

Holding the Bigger Picture

In 2014 we began these monthly prayer invitations with the following preamble:

“We are reminded that in the call to Mercy the primary focus passed on to us by Catherine McAuley is to portray Christ and his Gospel of Love. Recognising the effectiveness of prayer and the ‘prayerforce’ within the Institute and beyond, we are invited to unite in a specific and focussed way.”

Each month that followed we offered a focus of global significance and invited our members, colleagues and friends to join **consciously** in the incredible ‘prayerforce’ with a purpose of focussing our prayer on the particular issue at hand. We are sure you would agree that many months, if not years, could be spent holding each of those focuses in prayer; each issue is with us still!

REFLECTION ONE

Our lives are full of times when choices and decisions must be made both as individuals and as group. As we lean into the year of 2015 with all of its brokenness and pain let us make a conscious choice together to hold in our minds and hearts the bigger picture and avoid any temptation to retract into self-centredness and small-mindedness. With this in mind, we offer for your reflection the following quote from influential African American author, philosopher, theologian, educator and civil rights leader, Howard Thurman:

**“When the song of the angel is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are departed,
When the shepherds are back with their flocks,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost
To heal the broken
To feed the hungry
To release the prisoner
To rebuild peace among us
To make music for all to hear”**

We might ask ourselves:

- **Who** around me is lost?
- **Where** do I witness brokenness?
- **Who** are the hungry and for what are they (we) hungry?
- **Who** is imprisoned?
- **How** can I best participate in rebuilding peace among us?
- **What** music is within me that I might release for the benefit of all?

REFLECTION TWO

Miriam Therese Winter, a member of the Medical Mission Sisters, penned a song quite some years ago that is both invitational and challenging for us if we are prepared to open ourselves to see “*the more*” of what is before us...the oneness of life, the beauty of creation, the untapped potential within each person, the experience of the Cosmic Christ ...and, and, and... She says:

*If you look very close, you'll see wind on the top of the hill.
If you look very close, you'll see love underneath what I will.
If you listen, you'll hear a song when the city is still.*

We look and look, but so seldom do we see.
We love, but after all, what do you know of me?

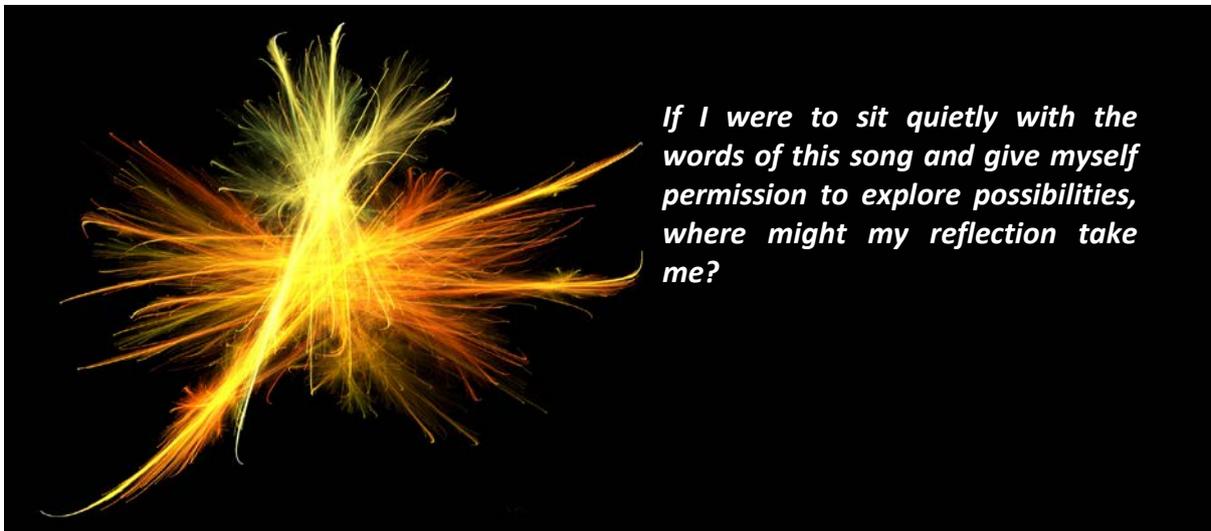
*If you look very close, you'll see clouds in the clearest of skies.
If you look very close, you'll see hunger in so many eyes.
There's a dawn every day, but it's always a lovely surprise.*

We watch and wait, but so seldom understand.
We reach, but how often extend a comforting hand.

*If you look very close, you'll see Christ on the crest of the sea.
If you look very close, you'll see Christ encompassing me.
Inside every seed is a flower that longs to be free.*

We look and look, but so seldom do we see.
We love, but after all, how did this happen to be?

Words and music: Miriam Therese Winter © Medical Mission Sisters 1968



Acknowledgements:

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