

## OUR MISSION

The mission of Good Shepherd Services is to surround at-risk New York City youth and their families with a web of supports that promote a safe passage to self-sufficiency. To achieve our mission, we lead in the development of innovative youth development programs; provide quality, effective services that strengthen participants' connections with family, school and community; and advocate on their behalf for broader change.

## OUR PHILOSOPHY OF CARE

Our philosophy of care is derived from the vision of our sponsors, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. Their mission of reconciliation is continued today, as we seek to bring young people and families to new understandings of themselves and to support them in making positive choices toward personal and social fulfillment. In our work we express the following commonly held convictions:

The dignity, worth and true uniqueness of each person require that all be treated with loving concern and tender kindness.

Each person's right to self-determination includes the fundamental right to receive an adequate education.

The development of caring relationships is essential in building trust and enhancing self-esteem.

Every individual has the potential to change and to grow.

Each person's capabilities are best realized in an atmosphere of compassion and respect.

Each person's strengths are best expressed in a holistic framework that recognizes inter-relationships among individuals, families and the environment.

Communities thrive when their members have opportunities to express ideas and participate in decision making; they are enriched when diversity is celebrated.

It is essential to work for social change in order to alleviate conditions that impede human equality and fulfillment.



## GOOD SHEPHERD SERVICES *History & Philosophy*

Every day, our programs surround more than 20,000 vulnerable children, youth and families with the services and supports they need to make a safe passage to self-sufficiency.



### Our Vision

*A Kaleidoscope*

reframing relationships, embracing  
change, creating opportunities.

# Our Philosophy of Service

## Rooted in the Unique History and Mission of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd

### Sister Mary Euphrasia Pelletier 1796-1868

*"A remarkable woman, great of heart and mind and greater still in will, uniting lofty and broad ideas with a constancy nothing could wary and which became bolder in the face of obstacles."*

*Charles Jourdain, writer, 1851*



Sister Mary Euphrasia, foundress of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, was a woman of vision, a compassionate innovator, and an inspiring leader who felt driven to address the urgent needs of her time. With a zeal that embraced the whole world, she developed a network of homes for women and girls -- initially in France and subsequently overseas -- founding a total of 110 Good Shepherd Homes on five continents.



### A Mission of Compassion

The Sisters of the Good Shepherd derives its name from the theme of the Shepherd in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures. The image is of the loving shepherd who leaves his flock to go after the one who is lost. In the same way, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd have a special mission to reach out to those who have in some way been marginalized or left behind in our world. True to the shepherd image, their efforts are characterized by a nurturing, compassionate attention toward each individual while sustaining the strength of the whole.

### A Timeless Philosophy

The mission of reconciliation of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd is crystallized in the writings of Mary Euphrasia. The following samples demonstrate the relevance of her beliefs to the positive, strength-based approach that we apply to our work with children and youth today.

*Look for the good, emphasize the positive in each one. It is there. Make constant efforts to develop this even if it is a continual re-beginning. Only in this way will there be progress.*

*Love and tender concern must mark your services -- a tenderness and concern for all their needs, their schooling, their suffering, their work, their food, their leisure, nothing must be omitted.*

*If you wish to gain their hearts, soften their characters and correct their faults, you must first conciliate and take care of them, showing them much care and consideration.*

*Don't be judgmental. See the good in people...We must be attentive and sensitive to cultures, countries, and different needs.*

### From beginnings in France...

In 1815, Rose Virginie Pelletier joined a religious community and received the name, Sister Mary Euphrasia. At this time, as a result of the French Revolution, there were great numbers of homeless women and children in need of care. To better serve them, in 1835, Sr. Mary Euphrasia established a new community, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd in Angers, France. Under her leadership, the congregation grew into a worldwide network.



### ...The United States...

In 1843, the first Good Shepherd program in North America was established in Louisville, Kentucky. In 1857, Sister Mary Euphrasia sent three sisters to establish the first New York "House of the Good Shepherd." Their initial mission was to serve the needs of the large numbers of homeless girls and women who had emigrated to the city as a result of the Irish famine of 1840-1869. The home grew quickly, serving 4,000 girls and women by 1873.



As public policy continues to evolve, so have Good Shepherd programs. From the initial residential programs of the 1800s, we have grown to be a multi-service agency, providing a broad array of individual, family, and school-based services, as well as foster care and residential services to thousands of participants each year. Though the size and scope of our work has changed dramatically, we remain committed to the same values and philosophy of care practiced by the Sisters who founded the agency. Their principles and ideals, revolutionary for their time, continue to inspire us all.



### ...the World

*"Unity is, in fact, your defense, your support, and by the strength it imparts you will spread your branches in all directions."*

*Sr. Mary Euphrasia*

Today there are more than 5,500 Sisters of the Good Shepherd in more than 60 countries worldwide, including 22 cities in the United States. In collaboration with others, they offer services that range from family, residential and community programs such as our own Good Shepherd Services' programs to women's crafts co-ops, basic education and nutrition for women and children, and advocacy for women's domestic rights in third world countries. On every continent and within various cultures, Sisters and staff continue to build on the strengths and address the needs of young people, families and communities.

