Fiscally Sound**
- ✓ **Debt-Free**
- ✓ **Sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Mercy**

Under Sister Carol's Leadership from 1982-2021

39 years
OF TOTAL SERVICE TO ASBURY PARK

70+ volunteers
AND COUNTING

302 graduates
FROM SISTERS ACADEMY SINCE 2001

12,475 baskets & toys
DISTRIBUTED SINCE THANKSGIVING 1994

100,288 individuals
RECEIVED EMERGENCY SERVICES (FOOD, CLOTHING OR ASSISTANCE) SINCE 1986

169,843 beneficiaries
OF SERVICES FROM THE FRC SINCE 1997

Sister Carol's vision and leadership brought Mercy Center to Asbury Park. However, it is the Board of Trustees, dedicated staff, countless committed volunteers and the most reliable and generous donors who make our work possible.

Throughout the Years

1981

Sister Carol receives a Masters of Arts in Music from The College of New Jersey.



1991

The building adjacent to Mercy Center at 1108 Main Street is purchased and becomes a day center for people suffering from mental illness.

1997

Sisters Academy of NJ (SANJ) opens.



2001

Mercy Center purchases 1104 Main Street and constructs a new two-story building to house its full time food pantry, additional offices and conference room.



1986

With a generous loan from the Sisters of Mercy, 1106 Main Street in Asbury Park is purchased to serve as Mercy Center's headquarters.



1994

Sister Carol begins First Annual Christmas Toy Drive (still active today).

1997

The Family Resource Center (FRC) is created with a grant from the New Jersey State Department of Children and Families.



2001

Sisters Academy of NJ holds its first graduation ceremony.

Throughout the Years

2008

Sisters Academy breaks ground at 1416 Springwood Avenue to add a two-story structure. Mercy Center's Board of Trustees embarks on a capital campaign to fund the new addition.



2016

Mercy Center celebrates its 30th year of offering programs to people that enrich, empower and educate.



2010

Mercy Center completes its \$4.2 M capital campaign. The state-of-the-art building is made possible through the generosity of many supporters.



2020

Mercy Center adjusts its operations so that all services remained available during the COVID-19 pandemic.



2019

Sisters Academy of NJ Alumnae Association is formally established.



2020

The Asbury Park community raises funds to create Mercy Center's Healing Garden.

“It has been an honor to serve and gain the trust of our families over these last 39 years. Because of our faithful staff, volunteers and supporters, I know Mercy Center will remain as our miracle on Main Street for many more years to come.”

– Sister Carol Ann Henry



Mercy Center

Empower • Enrich • Educate

Mercy Center, founded by the Sisters of Mercy, provides programs and services that empower, enrich and educate people facing socio-economic challenges to realize their full potential, with a special emphasis on women and children.

Mercy Center witnesses people's lives being changed through kindness, compassion and understanding from its staff and volunteers who encourage families to think differently about themselves and the world around them.

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