

# Mercy Associates Praying The Easter Season

The essence of the Easter Mystery is the merciful love of God.

It is said that the English word Easter comes from an older German word for 'east', which comes from an even older Latin word for 'dawn'. The sun rising in the East, bringing light, warmth, and hope has become an image for the Christian of the rising Christ, the true light of the world. However Easter is more than just a one-day event that marks the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is a season in which disciples discover this mystery.

The invitation of this prayer time is to be attentive to Easter as a season in which we depth our awareness of how we live as a follower of the risen Christ.

## Gathering Song: Morning Has Broken

Morning has broken, like the first morning  
Blackbird has spoken, like the first bird  
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning  
Praise for them springing fresh from the Word

Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from Heaven  
Like the first dew fall, on the first grass  
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden  
Sprung in completeness where His feet pass

Mine is the sunlight, mine is the morning  
Born of the One Light Eden saw play  
Praise with elation, praise every morning  
God's re-creation of the new day

Morning has broken, like the first morning  
Blackbird has spoken, like the first bird  
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning  
Praise for them springing fresh from the Word.

## *A Reading:*

'How quietly the great God does  
all his mighty works; darkness is spread  
over us and light breaks in again, and there  
is no noise of drawing curtains  
or closing shutters'.

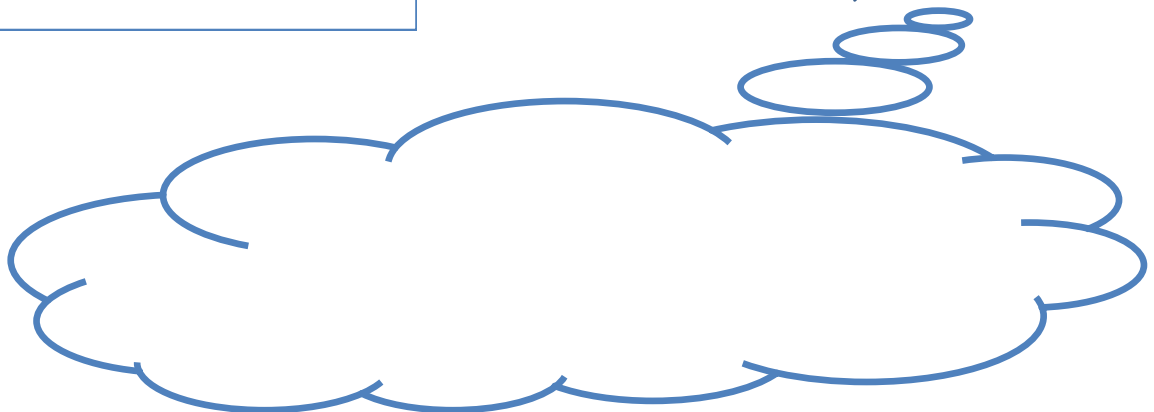
From Limrick Manuscript, in Sullivan, Catherine McAuley  
and the Tradition of Mercy, p. 174

## *Reflect in silence for a few minutes:*

Have you experienced a sunrise? A sun shower?  
A lightbulb moment? New life?  
The merciful love of God breaking into  
your life as light in darkness?

What was it like?

*Journal your thoughts and awarenesses in the  
cloud below:*



*After you have written share your thoughts and reflections together.*

**Take time with Scripture.** Perhaps choose just one to focus on today and save one for another time ...

### **Acts 2:42-47 The Fellowship of the Believers**

The early Christian community was devoted to apostolic teachings, fellowship, sharing meals, and prayer. United, they shared resources and supported the needy. Our Mercy Associate faith sharing communities also give and receive the love and mercy of God through active and spiritual works of mercy.

**What is it you value about your MAF Community?**

### **John 20:19-31 Jesus appears to the disciples, and to Thomas**

Like these early Christians we share faith and the invitation to discipleship, that is renewed each year in the Easter season. We have witnessed Christ's Resurrection and the light coming again into the world especially where there is suffering and darkness. We trust God's mercy and forgiveness present in everything and find ourselves open to beauty and joy and experiences of unexpected new life and hope. We are reminded again that our faith, tested by trials, is precious. Like Thomas, we may struggle with doubt and uncertainty, but with trust in Jesus, God's merciful love, we receive the peace and joy that comes from knowing the risen Christ. Our commitment to live and share the merciful love of God has the power to overcome doubt and fear.

**As disciples of the risen Christ we walk mercy  
balancing action and contemplation ..**



**'We have one solid comfort amidst this little tripping about: our hearts can always be in the same place, centred in God, for whom alone we go forward and stay back.'**

**'Let us take one day only in hand, at a time ... thus may we hope to go on taking short careful steps not great strides.'**

*From letters of Catherine to M. de Salzs White*

How do you balance action and contemplation in your life? Are you called in this Easter season to give this balance your attention?

**Closing Prayer: May you be blessed with joy and beauty as you walk the way of God's merciful love.**

### **A Blessing for Beauty**

May the beauty of your life become more visible to you, that you may glimpse your wild divinity.

May the wonders of the earth call you forth from all your small, secret prisons and set your feet free in the pastures of possibilities.

May the light of dawn anoint your eyes that you may behold what a miracle a day is.

May the liturgy of twilight shelter all your fears and darkness within the circle of ease.

May the angel of memory surprise you in bleak times with new gifts from the harvest of your vanished days.

May you allow no dark hand to quench the candle of hope in your heart.

May you discover a new generosity towards yourself, and encourage yourself to engage your life as a great adventure.

May the outside voices of fear and despair find no echo in you.

May you always trust the urgency and wisdom of your own spirit.

May the shelter and nourishment of all the good you have done, the love you have shown, the suffering you have carried, awaken around you to bless your life a thousand times.

And when love finds the path to your door may you open like the earth to the dawn, and trust your every hidden color towards its nourishment of light.

May you find enough stillness and silence to savor the kiss of God on your soul and delight in the eternity that shaped you, that holds you and calls you.