

# Reflective Prayer: Creating Circles & Culture of Mercy

**Sandra Lupi rsm (Brisbane): ‘Through the Eyes of Mercy**

*Through the eyes of Mercy, with the hands of Mercy,  
with the voices of Mercy, in the spirit of Mercy  
we are emboldened to live our lives anew,  
in Mercy and Justice to heal a hurting world.*

**Context: A culture of encounter/mercy**

Pope Francis has spoken of a ‘culture of encounter’ as a common goal, encouraging people to be fearless in the ways they look beyond themselves to the needs of others, “Faith is an encounter with Jesus, and we must do what Jesus does: encounter others,” Encounter is in some ways, a proxy for "mercy" placing the emphasis on compassion rather than judgment. We are called to not only meet Christ in the poor, but that the poor perceive Christ in us and in our actions. By being rooted in Christ’s personal experience we can contribute to a “culture of mercy” that deeply renews hearts and opens up to a new reality.

*(To prepare for our prayer, **let us take a quiet moment** with this poem by Australian poet, Noel Davis)*

**Video : “A Graceful Seduction”**

<https://www.emmausproductions.com/vimeo-video/a-graceful-seduction-episode-1-thought-for-the-day/>

*Come into the quiet And be gracious with time  
And with yourself  
Take off your thoughts  
Anxieties, expectations  
And lay them aside  
Ease into the silence  
And surrender to the stillness  
Lose yourself in being...*

**Reflective Readings:** *(you may like to choose one or more of the readings for reflection)*

- Mercy is a mode of relationship, not a momentary or sporadic feeling. It is, rather, a habit of the mind and heart, a way of organizing and interpreting the world. It is an enduring approach to the world. And, like any relationship, it is a two-way-street.

- We are invited to work for “a culture of encounter”, in a simple way, “as Jesus did”: not just seeing, but looking; not just hearing, but listening; not just passing people by, but stopping with them; not just saying “what a shame, poor people!”, but allowing ourselves to be moved with compassion...
- To encounter another person is to experience the grace of the living God. To encounter a living-breathing friend, to embrace a child, or to share a meal with a hungry person is to have an experience which is in essence the way which we encounter the intangible and invisible God.
- True compassion addresses the root causes of suffering and also asks questions about our unconscious complicity in those structures.
- When we are rooted in our relationship with God, our deeds of mercy and compassion concretely express God’s mercy.

### Song

**Through the Eyes of Mercy** (Song commissioned by the Sisters of Mercy Brisbane to commemorate 160 years of service.)

<https://vimeo.com/568283379>



What does the Lord require of you  
but to do justice and to love kindness  
and to walk humbly with your God?

*Through the eyes of Mercy, with the hands of mercy  
with the voices of Mercy, in the spirit of Mercy  
we are emboldened to live our lives anew,  
in Mercy and Justice to heal a hurting world.*

I was hungry and you gave me food.  
I was thirsty and you gave me drink.  
I was a stranger, yet you invited me in.

*Through the eyes of Mercy, with the hands of Mercy,  
with the voices of Mercy, in the spirit of Mercy  
we are emboldened to live our lives anew,  
in Mercy and Justice to heal a hurting world.*

In Mercy and Justice, in Mercy and Justice,  
in Mercy and Justice, in Mercy and Justice,  
Amen

Words and music, Timothy Sherlock  
*Micah 6:8 Matthew 25:35-40*

## Prayers of Intercession

### Opening Prayer

O Holy Spirit, you are the mighty way in which everything that is in the heavens, on the earth, and under the earth, is penetrated with connectedness, penetrated with relatedness. (Hildegard). Be with us as we gather one in heart and spirit and pray for all those in need of your mercy.

Mercy calls us to be protectors of human life, promoters of human dignity, defenders of the poor and seekers of the common good.

*~ Compassionate God, pour out your mercy upon us*

God, who is “rich in mercy,” draws us ever closer to God’s own heart, making our hearts one with God’s.

*~ Compassionate God, pour out your mercy upon us*

Plunged into the world’s suffering, we rely on God’s abundant and continual flow of mercy to us and through us which then pours itself out upon those who suffer.

*~ Compassionate God, pour out your mercy upon us*

For all who seek a kind word, a gentle compassionate look or the patient hearing of their sorrows, we pray:

*~ Compassionate God, pour out your mercy upon us*

### Closing Prayer

May the God, *whose mercy is the force that reawakens us to new life and instills in us the courage to look to the future with hope* bless us and empower us to fill the world with God’s justice and mercy. Amen

### Song:

<https://soundcloud.com/mercyworld/pour-out-compassion-and-mercy-1>

**POUR OUT COMPASSION AND MERCY** (Mechthild of Magdeburg)

1. Pour out compassion and mercy from the depths of your heart.  
And give to the poor and the broken, the service of your love.

**Ref: In so far as you do these holy deeds, with all the love of your soul.  
Then you will resemble me, your God, and I will make you whole.**

2. If you seek out and find the stranger and comfort the lonely of heart.  
And offer them your friendship, then my justice you impart. Ref.

1. So pour out compassion and mercy from the depths of your heart; And give to the poor and the broken, the service of your love. Ref.

[From Woman’s Song of God by Sr. Briege O’Hare OSC.]

## **A Blessing** (Adapted from Benedictus by John O'Donohue )

May the wonders of the earth call us forth and set our feet free in the pastures of possibilities.

May we always trust the urgency and wisdom of our own spirit.

May the Spirit inspire in us a new generosity and so encourage us to engage in life as a great adventure.

**All : Amen**

### **References**

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What Pope Francis Means By a Culture of Encounter, July 1, 2015, By Thomas J. Eggleston

*Heart Gone Walkabout* by Noel Davis Shekinah Creative Centre Emmaus Productions, 1991

Woman's Song of God composed by Briege O'Hare osc, Sung by Marie Cox rsm

Morning and Evening Prayer of the Sisters of Mercy - Feasts of the Sisters of Mercy

Through the Eyes of Mercy Words and music, Timothy Sherlock

*Benedictus* John O'Donohue