



Dear Mercy Board Trustees,

We write to you in the midst of the unprecedented crisis of the Covid-19 pandemic, a crisis that has touched every aspect of our personal and institutional lives. As trustees of the Mercy mission of higher education, you are facing the challenges of this crisis as your institutions continue to offer a quality Mercy education through online learning, as you continue to support your administration, faculty and staff, as you continue to plan for the unknowns of the months ahead and deal with the financial impact of the virus on current and future students, donors, and the economic conditions of your local civic communities.

It is at times such as these that we discover the meaning and depth of our relationships with one another and in you we have witnessed the strength of the Mercy community that is at the heart of the Conference for Mercy Higher Education. You have brought compassion, creativity and hope to your institutions and to one another during these days and we are grateful for the stewardship that you are exercising for our shared Mercy Mission even in these difficult times.

The documents that we are sharing with you today are meant to strengthen structures to support this community and mission. They reflect changes and opportunities that have been part of our conversations for several years and in a more particular way since July 1, 2019 when the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas and the Conference for Mercy Higher Education made significant changes in their civil structures. The various documents for your discussion contain the explanation of these changes but as the canonical sponsor of our colleges and universities, we wanted to convey to you the hope that we have that the proposed changes will guarantee and enhance our shared identity and mission for many years to come.

The by-law changes and the Covenant document have, as their primary purpose, the continuity of the Catholic Mercy identity of our institutions of higher learning. While the by-laws express this in legal terms, the Covenant reflects the Biblical invitation to a relationship of support, engagement and accountability – a relationship lived in mutual trust and understanding and oriented by Catherine McAuley's belief in the power of education to address the critical needs of our society.

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas

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We are grateful that we stand at this threshold of a new expression of relationship with you. As with all thresholds, the crossing requires courage and commitment but those are the values that sustain all of you as you remain faithful to the institutions with which you have been entrusted.

We look forward to gathering with you in person someday to celebrate the signing of this Covenant, but, until then, please know that we are holding you and your institutions in our Mercy prayers.

In Mercy,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Patricia McDermott, RSM".

Patricia McDermott RSM
Institute President

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Patricia C. Flynn RSM".

Patricia C. Flynn RSM
ILT Liaison to the Conference for Mercy Higher Education