



MERCY
GLOBAL
PRESENCE

Facilitators' Guide

Guiding Group

The role of the Facilitator will necessarily include organising the group's access at the session to the resources on screen or in print.

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 in this Segment, groups will have already met for one or more sessions and so will have been introduced to the Focus (Global) and be familiar with the microsite.

Whichever presentation you, the Facilitator, or group first choose to engage with, commence your work with the theme using the Introduction by Elizabeth Davis rsm which highlights the wealth of the material in last month's theme, introduces the expression 'social change' and names some of the marks of this age.

In her **Introduction**, Elizabeth Davis rsm invites us to consider what has changed for each of us personally, singling out nine areas of our lives that we might examine:
Look at your own life and the changes in recent years in your food, your clothing, your home, your prayer, your reading, your friends, your interests, your use of social media, your ministry. . . As we name some of the marks of this age – some positive and some not, I invite you to observe the realities around you.

Use this exercise in your first Session on this theme to enable participants to explore the meaning and their experience of deep social change. They might also consider if there are other areas of their lives in which there have been significant changes. The article '*20 big ways the world has changed since 1999*' in the Good Reading section could be a useful prompt for this exercise.

Julia Upton introduces her **Theological Imaginings** by sharing her long-held fascination of 'the extent to which Catherine McAuley's foundations circle the globe'. A useful visual of this is the map of the Mercy family on our Mercyworld.org website [here](#).

The **Distinct Voice** Presentation introduces us to education in South Sudan. There are three Sisters of Mercy ministering in and for South Sudan, the world's youngest country. Ailish O'Brien rsm, this month's Distinct Voice, tells of her call to go 'on mission' to South Sudan in her article written for World Mission Day 2019 and published on the Mercyworld.org website.

[Homelessness](#) is one of the six issues that emerged from the Mercy International Reflection Process (MIRP) under the theme 'Displacement of Persons'. Suzanne Browne rsm, this month's **Grassroots Minister** tells of her lived experience in London ministering with the homeless, while Angela Reed rsm presents the global perspective in her **Mercy Global Action presentation**. Last month, to mark [World Homelessness Day](#) on October 10th, Elizabeth Dowling rsm wrote a paper 'Homelessness and our Wisdom Traditions' seeking to bring homelessness into dialogue with some of our biblical and mercy wisdom traditions. That paper can be [read here](#) on our Mercyworld.org website. The theme of 'Homelessness' has been a very important part of our spiritualities', says John Haught addressing [Ecology and Christian Theology](#) in his interview in the MIRP resource series '[Voices](#)'.

Once again we offer three of many possible approaches to using resources from the theme People and Deep Social Change implementing the suggested structure (nos. 1-6). The approach used will depend on the needs, interests and abilities of the group members. 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 Approach One: Artistic Response

The Facilitator organises a smart television or a data projector and laptop for the meeting place in order to screen (on a blank wall or screen) the Artistic Response.

Commence the Session with the Opening Prayer from the Reflective Prayer
Screen the Introduction by Elizabeth Davis rsm on a smart television or using a data projector and laptop and then engage in the exercise to name some marks of this age.

Mary White rsm began her exploration of the topic 'People and Deep Social Change' by collecting words and images, both her own and from friends and colleagues, to inform her artwork.

In advance of the Session, the Facilitator could collect a number of magazines, catalogues and newspapers to be able to invite participants to search through these and tear out or cut out (if scissors are available) words and images that speak to them of the theme.

Once each participant has made a selection of items in the time allowed, the Facilitator invites them to share with one or two others their reasons for some/all of their choices.

Now screen Mary's gallery of images. Are there any similarities in the choices by participants of words and images? Invite responses from the large group.

Screen Mary's final art piece and her Artist's Statement.

If it was possible for the Facilitator to arrange for glue and scissors to be available, or brought to the Session by the participants, then they could work on creating their final piece, including their Artist's Statement. If it is not possible, then that could be completed at home. If the group is a continuing group, they could be invited to bring their finished work to their next gathering for display.

Conclude the Session with the Concluding Prayer from the Reflective Prayer.

Example Approach Two: Distinct Mercy Voice

Commence the Session with the Opening Prayer from the Reflective Prayer.

Screen the Introduction by Elizabeth Davis rsm on a smart television or using a data projector and laptop and then engage in the exercise to name some marks of this age.

It would be beneficial for the participants if the Facilitator could introduce the Session by giving some context on teacher training and education in South Sudan to underscore both the need for more qualified teachers and the importance of this ministry in Yambio, South Sudan.

The following resources will be helpful in preparing this overview:

Why Teacher Training in English? See: <https://www.solidarityssudan.org/what-we-do/teacher-training/>

Training Teachers in South Sudan. See: <https://maryknollmagazine.org/2019/09/solidarity-teacher-training-college-south-sudan/>

Solidarity Teacher Training College – Yambio. See: <https://www.solidarityssudan.org/origin-and-general-definition/communities/yambio/>

There are two parts to the presentation by Ailish OBrien rsm: her reflection on the invitation to be a distinct voice and the testimonies and images of the South Sudanese.

Invite participants to read the reflection first. Ailish sees 'the new' as the way in which education is being delivered:

'Sisters of Mercy have always been involved in education. That is our tradition. My ministry here in South Sudan, to assist the South Sudanese through education, is at the same time old and new. The difference is that in this place I am doing it in collaboration with lay and religious men and women, called by God from all parts of the globe, living together in a mixed, intercultural, inter-congregational community, in partnership with South Sudanese people, supported by agencies worldwide, and with the one vision of bringing about positive change in

the newest country in the world.'

Invite participants to share with the whole group their response to how the community and its ministry is structured. What are the positives of this structure? Are there any negatives?

Invite four participants to present the stories of Christine Baptist (parent), Josephine Kuol, John Dau and Tereza Peter. Depending on the size of the group, participants could be divided into four small groups, each group taking one of the stories.

The authors of the Report have highlighted the significance of the stories of the 3 educators (two trainees, Josephine and John and Terza, the graduate), while Christine Baptist shares why qualified teachers are important.

Ailish writes: *'The stories speak for themselves. There is deep social change taking place because of our work here in South Sudan.'*

Invite participants to share what they have learned about social change from these stories. What surprised them? What hadn't they considered?

Conclude the Session with the Concluding Prayer from the Reflective Prayer.

Example Approach Three: Reflective Prayer

The Facilitator organises a smart television or a data projector and laptop for the meeting place in order to screen (on a blank wall or screen) the Reflective Prayer.

The Focus space would reflect the Segment (Global), the theme (People and Deep Social Change) and could include some words, images or artefacts that represent the terms in the word wheel.

Participants are invited to take a minute [a set time] to focus on the four meanings from *Dadirri*– on awareness of where they've come from, why they are present, where they are going and where they belong. That leads into deep stillness and the playing of the track 'Benedictus'. As that is played, the image of the young woman in the shawl is screened.

One member of the group reads the Opening Prayer aloud, slowly and prayerfully.

Following this prayer, the four inspirations – from Scripture, from Pope Francis, from Catherine McAuley and from Daisaku Ikeda are read aloud reflectively and in turn by four different voices, with a pause in between each one to allow participants to absorb what they have heard.

At the conclusion of the reading of the four inspirations, following a period of silence and personal reflection, participants are invited to share with a neighbour or in a group of two or three (depending on the size of the whole group) their response to the material presented. Each small group is then invited to share with the whole group something they heard that is 'too good to keep to themselves'.

The call to action follows, introduced by the 'Song of Peace and Hope'.

Participants are invited to take a minute [a set time] to reflect on the words of the three young people. Following that, an invitation is issued to the whole group to say aloud the word or phrase from each young person in turn, that spoke to them.

Participants are invited to read the Concluding Prayer aloud, together.

The gathering comes to a close with a playing of the final song.