



**MERCY
GLOBAL
PRESENCE**

Reflective Prayer: New Foundations in Mercy – ‘The Wondrous Ways of Mercy’

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Centering

Leader: Our heart is comforted in its awareness of You,
Soul within our soul, life within all life.

All: Our heart is comforted in remembering You,
Giver of this day, Gift of every moment.

Leader: May we be bearers of comfort. May we be strong in our soul
To cry at the wrongs of nations, to weep with the bleeding earth,

All: To mourn with those who mourn this day,
In the loss of life and lands, in the loss of dreams and hope,
May we be strong in our soul this day.

– John Philip Newell, *Praying with the Earth*

A Reading from the Gospel of John

Jesus said to his disciples: Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in them will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing.

– John 15: 4, 5

“Song of Mercy” – Verse 1 by Mary Wickham, RSM

(melody: Beethoven’s “Hymn to Joy”)

God, the Maker and sustainer,
Jesus, ever-gracious Word;
Spirit-Wisdom, breath of goodness,
All our praise to you be heard.
Love beyond all other loving,
Truth beyond our skill to tell,
You are joy and you are blessing,
In your heart may our hearts dwell.

Pause for reflection

Reading

Catherine McAuley could have been insulated and isolated against the miserable poverty of Dublin. Instead she recognized the call of the Spirit, and accepted it with a grateful love and a willingness to be at the service of others. As recipient of God's mercy, she saw herself as steward. Gifts given were gifts for others. Direct and practical in her response, she went out into gutter and garret to teach, to soothe and to shelter. She had discovered that her charism, her gift for others, was Mercy, a charism to the cutting edge of brokenness or imbalance.

– M. Joanna Regan and Isabelle Kiess, *Tender Courage*

“Song of Mercy” – Verse 2

Mercy is our name and calling:
Mercy is God's way and will.
Tender strength and hearts for kindness;
Simple service; faithfulness.
Such was Catherine's way and purpose,
Such our hope and daily prayer.
For the needy be compassion;
Strive for justice; live in love.

Pause for reflection

Leader

Mary Ann Scofield, RSM describes Catherine McAuley as a “woman who allowed the experiences of her life to speak to her; and she listened for ministry out of this discernment... She was quick to be flexible and quick to respond to need: all with a deep faith in the providence of God working in her and forming and re-forming her according to the changing needs of the people whom she saw around her.” (*Toward a Spirituality of Mercy*)
We who follow in her footsteps can resonate with her in our discernment of ministry in our time, both personal and communal.

For quiet reflection

Consider your own life in ministry and the changes you made out of a merciful response to human need.

Consider the Mercy communities to which you belong: How has the shape of Mercy ministries been formed and re-formed in your lifetime.

For quiet reflection and sharing

In light of the present needs of God's people, where are you noticing new ways of serving in Mercy either bubbling up or actually flowering?

In light of all that you have reflected on, to what ministerial action does God seem to be inviting you now?

Sharing

Closing Prayer

All: God of Mercy, you share your name with us and invite us to witness to your mercy in our world. In a world so in need of mercy, help us to respond with sensitivity, warmth, compassion and action. Encourage us to walk boldly in the path of mercy knowing that you journey with us as companion and guide. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Closing

"Song of Mercy" – Verse 3

Mercy then our source and seeking,
On life's journey we are graced.
Past is treasured, future trusted;
Our hearts one in jubilee.
We give thanks for one another;
We give thanks for Catherine's dream,
Guide us, keep us, lead us, love us,
God whose mercy we proclaim.