



During Mercy Week, MIA hosted a six-session Generative Conversation : Opening Doors to an Emerging Future. This conversation was planned in the context of moving into the third century of living mercy in the spirit of Catherine McAuley.

The intention for the Generative Conversation was to provide a space for each, individually and collectively:

- to listen to and learn from each other
- to attend to the calls echoing deep in our hearts and minds
- to re-source ourselves in a renewed sense of connection and purpose
- to imagine together new ways forward for MIA in this current time.





Over the six sessions, participants across the Mercy World engaged in passionate conversations involving a variety of engaging topics including; how Catherine's story ignites our own passion and sense of purpose, listening and seeing unfamiliar ways of Mercy-ing, attending to the sources of Mercy-ing, attending to the call to co-create, imagining possible ways forward.

Key to the conversation were the following ponderings

What might the future of MIA look like?



What is wanting to emerge?

What is Mercy's Agenda?

What are the Non-Negotiables for MIA?

What follows here is a short summary of themes, insights and reflections gathered up over the six sessions.





# Emergent Themes





Source: Foundresses , Sr Mary Southard csj  
Used with permission

**Earth  
Movement Forward  
Listening  
Catherine  
Global  
Hope  
Gospel  
Youth  
Laity  
Church  
Leadership**



# **A Snapshot of Insights Ponderings Reflections**



# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

Our group resonated with joy and hope as we experienced 'the young faces full of the charism' during these sessions. Our Call is to support and encourage the forward movement.



# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

Inspired by Catherine, let us move forward in the spirit of the Gospel.





# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

You need a website that screams the Gospel every day, which says what we do and how we do it, which allows/invites the person to do it with us.



# Insights, Ponderings, Reflections

A recognition that we need to hear the voices of everyone if we are to move forward with courage and hope.





# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

Our group spoke about the hope of the youth. We need to keep telling Catherine's story because she shows us what is possible. Young people are drawn to her story and we have the responsibility to harness their energy and direct them to make a difference in the world, just as she did.



# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

Energized and hope-filled by the opportunities for collaboration and mutual sharing among sisters and brothers. Mercy is truly alive.





# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

We need courage and hope to walk in new waters.



# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

We thought that Catherine's original vision for the laity was voiced and the need to give the Mercy Associates more encouragement and opportunity for leadership.





# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

We need new encouragement for the Mercy Mission. More leadership options for the laity within the Congregations and Institutes.



# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

Deep Listening is the way forward...





# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

Whether I am listening or reading the chat messages, I know I have come to the right meeting. We know who we are as Mercy. May we continue to be faithful to living our values.



# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

Resonance around new forms of community, an MIA lay community?  
How might we better raise up our  
Mercy Companions and  
Associates?





# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

Through conversation Mercy opens itself to engage in dialogue across boundaries, internal and external.



# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

**Gratitude: Mercy is on the way to a wider journey as part of a dynamic unfolding universe.**





# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

The way forward may not be what you expect- be open, flexible, attentive and discerning.



# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

This Generative Conversation is itself the door being opened for everyone to feel the present time and at the same time to look forward.





# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

We need to let go of what anchors us from moving forward.



# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

Explore further the voice of partnership, networking with colleagues, chances for sharing and learning.





# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

I support collective meditation  
as a powerful way forward  
towards personal and  
communal transformation.



# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

Mercy needs to continue to engage the youth. For many, Mercy is the only version of Church that they will ever have.





# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

**Mercy Agenda- This has been a week of radical synodality and non-hierarchical leadership.  
..this would be an amazing thing to explore, new models of leadership.**



# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

The visions, voices, energies, insights and skills of the youthful members of the Mercy World, need to share equally with the wisdom and experience of those who have been on the Mercy journey for a long time.





# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

Our group had a strong theme of regenerating Earth, healing ecosystems and also shifting the systems that damage the earth (economy, greed) and looking at our own call to live simply.



# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

Catherine recognised the signs of the times. Today the greatest issue is the destruction of our Earth home.





# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

Mercy Spirituality has been the root of our life in Mercy. The sacredness of life has been lost to a society of materialism, secularism in greed, control and dominance. We need to return to a deepening of our creation spirituality.



# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

We need to come together, not as a corporation, but as powerful local advocates and we must accompany each other in a new way in new global geographies and around issues.





# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

I think that the MIRP and Mercy Global Presence processes have helped us across the world to get in touch with our passion, our interconnectedness with all the Earth Community.



# Insights,Ponderings,Reflections

Catherine read the signs of the times and listened attentively. The Mercy world needs to continue opening doors...We must respond to the needs of today. We are all Mercy!





# Mercy Agenda

We need to work for oneness in whatever ways we can.

Mercy should bring everybody into the conversation especially those who feel exiled by the church.

To be faithful to the Gospel, not to forget we are in God's presence and God comes to us in the people we are with, in nature, in our realities. Our voice is important in Church. To be connected.

Recognise Mercy as an ecosystem.

Regarding inclusion – broaden our invite for communication to members, associates, companions, volunteers, co-workers.

Ecospirituality – working for and with the earth, growing the culture and community of Mercy to include wider Mercy Family.

Agenda – Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor – Preferential option for women and children.

We need to return to a deepening of our creation Spirituality, to the sacredness of all life so as to truly make a difference.

Be the source of a spirituality that many don't find in other church circles.

Mercy Agenda: Climate Justice, care for women and girls, a global focus and risk taking.



# Non-Negotiables

Gospel Spirituality. This was a real focus for Catherine. We have been so blessed to have retreats, conferences etc.

Continue initiatives in caring for the Earth, Displaced Peoples and Inclusion of the younger generation...

...it's not just WHAT we do, but its HOW we do it. Catherine encouraged 'great tenderness in all things' and Pope Francis called us to a 'revolution of tenderness'.

To Lean in with courage and hope.

For our particular refraction of Mercy, God is our centre and we are inspired by the tradition of Catherine McAuley. All our actions emerge from this core. For me, this is one of our non-negotiables.

Passion and Courage.





# Actions Moving Forward

As we emerge from within a time of global crisis and pandemic, we are mindful of our call to continue Catherine's legacy and vision into the future. World leaders have called us to 'Build Back Better' and justice advocates have challenged us to find new solutions and systems which support both people and planet. These calls challenge our Mercy world to open our doors wide and explore what is possible for the future.

- To ensure that themes and issues raised during the Generative Conversation inform MIA's upcoming Strategic plan
- For MIA to facilitate a regular virtual Mercy Global contemplative Prayer session
- For MIA to explore further possibilities for lay leadership to flourish within the association





