



### Theme for this week: sowing the seeds of real hope

If we can tap into the sources and seeds of hope within ourselves and assist others to do the same, we will be making an important contribution to everyone's wellbeing in the uncertain times ahead. Life has its own rhythms. Some cycles are shorter, others longer. Interventions, such as COVID 19, can break the familiar cycles and we are required to engage differently. A new opportunity presents itself!

Christians are currently marking the season of Lent, a time in the annual cycle of Church life when we are invited to refocus on what is important in our relationship with God, with others and with all of creation.

- **We pray and reflect** so we can remain centred, in an environment which is rapidly changing during these times.
- **We fast** so we can declutter and focus on what is essential and heighten our awareness of what is asked of us during these times.
- **We give alms**, so that by sharing our resources others can have what they need to survive during these times.

There are many ways, both literally and figuratively, in which we can become sources of hope for others. Mary Sullivan has this to say about the seeds of hope sown in 1830s Dublin by Catherine McAuley:

"If we wish to sow the seeds of real hope in our world, I think Catherine McAuley would say: This is the way we must do it – one person at a time: one answering of the figurative doorbell, one opening of the figurative door, one embrace of the stranger, one welcoming of the other, one sharing of our bread and milk – one person at a time. (Mary C. Sullivan, "Welcoming the stranger: the Kenosis of Catherine McAuley", *Morning and Evening Prayer of the Sisters of Mercy*, p. 929)

### A couple of suggestions:

1. While you are working from home, you might like to start (or continue) **keeping a diary**, either in hard copy or in a file you create on your computer or mobile device. For 5 minutes each day (e.g. just before you finish work for the day) you could note anything which has been significant for you or which has caught your attention during the day. You might like to jot down a few things which struck you about this week's prayer focus. There may be an image which has arisen for you or a piece of music which is significant.
2. You might like to **share a thought or an image with your work colleagues** when you phone or text or Skype someone in your team or send an email. Keeping in touch with each other is one way we can sow seeds of hope for each other.

Annette Schneider rsm  
ISMAPNG Governance Formation Coordinator