

## **Participant Informed Historical Research**

The Restorative Inquiry established a collaboration with Professor Alisa Del Tufo from Bennington College in the spring of 2020 in order to conduct a participant-informed historical research project. Alisa helped recruit two Bennington College students, India Carter-Bolick and Gabriela Yadegari, to conduct the research. India and Gabriela met with the former residents to explore and record what Orphanage-related questions that the group wanted answered; and then conducted research into these questions, connecting with a variety of sources (including former residents); compiling documentation and photos; and preparing both interim and final reports. They shared their research with the participants in June and August.

The drop-down menu is structured around the questions that the former residents identified for research. You also can find reflection statements from India and Gabriela in the drop-down menu. Thank you India and Gabriela for your remarkable dedication, deep compassion, and unwavering commitment to the Restorative Inquiry.

### **Research Sources Include:**

Jim Forbes, Senior Policy & Operations Manager for Vermont DCF Family Services  
Sam Hemingway, Former journalist at Burlington Free Press  
Christine Kenneally, Journalist and author (Buzzfeed article)  
Jerome O'Neill, Burlington-based lawyer  
Burlington Free Press archive (Newspapers.com)  
University of Vermont public archive  
About Burlington Vermont- Charles Edwin Allen  
American Catholic Historical Society - William L. Lucey  
The Catholic Church in the United States of America- Catholic editing Company  
Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington Website (vermontcatholic.org)  
Sisters of Providence Website (providenceintl.org)  
Vermont Eugenics: A Documentary History Website (uvm.edu/~eugenics/)

### **Researcher's Statements**

**How did the Sisters of Providence come to the St. Joseph's Orphanage and what was the relationship between Bishop DeGoesbriand and Sisters of Providence?**

**How were unwed mothers viewed by the Catholic Church in the 1950's and 60's? How were they viewed by the community of Vermont?**

**How did gender separation evolve over time at the Orphanage?**

**How did the State of Vermont supervise the Orphanage?**

**How were foster parents identified and screened by the State of Vermont?**

**What role did the Catholic Church/Charities play in identifying and screening foster families?**

**Why did abuse become the norm in the Orphanage?**

**How could nuns think that way? What was the motivation that led to their actions?**

**How did specific children become targets for the nuns' abuse?**

**How did people in the know (Orphanage administrators) keep up false fronts about the abuse within the community and within their own families?**

**Why did the community give so much authority to the priests and nuns?**

**What research (medical and otherwise) was done on the children at the Orphanage?**

**Where are the children who died at the Orphanage buried?**

**Why did the Orphanage close?**

**Why is it that religion can get away with the abuse and not be held accountable? Is there a way to change this?**

**What does "Sovereignty" afford the Catholic Church? What doesn't it afford? How have other communities/nations dealt with the Church's sovereignty privileges? How was it not a conflict**

**of the separation of church and state for Vermont to place children at St. Joseph's Orphanage?**

**How do the former children see the impact of the Orphanage playing out in their lives?**

**How did the orphanage impact former children's relationships with faith, friendships, spousal relationships, children, education, career, and mental/emotional/physical health?**

**What has given you strength to move through the impacts of the orphanage?  
(What gifts or strengths do you have that you trace to your experiences at the Orphanage?)**

**What do you think our community should learn from your experiences at the Orphanage?**