

# GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP FORMATION

**Session 4 – Engagement with the Trustee  
Directors of Mercy Ministry Companions**



INSTITUTE OF  
SISTERS *of* MERCY  
OF AUSTRALIA & PAPUA NEW GUINEA

**Carmel Ross**

**Online Governance Forum, July 2021**



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SISTERS of MERCY  
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GOVERNANCE  
LEADERSHIP  
FORMATION



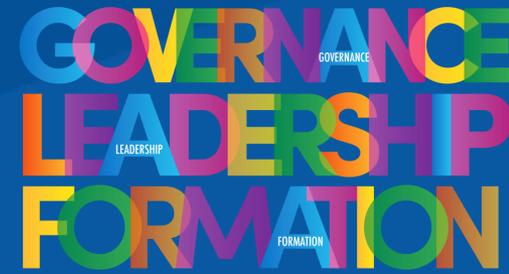
Who are you?

Where are you going?



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# Who are we?



**‘The members of the Institute** follow Catherine McAuley in seeking to advance the reign of God by engaging in the spiritual and corporal works of mercy.’ *(Constitutions J2.10)*

Sisters participate in regular formation, including retreats. Their life commitments and lifestyle differ from those of lay people, including those involved in the many Mercy ministries conducted by ISMAPNG.

**Mercy Ministry Companions** exists to foster, in its ministries, the mission of God’s Mercy in our time. Mercy-inspired ministries:

- Continue the ministry of Jesus,
- Are works of the Catholic Church,
- Evolve the Mercy tradition of Catherine McAuley,
- Respond to Jesus’ call to apostolic service.

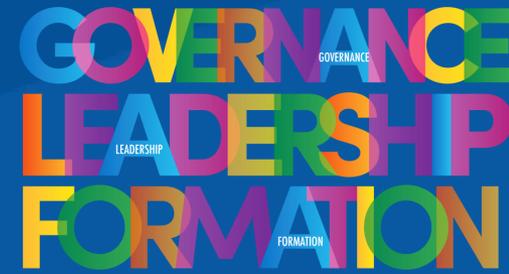
*Statement of Mission Purpose for the Future Governance Entity*

To remain true to the mission, all of us need to participate in formation that prepares us for our role and enables us to contribute with integrity in our own particular role.



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# Formation...



- ❖ Our ministries are about mission – contributing to the reign of God through our expression of the Mercy of God in all we do.
- ❖ As human beings, we are never a ‘finished product’. Always, we are taking in new experiences and being shaped by them – we’re always a ‘work in progress’ as we journey through life...
- ❖ And each of us is unique. To our roles, we bring our life experience, professional expertise, faith, values plus other qualities and characteristics that comprise our personal uniqueness.
- ❖ Formation is holistic – at its best, it is an experience that engages us in profound ways and gives us new insights into things that matter in our role.



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# What do we mean by Formation?



- ‘Formation** occurs when the person cooperates with the Holy Spirit in identifying and developing the values, relationships, skills and knowledge that will enable her/him to more fully become the person that God calls her/him to be. Formation is:
- ❖ a life-long transformative process;
  - ❖ dynamic – incorporating varying elements as the person’s mission leads them into new roles;
  - ❖ individualised – requiring each person to identify the formation activities that will best facilitate their growth; and
  - ❖ communal – both in that it can be seen as a process for a group and also in that the person is drawn closer to others (God, people and all of creation)’

*AMPJP Formation Framework for Canonical Stewards*



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# Who are we becoming?



In the new era for Mercy ministries, canonical stewards, directors, executives and management continue to embody the compassion, hospitality, integrity, care, justice, practicality and service which characterise the Mercy heritage; they are contemporary channels of Mercy. Through ongoing formation, they deepen their understanding of *the passion of Catherine McAuley* to serve those at the margins.

Mercy ministries have a commitment to excellence and innovation, to collaborations for the sake of the mission, and to *communio* within, across and beyond the ministries. Leaders of Mercy ministries use their prophetic voice to seek justice within the Church, but also in the wider society to address poverty, exclusion, inequality and vulnerability.

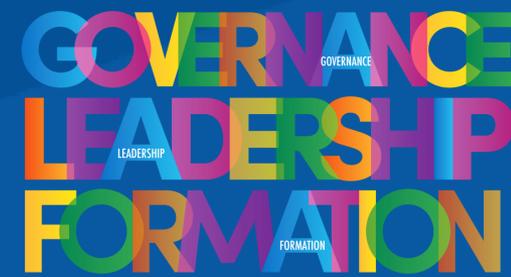
Mercy ministries promote confident, courageous and dynamic leaders ready to go to the margins to respond to the needs of the vulnerable, to hear both *the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor*. Importantly, as exemplified by Catherine, the ministries will champion female leadership within the Church and the wider community.

*Statement of Mission Purpose*



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# We're not starting with a blank page...



An immense amount of work has been done, by ISMAPNG and the individual ministries, to identify formation needs and develop resources and opportunities to respond to those needs.

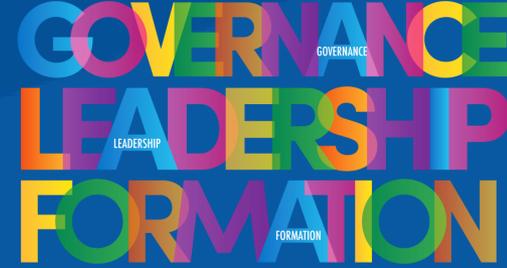
Yet, just as we are never a 'finished product', nor are our ministries. And, charism itself evolves in response to the people involved and the signs and needs of the times.

So, formation is an ongoing journey for ourselves and our ministries... a 'work in progress' ...



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# Scope of formation



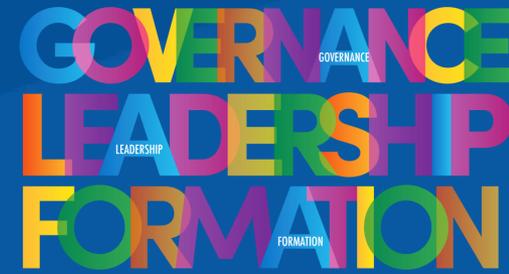
In ministerial public juridic persons and other Catholic Church ministry organisations, policies and resources are developed to ensure personnel at all levels have access to formation appropriate to their role.

The *ISMAPNG Formation Schema* covers four domains:

- ❖ One Mercy Mission
- ❖ Canonical Governance
- ❖ Ministry-specific Culture and Context
- ❖ Civil Governance

Underpinning these is our faith and the realisation that for those in governance and executive roles, we need to continue to grow in our ability to lead.

## As the Trustee-Directors get underway...



- ❖ Ongoing formation will guide us in navigating this new journey we are embarking on.
- ❖ Formation is not a ‘one size fits all’ undertaking. If we are each unique, then we will differ, perhaps considerably, in the topics, knowledge, skills, etc., we need to continue growing in.
- ❖ As well as our joint involvement in formation (e.g., with our board), we will benefit from identifying our personal needs for formation, and take steps to respond to these needs.
- ❖ So, across the ministries, staff will continue to be offered formation opportunities to support them in their roles, and potential leaders supported to undertake theology, scripture, ethics and leadership studies, and other professional learning.

**The document submitted to the Vatican identifies four content dimensions:**

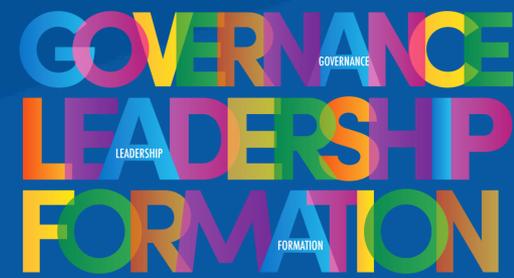
- i. The Theological component;
- ii. the Charism of Mercy;
- iii. Civil governance; and
- iv. the Ministry-Specific Culture and Context.

Also included are:

- ❖ **Structures** to be used to support formation
- ❖ **Processes**, including the Governance Formation Schema
- ❖ **Policies and procedures** to guide practices and resourcing.

*Adapted from Appendix J*

# Formation within Mercy Ministry Companions



- ❖ The four part Formation Process provides a comprehensive overview of the approach to governance formation being taken within Mercy Ministry Companions.
- ❖ It will be regularly reviewed and enhanced through the provision of appropriate resources for each Dimension of the Governance Formation Schema and through the delivery of ongoing formation programs suitable for adult learners.
- ❖ We've started. Each meeting of the Trustee-Directors will include a substantial allocation of time to formation of ourselves.
- ❖ We are fortunate to have the support of Annette and others within ISMAPNG...

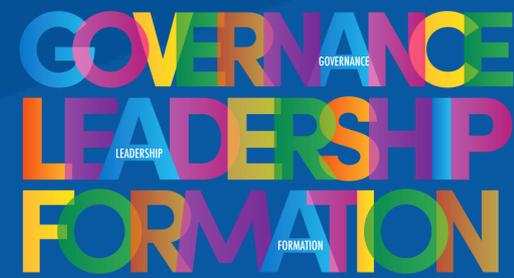


*“ ... one mercy mission ...  
... wan marimari misin ... ”*

Constitutions, Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia  
and Papua New Guinea, 4.03



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Reflecting on the two presentations:

- 1. Reflecting on Pope Francis' insights in relation to Mercy, how is Mercy manifest in your ministry?*
- 2. From your experience of ongoing formation in mercy, what kinds of experiences have been the most beneficial for you?*