



MERCY
GLOBAL
PRESENCE

Facilitators Guide: Mercy and the Displacement of Persons

Guiding Group

A suggested structure for each Session is:

1. Preparation of the Focus Space
2. Prayer
3. Introduction
4. Content Explored
5. Reflection and Discussion
6. Closing

As this is the third theme of the second Segment, most groups will have already met for one or more sessions and so will be familiar with the process and [the microsite](#).

One of the outcomes of the [Mercy International Reflection Process](#) (MIRP), precursor to this process, was the focus on two **often intersecting** themes: (i) displacement of persons and degradation of Earth. Last month, in Mercy Global Presence (theme two) we focussed on 'Mercy and the Degradation of Earth'. This month, our focus is 'Mercy and the Displacement of Persons'.

Each week in [Mercy eNews](#), the online newsletter of Mercy International Association and on our website [here](#), we share stories of how and where Mercy people are heeding 'the cry of Earth and the cry of the Poor' and responding to needs with justice, in mercy. We tell '*Stories that build up, not tear down; stories that help us rediscover our roots and the strength needed to move forward together...a human story that can speak of ourselves and of the beauty all around us. A narrative that can regard our world and its happenings with a tender gaze. A narrative that can tell us that we are part of a living and interconnected tapestry. A narrative that can reveal the interweaving of the threads which connect us to one another.*' (Pope Francis: [Message for the 54th World Communications Sunday](#))

Whichever presentation you, the Facilitator, or group first choose to engage with, commence your work using the introduction by Elizabeth Davis rsm. In it she reviews last month's theme, giving us the opportunity to understand the relationship with this month's theme: 'everything is connected' (*Laudato Si'* #117). Elizabeth points out that we tend to think of *globally* displaced persons, but that displaced persons are also persons *living in our midst*. Then, through first a global then a local lens, Elizabeth invites us to view some of the key challenges of our contemporary world. Many of the issues she addresses were identified by MIRP groups and are subjects chosen for exploration by the other presenters on this theme.

Once again, we offer three of many possible approaches to using resources from the theme Mercy and the Displacement of Persons, implementing the suggested structure (nos. 1-6). The approach used will depend on the needs, interests, abilities and situations of the group members. **At this present time, groups that are able to meet are using video conferencing. Our suggested approaches take account of this and of face-to-face-meetings becoming possible again in the future.**

Facilitators may, of course, use their own approach with the resources, or choose elements from these three suggested approaches to create a different approach. At the conclusion of the Session the Facilitator or another group member is encouraged to send on 'what is too good for the group to keep to themselves' to mgpfeedback@mercyinternational.ie

Example One: Distinct Voice

The Facilitator organises an online meeting room such as Zoom, Skype or Facetime. If using Zoom, the video or text of the poem could be shared using the 'Share screen' function. When face to face meetings are possible again, the Facilitator arranges for a smart television, or a data projector and laptop for the meeting place in order to screen (on a blank wall or screen) the Distinct Voice video which is a reading of the poem. Alternatively, each participant is provided with a text copy of the poem.

Create a focus space with a candle, a copy of the poem, images that depict the issue of sex trafficking (google this on the internet), a flower to represent the unique worth of this woman.

Commence the session using the Opening Prayer from the Reflective Prayer.

Six participants are invited to read a chapter aloud each. In preparation for the reading, the Facilitator invites the participants to reflect for a specified amount of time on her/his memories of being the ages of each chapter: birth until 11, 12-14 years, 15-17 years, 18-20 years, beyond 20, now.

Participants could be invited to share with the group a word or phrase summing up that age for them. Alternatively, jotting down a word or phrase for each chapter of their own lives would create a short poem of their own

Conclude the gathering with the Joyce Rupp prayer from the Reflective Prayer

Example Two: the Canaanite Woman

The presenters of both the Theological Imaginings and the Reflective Prayer have used the Gospel story of the Canaanite woman.

A session could be arranged with a focus on this text.

The Facilitator organises an online meeting room such as Zoom, Skype or Facetime. If using Zoom, the texts could be shared using the 'Share screen function'

Create a focus space with a candle, a bible opened at the passage, an image of the Canaanite woman (google this on the internet), a flower to depict the courage of this woman.

Commence the session with the Opening Prayer from the Reflective prayer.

The Theological Imaginings presentation provides an interpretation of the passage which could be read aloud as an introduction to the text. Some/all of the reflective questions from the Reflective prayer could then be used by participants for silent reflection, after which sharing could be invited in the main group. Alternatively, or in in pairs/small groups discussing these. If using Zoom, this activity could take place in breakout rooms and be followed by sharing in the whole group.

Conclude the gathering with the Joyce Rupp prayer from the Reflective Prayer, inviting one voice to read the opening line ('Companion of the Companionless', 'Home of the Homeless' etc) with the rest of the stanzas said aloud together. If using Zoom, it might be beneficial to mute all readers except the person reading the first lines.

Example Three: Reflective Prayer

The Facilitator organises an online meeting room such as Zoom, Skype or Facetime. If using Zoom, the text of the prayer could be shared using the 'Share screen' function.

When face to face meetings are possible again, the Facilitator arranges for a smart television, or a data projector and laptop for the meeting place in order to screen (on a blank wall or screen) should one of the suggested opening songs be used.

She/he also arranges for each member of the group to receive a copy of the prayer text.

The Context of the Reflective Prayer and the Preparation Suggestions, including the focus space, for this prayer have been provided by the presenter.

Two Gospel passages are included in the prayer and reflective questions are provided for each.

Invite two readers to prepare and read the passages. Alternatively, invite participants to take on roles of narrator, the Canaanite woman, Jesus and the Disciples (*first text*) and Narrator, Lawyer, Jesus and Samaritan (*second text*).

Following each of the readings, participants could spend time alone in silent reflection on the questions, or in in pairs/small groups discussing these. If using Zoom, this activity could take place in breakout rooms.

