

Celebrating Mercy Faith Communities

The presence of mercy alive and active has never been more important than it is today. It's powerful transformational potential frees us to celebrate life, give hope and cast out fear. It is also a call to action.

In the words of the 19th century hymn by Frederick William Faber (1814-1863)

There's a wideness in God's Mercy
like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in his justice
which is more than liberty.

***As you come to prayer recall your recent experiences of the power and presence of Mercy.
When you are ready, share something of how this made a difference.***

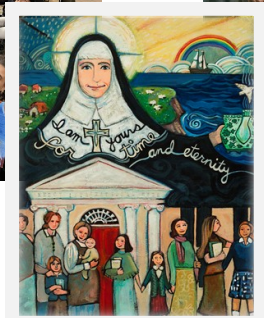
Mercy Faith Communities are communities for the World



*Paint and Sip Fundraiser organised by
Young Mercy Links South Australia*



Mercy Friends in PNG gathering donations
towards the earthquake disaster in 2023



Mercy Associates are called to live and share the mercy of God.

Take a little time of silence to allow yourself to fully appreciate all the different people and groups who are inspired and inspired by the life of Jesus and the vision and charism of Catherine McAuley, and who belong within the wideness of our mercy family.

Give thanks for all who, like Mercy Associates, share in the work of God's mercy in our world.

Let us Pray: Our World is Large

O Creator,
Our world is large, and yet the global community is so fragile.
We glimpse the needs of our sisters and brothers, and those needs are great.
We want to turn away, but you call us back.
We want simple solutions, but you want us to help solve the complex problems.
Through the gospels, you call us to listen, to learn, to reflect and to act.
Give us a deep sense of our place in this web of Creation.
Give us the wisdom of mind and generosity of heart to seek your will in the world today.
Inspire us to respond to the call of Pope Francis as he calls us to solidarity with the impoverished of the world, so that all children of God might live in dignity and peace. Amen

<http://www.educationforjustice.org>

A Reflection on the wideness of God's mercy: from a Steve Koski facebook post.

Imagine if we truly understand and live by the truth that no one wins until everyone wins. Imagine if we understand and were able to see a world where there is no "me", only "we", there is no "them", only "us". Imagine if we lived by the understanding there is no "their" children or "my" child, there is only "our" children.

A photojournalist was taking pictures of the destruction of the war in Syria when he heard a sniper's rifle. He turned and saw a child fall to the ground down the street. He rushed to her and she was being held by a man who said, "My child, my child, she's been shot. Please help!"

The photojournalist ran to get his car and helped the man and wounded child into the backseat. The man said, "My child's bleeding badly. Please hurry."

They hurried to the hospital. They rushed the child into emergency leaving the photojournalist and man pacing in the waiting room. After some time a doctor walked through the door with that look that says we did all we could but it was too late.

The man said to the photojournalist, "We must go and find this girl's father at once and tell him."

The photojournalist said, "Father? I thought you were her father. You said 'my child'?"

The man, with tears in his eyes, said, "THEY ARE ALL OUR CHILDREN."

Those are the tear-filled eyes that can heal and restore our broken world. Those are the eyes of Jesus, the eyes that understand and see they are all OUR children. It's good to be reminded of the truth that there is no "their" children. They are all our children.

In response pray together the International Prayer for Peace.

Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth

Lead us from despair to hope, from fear to trust

Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace

Let peace fill our hearts, our world, our universe

With humility and awareness, let us practice the establishment of peace in our hearts and on earth. Amen.

A reading from Scripture: Philippians 4:7-9

.. the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

"The spiritual and corporal works of mercy which draw religious (and Associates) from a life of contemplation, so far from separating them from the love of God, unite them more closely to Him and render them more valuable in His holy service."

Catherine McAuley

What spiritual and corporal works of mercy are you most drawn to?

Have you found your participation in the works of mercy and this MA faith community brought you closer to God? How?

Closing: listen to some more words from the 19th century hymn "There's a wideness in God's mercy"

*For the love of God is broader than the measure of our mind,
and the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.*

Closing Blessing: If you have dreamed the dream of mercy, help one another, that your dreams may come true.
If you have known love and kindness, give some back to a bruised and hurting world.

Go in peace.

All: AMEN

May God bless and animate you with God's own divine spirit, that you may prove it is Jesus Christ you love and serve with your whole heart.

Letter to Frances Warde October 23, 1837