History highlights – Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth

Fall 1858  Bishop John Baptist Miege invites Mother Xavier Ross and the Sisters of Charity to “Come North” from Nashville to the pioneer territory for which he was responsible.

Nov. 11, 1858  First Sisters of Charity arrive in Leavenworth, Kan.

March 8, 1859  Sisters open St. Mary’s Academy for Young Ladies, Leavenworth.

March 15, 1864  Sisters open St. John’s Hospital, Leavenworth, the first civilian hospital in the territory of Kansas.

1869  The first group of Sisters respond to the call to serve in Helena, Mont. In subsequent years, the SCLs establish ministries or serve in California, Colorado, Illinois, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

1870  St. Mary’s Academy opens at new site in Leavenworth (location of current University of Saint Mary); operates as a high school until 1950.

Jan. 6, 1916  The SCLs dedicate Annunciation Chapel in Leavenworth.

Sept. 10, 1923  SCLs open St. Mary’s Junior College in Leavenworth.

1930  St. Mary’s expands to a four-year college

Nov. 11, 1940  Community dedicates new Mother House.

Nov. 8, 1963  SCLs establish their first Latin American mission in Peru. In subsequent years, SCLs serve in Bolivia, Ecuador and Guatemala.

1965  Community dedicates Ross Hall as retirement center at the Mother House for SCLs.

Dec. 12, 1972  Hospitals formerly operated by the Sisters organize into a separately incorporated health system.

1981  First Peruvian young woman enters the South American novitiate.

1988  SCLs begin Associate program.

1995  SCL Community joins Federation of Congregations of Charity, network of other Sisters of Charity with Vincentian roots (today’s Charity Federation).

2003  New Marillac Retreat Center opens on Mother House campus.

March 2005  Hermana Susana Córdova becomes the first Peruvian Director of the Latin American Missions.
Cristo Rey Kansas City High School begins as newest SCL sponsored ministry.

SCLs and Hermanas dedicate Centro San Vicente de Paul in Piura, Peru.

SCLs name Terri Butel first lay director of SCL Associates.

First SCL responds to call for mission service in South Sudan.

Hermanas in Chuschi, Peru, begin serving a noon-day meal for older adults.

SCLs transfer sponsorship of Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Health System to Leaven Ministries, new public juridic person.

The new San Vicente de Paul Dining Room opens in Chuschi, Peru, to serve noon-day meals to the elderly, particularly those living in extreme poverty.

New Ross Hall opens.

First SCL missioned to work with refugees arrives in Sicily, Italy.

SCL Community participates in international observance of 400th anniversary of Vincentian charism.

SCLs host eclipse watch in Leavenworth.

Charity Heritage Formation Program launches for colleges sponsored by member congregations of the Charity Federation.

Leavenworth Interfaith Community of Hope – in which SCLs have been instrumental since its beginning – opens new facility that provides a clearing house, day center and overnight shelter.

Care of Creation Committee hosts Earth Fest in association with Earth Day.

Sisters and Associates gather in Leavenworth for observance of 160th Anniversary under the theme: “Grace has its moments.”