

# REMEMBRANCE DAY

*Celebrating the life of Catherine McAuley*



## Prayer Service:

*We remember the death of Catherine McAuley on November 11, 1841. We look to the future of Mercy with hope.*

## Knowing Catherine

*Adapted from Constitutions of the Sisters of Mercy of Ireland, p5*

Catherine McAuley, a woman of prayer and compassion, opened the house on Baggot Street in 1827. She died there, in an upstairs room, around 7.30pm on November 11, 1841. Today, we gather as a global Mercy community, as people of prayer and compassion, in remembrance of her life, in gratitude for her legacy, and in prayerful hope as we look towards the future of Mercy.

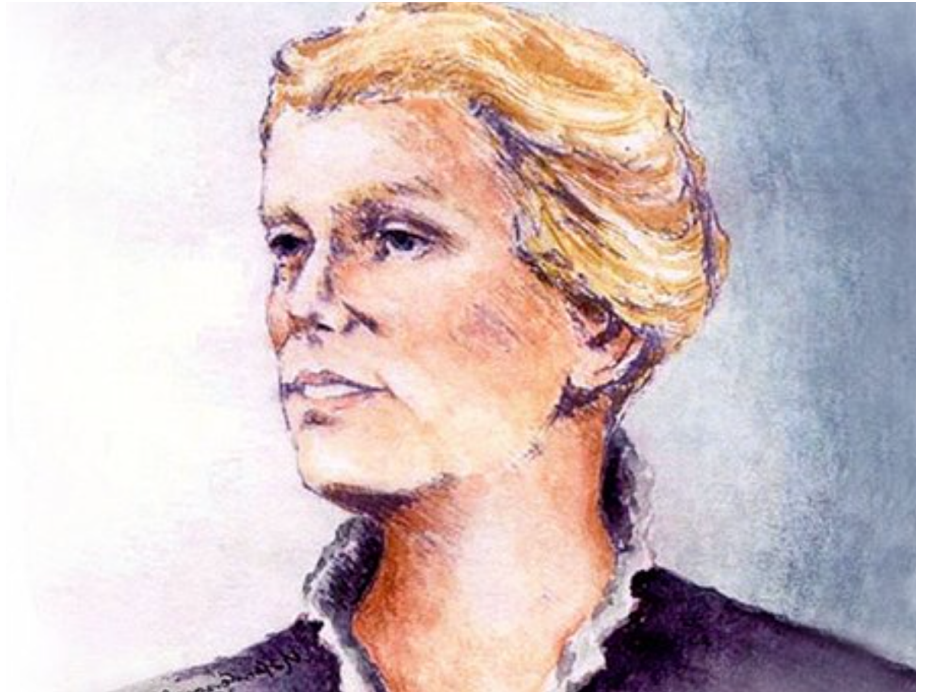
At the end of her life, looking to the future, Catherine said, *"If the Order is my work, the sooner it falls to the ground the better; if it is God's work it needs no one."* In the ten years of her religious life, Mother Catherine founded ten convents in Ireland and two in England. Since then the Sisters of Mercy have spread to many corners of the world:

to North America (New Foundland) in 1842  
to Australia (Perth) in 1846  
to South America (Buenos Aires) in 1856  
to Africa (Bechuanaland) in 1896, and  
to Asia (India) in 1953.

As we pause in gratitude today, on the anniversary of Catherine's death, let us also take time to listen to the new seeds of Mercy that God may be sowing in our hearts.

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*"Shall we all meet in  
heaven? O what joy to  
even think of it."*



## Opening Prayer

May the God of strength be with us, holding us in strong-fingered hands; and may we be the sacrament of God's strength to those whose hands we hold.

May the God of peace be with us, stilling our hearts when they hammer with fear or doubt or confusion; and may the warm mantle of God's peace cover those who are troubled or anxious.

May the God of dreams be with us. With all the dreamers - like Catherine - who have gone before, may we come to trust in God's dream for us. May we open ourselves to become what God envisioned at our birth and may we have the courage to live into the reflection of God that we are.

## Scripture Reading: Ephesians 4:1-6

I, therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

## Poetry Reflection

*From New and Selected Poems and Prayers by Mary Wickham rsm*

### SEEK

Seek the holy ground -  
seek the holy ground  
of need  
where with the lonely,  
the loony and the bruised  
I wait.  
I wait  
with,  
for,  
compassion:  
the hand, the ear, the voice  
of compassion.  
Seek and stand the holy ground.

### ALLOW

Allow the light  
is all  
the call implores.  
Allow the light  
to flood  
the heart,  
to flow  
the veins,  
to fill  
the space  
that craves.  
Allow the light  
is all.  
The light is all.  
The light  
Is

## Quiet Reflection

What spoke to your heart as you read one or both of these poems?

Allow the poets to dialogue with one another and notice where the Spirit is whispering to you.

What new seeds of Mercy is God drawing your attention to?

## Universal Prayer

On this 180th anniversary of Catherine McAuley's death, we remember her and all those who have given their lives in service to others, and so we pray:

*We are yours, O God, for time and eternity.*

We pray for each of us, that we may be an influence for good on this earth:

*We are yours, O God, for time and eternity.*

We pray for hearts free from anxiety and fear and full of self-surrender:

*We are yours, O God, for time and eternity.*

We pray for trust in God's providence during times of doubt and difficulty:

*We are yours, O God, for time and eternity.*

We pray for all people who are nearing the time of their own death, that the hope of eternal life will comfort them:

*We are yours, O God, for time and eternity.*

We pray for Sisters of Mercy and the Mercy community throughout the world, that Catherine's life and death may continue to call each of us to embrace the spirit of hospitality and service:

*We are yours, O God, for time and eternity.*

## Closing Blessing

God of the living and the dead, through the power of Christ's resurrection you have conquered sin and death forever. Catherine McAuley reminded us that each day is a step we take towards eternity. May we continue from day to day taking each step thoughtfully and in gratitude, mindful of its impact on our eternal journey to You.

May we be blessed and animated by God's own divine Spirit, proving that it is Jesus Christ we love and serve with our whole hearts.

May the love of God be above us to overshadow us, beneath us to uphold us, before us to guide us, behind us to protect us, close beside us and within us to make us able for all things, and to reward our faithfulness with the joy and peace which the world cannot give - neither can it take away.

**Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.**

