

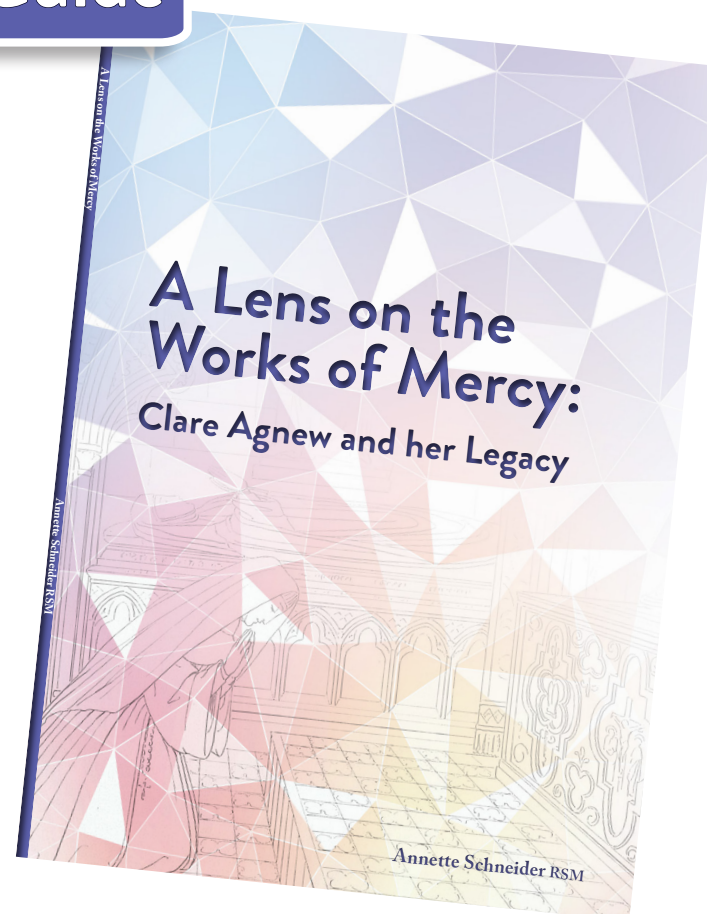
Learning and Teaching Guide

The activities suggested in this Learning and Teaching Guide to accompany *A Lens on the Works of Mercy: Clare Agnew and her Legacy* are designed to supplement current curriculum guides in use for senior students. Each educational jurisdiction will have its own way of documenting the key areas of the Curriculum, with related Learning Outcomes and Assessment Tasks. The learning activities suggested here can be incorporated into Religious Education, Social Studies, History, Languages, Literature, Visual or Performing Arts and Integrated Studies programs. They could also be adapted for inclusion in local Community Service and Mission Outreach activities.

A Lens on the Works of Mercy: Clare Agnew and her Legacy begins with a brief overview of the contents and then is organized around four main sections:

1. An introduction to Clare Agnew (Elizabeth Constantia);
2. Background to 'The Illustrations of the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy';
3. Exploration of each of the 16 sketches; and
4. Consideration of Clare Agnew's legacy.

Take time to read the book first before deciding which activities are more likely to engage the students and meet the desired learning objectives. As you are reading the text, ideas will likely 'jump



out' at you! If you are team-teaching and working as part of an Integrated Studies program it may be helpful to share ideas and do some initial planning together so that your students benefit from a range of possible approaches.

If you are operating within an already crowded curriculum, there may be ways of incorporating the book into a program of guided reading for a particular subject. An invitation can be given to the reader to keep a journal and prepare a piece of reflective writing in response to parts of the book which were significant.

Section 1: Learning activities associated with 'Introducing Clare Agnew (Elizabeth Constantia)'

1. A timeline of key events in Clare Agnew's life could be developed and be represented in a traditional format or in an Infographic. If the timeline were divided into a small number of sections, small groups of learners could undertake historical research to document other significant events or developments happening around the same time in England, Ireland, France and other countries. Such an activity situates Clare's life in the broader historical, political and religious context of the time.
2. A study of the novel 'Oliver Twist' by Charles Dickens would shed light on the conditions in Bermondsey when Clare was working there in 1837-38 and on her return as a Sister of Mercy at the end of 1839. The description of Jacob's Island in the novel could be used as the basis for an interview with some of the characters in the novel, such as Oliver himself, or Nancy, or Bill Sykes or with Clare Agnew as someone who knew the area very well too. Learners could write the script and then conduct the interviews and record them as part of a communications project.
3. As a creative writing task, the character of Sr Mary Clare Agnew could be written into a scene from 'Oliver Twist'. Small groups could decide on an appropriate 'plot', draft the text for the new scene and then dramatise it for the larger group.
4. Another small group could investigate what that part of Bermondsey is like today and report on the changes which have taken place and identify the current challenges people in the area are facing (e.g. poor people being 'pushed out' by property developers wanting to attract rich investors). There are still Sisters of Mercy living and working in Bermondsey so contact could be made with them via their website or an onsite visit to their Heritage Centre could be arranged for groups visiting London.
5. Making the decision to convert from one faith tradition to another is usually done after careful consideration of a range of factors. There may be learners in the group who have made such a step and who would be willing to speak about it in a respectful environment at an appropriate time. A study of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults within the Catholic Church may be appropriate.
6. This activity may be more appropriate as an 'extension activity' for more advanced Literature students. Clare Agnew wrote a number of novels which are listed in the book. Copies of some of them could be located and a study of pre-selected passages could be done. If any of the volumes of Geraldine were selected, research into the genre of 'Conversion novels' could be undertaken and the selected passages could be translated into more contemporary language as part of a senior language programme. Characters from Geraldine could be compared with characters in selected novels by Jane Austen.



Section 2: Learning activities associated with the background to The Illustrations of the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy

1. Small groups could conduct some research into Charles Dolman, the publisher, Alfred Freebairn, the engraver, and St Peter Nolasco who founded the Military and Religious Order of Our Lady of Mercy. A brief report on each person could be presented to the larger group.
2. The lists of the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy are written in English in this section of the book. These lists could be translated into the languages of those represented in the class or into other language(s) being studied by the students. A list of Works of Mercy in different languages could be prepared and displayed in a suitable location in the school.

Section 3: Additional learning activities associated with an exploration of the 16 sketches

For each of the 16 sketches in the book, a double page of information relating to the particular sketch is provided and suggestions for contemplation and action are offered. Some of the suggestions offered in the book can be adapted for small group work as appropriate.

1. Dr Jacinta Prunty features in two Youtube clips which can be used to 'set the scene' for researching the historical background to the sketches. Clip 1 gives an overview of the complex web of factors affecting the poor in Ireland around the time Clare did her sketches. Clip 2 relates in particular to the sketch 'Sheltering the homeless'. Preview them before showing the clips so you can give the viewers some points to consider.

Youtube Clip 1: (September 13, 2017); Dublin slums 1800-1925 (31 mins 10 sec);

Youtube Clip 2: (April 29, 2013) Jacinta Prunty on the origins of the Dublin Housing crisis (3 mins 12 secs).

2. There are 16 sketches so activities could be done in four small groups (working with 4 sketches each) or 8 small groups (working with 2 sketches each) or 16 groups (with one sketch each). Feedback from each group's learning can then be provided to the whole group.

Each group could locate the reference material cited in the 'Behind the scene ...' and 'In our time ...' sections and find out additional information in relation to the particular work(s) of mercy allocated to the group. A roster could be organized for their additional learning to be shared with the class e.g. as a prayer focus during Religious Education classes.

3. As part of this activity, the brief descriptor of the work of mercy given in the book could be translated into the languages represented within the student group.
4. Visual arts students could be commissioned to design and produce a contemporary set of the 16 sketches. They could be unveiled at a significant occasion in the school or college.
5. Performing arts students could be commissioned to depict the works of mercy in a contemporary context through music, movement and dance. It could be premiered at a significant school or college function.

Section 4: Learning activities associated with consideration of Clare Agnew's legacy

1. Copies of the four addresses given by Pope Francis (2016 b; 2016 c; 2016 d and 2017) referred to in this section of the book, and listed in the References, can be found online. In four groups (one address per group), students could read the short address in full (most are an A4 page in length), agree on its key messages for young people and prepare a poster presentation, a song or a video clip to convey the Pope's message in a way which engages their student group.
2. The Mercyworld website (<https://www.mercyworld.org/about/works-of-mercy/>) contains a section titled 'Works of Mercy'. Individually or in small groups, students can view the online material relating to the 15 sketches and read the contemporary story about each work of mercy. Note that the final sketch in the book - 'to pray for the living' - is not currently on the mercyworld website as 'to pray for the living and the dead' have been combined.
3. A contemporary expression of these works of mercy being undertaken within the school or college could be developed through a series of photographs and brief descriptors or stories. These can be displayed in a prominent place for a significant occasion e.g. on the school Feast day or Founder's day or on the feast of Our Lady of Mercy on September 24.

There are endless possibilities ...

As a teacher and 'leading learner', you know the range of abilities and interests amongst the other learners with whom you work. You also know the resources and length of time available to you when you are considering the most effective way to integrate this resource *A Lens on the Works of Mercy: Clare Agnew and her Legacy* into the curriculum via your Learning and Teaching Plan. The suggestions offered in this Guide are designed to give the students and other readers of the book a deeper understanding of the works of mercy and their expression in our lives today. Hopefully they provide an impetus for the development of a range of creative ways of engaging with these works. If that happens for you, your colleagues and the other learners with whom you interact, it will have achieved its purpose.

Annette Schneider RSM.

