



Good Samaritans: A long tradition of safeguarding

From our earliest days in the colony of Sydney, the Sisters of the Good Samaritan have had a tradition of safeguarding that has underpinned our work and ministry. Inspired by the Parable of the Good Samaritan, the support of vulnerable women and children has been a priority. In seeking to be neighbour, our work began in the establishment of orphanages and refuges and continues today in centres of education and agencies supporting women, children and communities.

A LONG TRADITION OF SAFEGUARDING: YESTERDAY

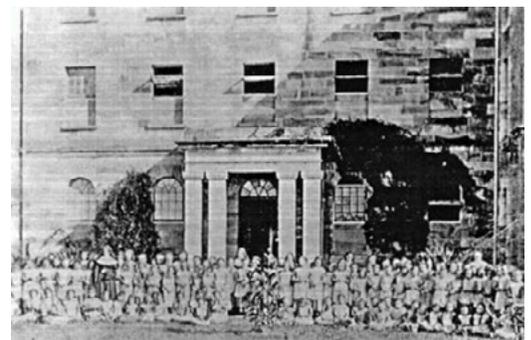
Pitt Street

The people most in need in Sydney, in 1857, in the eyes of Polding, were the destitute women of Sydney. With the aim of relieving their suffering he gathered five women and formed a new religious congregation which he named the Sisters of the Good Samaritan of the Order of St Benedict. Their initial ministries were the care of needy women and the education of children. The Sisters began working in a women's refuge in Carters' Barracks, an old building once used as a prison in Pitt Street. They visited the sick and the poor and looked after orphans.



Parramatta Orphanage

Also known as the Catholic Orphan School, Archbishop Polding sent three Sisters to the Parramatta Orphanage in 1859, where they found themselves caring for over 300 children. It was dingy, overcrowded, unhygienic, and often stinking due to the lack of lavatories and the sewer that often drained from the Lunatic Asylum next door into the



orphanage courtyard. The Sisters had no control over the number or type of children who ended up with them. While there were indeed orphans, many were the children of mothers in the Lunatic Asylum or in gaol, some were runaways from drunken and violent parents, others had been through significant trauma had seen great poverty, violence and death. Few had experienced 'normal' family life.

St Magdalen's Retreat

The work begun at the refuge in Pitt Street was continued at St Magdalen's Retreat, Tempe, in Sydney, where the Sisters looked after girls committed to their care by the courts. Opened in 1887, Tempe, later known as the Good Samaritan Training Centre, closed almost 100 years later in 1983. The Sisters focused on unmarried mothers and women who were seen to be at risk. The Sisters built laundries and accommodation for over 40 women, and by 1900, over 100 people worked a daily routine in the laundry.



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A LONG TRADITION OF SAFEGUARDING: TODAY

Philippines

In the 1980s, the Church in Japan expressed a strong desire for solidarity with the poor in Asia. After sending two Sisters to study in Manila, and following a significant period of discernment, a Good Samaritan community was established in the Philippines. In 1990 Sisters from Japan and Australia took up residence in Bacolod and the Good Samaritan Kinder School opened its doors in 2004. The Sisters are today involved in a broad range of ministries including visiting prisons and orphanages, operating a community centre for women, and a long-term commitment to the urban poor.



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Kiribati

In 1988 the Sisters responded to an invitation to assist with the education of young people, from the Bishop of Kiribati. Again, the Congregation answered the call to be neighbour with generosity and compassion, and there are now two communities of Sisters in Kiribati. They are involved in education through a Kinder School; in supporting vulnerable people in prisons and mental health facilities and centres for people with disabilities; as well as offering pastoral care in the villages.



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The Good Samaritan Inn

Since 1996, The Good Samaritan Inn has provided short-term emergency accommodation for single women, and women with children, escaping family violence and homelessness. They are provided with a supportive, safe and clean place to stay, where they can attend to their immediate needs, prior to moving onto other short-term or transitional accommodation or return home safely.



Sourced from: M. Walsh, The Good Sams, 2001, Trove, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/>