

Advent Ritual



*'It is as though the whole creation is standing on tiptoe
longing to see an unforgettable vision...'*

~ Romans 8:19

Mercy Place

9 December 2017

Acknowledgement of Country

Margaret Cheers rsm

This ancient land was here
in its silences and its sounds of life
long before history was written,
held carefully in its dreaming.

*All: Here, an ancient people,
belonged to this land, our mother,
custodians of its rhythms of life,
loving it, dreaming with it,
listening to its voices
and reading its subtle messages.*



We acknowledge the Turrbal, Jagera,
Quandamooka and Gubbi Gubbi people,
as the traditional custodians
of the waters and land
from which we have travelled
and on which we gather today.

*All: We pay our respects to them
and honour their links
with all creation.
Together may we walk in a spirit
of justice and reconciliation.*



Call to Gather

Angela Mary Doyle rsm

Mysterious God, creating cosmos,
universe, and planet,
whose word has called us into being:

All: We come in awe!

Aware that time past
is part of time present we come,
celebrating the gospel of mercy
shared with Catherine McAuley,
Ellen Whitty, our founding Sisters,
Jane Gorry and all women and men of Mercy:

*All: We come, rejoicing in their vision,
which is a source of blessing for all!*



Into the presence of our God
whose transforming Spirit
stirs within us
and touches our hearts
with tenderness and compassion:

*All: We come in hope and joy,
celebrating life!*

Sign of the Cross

We make the Sign of the Cross,
remembering our baptism,
Jesus' call to life, the promise of hope,
and glory of God's creation.

*All: In the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.*



Lighting of the Candle

We are called continually into the beauty
of God's creation,
out of darkness
into God's marvelous light.



Remembering,
we light this candle,
symbol of Christ present among us.

please light the candle at your table

Introduction

Patricia Kirchner rsm

Last December, we gathered on our Advent journey and reflected on the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy, notably the inclusion of *Care for Our Common Home*, the 8th Work of Mercy, as proclaimed by Pope Francis.



We were

*Called to contemplate God's world
gratefully.*

*Called to being open to God's teaching in
each created thing.*

*Called to valuing the natural world and
promoting ecological action.*

*Called to awareness of our personal carbon
footprint.*

*Called to spending time in prayer and
contemplation of Earth's beauty.*

paraphrase Laudato Si # 214,85,230-31



*In looking at the Works of Mercy as a whole,
we see that the object of mercy is life itself...
everything it embraces... human life and
care for our common home.*

Pope Francis

Today we have the opportunity for reflection
on our personal response to the 8th *Work of
Mercy* in our life across the year.

In silence, for the next 10 minutes, you may
wish to record your reflections in the space
provided.

This will be followed by time of table sharing.



My Reflections:

Sharing

Patricia Kirchner rsm

You are invited to entrust your reflections to your table companions for about 10 – 15 minutes.



Prayer Response

Our time of reflection and sharing
has offered us the opportunity
for silence and listening,
an invitation into the mysteries of God
present among us in our daily lives.

May the sharing of the joys, complexity,
sorrows, challenges and ambiguity of our lives
encourage us to hope and gratitude.

*All: Wondrous God,
we thank you for these signs of your love
in our lives.*

*God- who- visits,
we thank you for speaking your Word,
Jesus Christ, to us.*

*He is Your Word of love,
coming to birth within us,
the hope to which we cling.*

Amen.



God Beyond All Names

(Bernadette Farrell)

God, beyond our dreams,
You have stirred in us a memory.
You have placed your powerful Spirit
In the hearts of humankind.

*All around us we have known you,
All creation lives to hold you.
In our living and our dying
We are bringing you to birth.*

God, beyond all names,
You have made us in your image.
We are like you, we reflect you.
We are woman, we are man.

*All around us we have known you,
All creation lives to hold you.
In our living and our dying
We are bringing you to birth.*



Advent Reflection

Advent requires that we prepare to do some birthing of the reign of God in our lives.

Joan Chittister

Catherine Reuter rsm

As we continue our sacred journey through Advent to Christmas we turn once again to words of Scripture that shape our faith, hope and love.

Today's Advent reading gives us the beautiful vision of creation straining forward, on tiptoe, eagerly waiting for deliverance, for birth, longing to be caught up in God's plan for its wholeness.

With open hearts let us enter into this listening moment.



The Word of God

Mary Johnson rsm

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans

It appears to me that whatever we suffer now will show up only dimly when compared to the wonders God has in store for us. It is as though all creation is standing on tiptoe longing to see an unforgettable vision, the children of God being born into wholeness.

Although creation is unfinished, still in the process of being born, it carries within a secret hope. And the hope is this: A day will come when we will be rescued from the pain of our limitation and incompleteness and be given our share in a freedom that can only belong to the children of God.



At the present moment all creation is struggling as though in the pangs of childbirth. And that struggling creation includes even those of us who have had a taste of the Spirit.

We peer into the future with our limited vision, unable to see all that we are destined to be, yet believing because of a hope we carry so deep within.

A paraphrase of Romans 8:18-25

Silent Reflection

Reflection on the Reading

Catherine Reuter rsm



Song

God Beyond All Names

(Bernadette Farrell)

God, beyond all words,
All creation tells your story.
You have shaken with our laughter,
You have trembled with our tears.

*All around us we have known you,
All creation lives to hold you.
In our living and our dying
We are bringing you to birth.*

God, beyond all time,
You are labouring within us;
We are moving, we are changing
In your Spirit ever new.

*All around us we have known you,
All creation lives to hold you.
In our living and our dying
We are bringing you to birth.*



God of tender care,
You have cradled us in goodness,
You have mothered us in wholeness,
You have loved us into birth.

*All around us we have known you,
All creation lives to hold you.
In our living and our dying
We are bringing you to birth.*

The Gift of Presence

*We are always called to pray beyond the
boundaries of our homes and lives.
Praying for others keeps us alert
to the ways we reveal God's love
in practical, tangible ways.*

Pope Francis



Explanation of prayer card activity

Catherine Reuter rsm

Take a card from your table.

You are called to compassionate contemplation (being with) one or more groups listed on your card. See what may be difficult to see.

Write your prayer response on the card.

If you have time, write a simple practical response you can make that seeks to build a better world.

Share your prayer response with table companions (optional)

Prayer focus



Being with

Someone who needs you
Someone who is in pain
World leaders

A homeless person
Indigenous communities
An older person

Someone who nurtures Earth
Those who have walked the path of Mercy
Those suffering addiction

Someone advocating for justice
Those working for reconciliation
Your loved ones

Children/families at risk
A person you find difficult
Those in conflict over use of resources
of our fragile environment e.g. farmers, miners

A person who gives you hope
Someone terminally ill
Church leaders and all people of God



Families/communities who are struggling
Those without employment
Refugees and displaced persons

Those suffering mental illness
Carers, health professionals, educators
Prisoners

Victims of crime and accident
Emergency Services personnel
Those vulnerable to radicalization

Victims of abuse and perpetrators
Religious fanatics
Those who die unloved and forgotten

Family and friends who have died
Those who defend us
Cooks, cleaners, garbage collectors,
mechanics, office workers

Those who participate in
international bodies e.g. U.N.
Scientists, creators, writers
Politicians



Sharing of prayer at table

Concluding Prayer

Ever present God,
You call us to pray beyond the boundaries
of our homes and lives
and so we offer you,
the spoken and unspoken prayers
of our hearts, through Jesus, your Son
and our brother.

All: Amen.



Commissioning of Pastoral Companions

Mary Lawson rsm

Introduction

Today we acknowledge the twenty-two women who continue to fulfil their roles as Pastoral Companions to our Sisters who are resident in MCS - Aged Care Services. You were commissioned in October last year.

As we continue to respond to the needs of our Sisters resident in Aged Care, we now commission another seven Sisters –

**Peta Goldberg, Claire Irving, Patricia Kirchner,
Joan Morrissy, Elizabeth O'Connell,
Pauline Smoothy and Jill Stringer.**

And now we pray

Faithful God
breathe your spirit today on these women
commissioned to be Companion Sisters.



*All: Grace them, we pray, with
a new sense of your mystery,
a new experience of your presence,
a new commitment to your gospel
as they embrace this ministry
with our Sisters.*

*We ask this in the name of Jesus
who through your Spirit
empowers and renews us.*

Amen.

*Each pastoral companion
is presented with her letter of appointment and
her identification
to wear within Mercy Aged Care Service*



Response of Pastoral Companions

*I accept the privilege and responsibility
of my role as Pastoral Companion.
May my companioning be grounded
in acceptance, respect and encouragement
as we share Faith, Love and Compassion.*

Response of the Community

*All: Sisters,
encouraged by the witness
of your life as a Pastoral Companion
may we each continue the work
of the Gospel
courageously, compassionately
and without reserve.*



Gifts with Calendar of Hope

Mary Lawson rsm

Mary Pescott rsm



Benediction

Catherine Reuter rsm

On tiptoe we stand, Lord Jesus
eagerly awaiting your full revelation
always expecting you
to come some more.

*All: Our hands and hearts
are open to your grace.
Our lives still waiting for
the fullness of your presence.*

We are those who have been promised
a kingdom, and we can never forget.
Yet we have a foot in both worlds
and so we stumble.



*All: But still we stand on tiptoe
owning our kingdom-loving hearts
and our earth-eyes.
We lean forward
and hope.*

May God, Source of Hope,
Jesus, Pattern of Hope,
The Spirit, Inspirer of Hope,
bless us.

All: Amen!

In song, we entrust the life of all humanity,
Earth, the Church, and the entire cosmos to
Christ.



Song

Be Glad, O People

Gregory Norbet (Weston Priory)

I will never forget you, O my people;
On the day of anguish I will answer you.
As you join in celebration,
My joy will move among you.

*Be glad, O people of the earth!
Lift up your heart with song and dance,
For I am with you, yes, within you, forever:
You are the heart of my heart.*

You shall find a land to be your home,
Where sheep and cattle may freely roam,
Mountains from which springs
Shall flow with living waters.



*Be glad, O people of the earth!
Lift up your heart with song and dance,
For I am with you, yes, within you, forever:
You are the heart of my heart.*

I will make your faith burn brightly,
So that others may find life's fullness:
Freedom for all captives
And justice for all nations.

*Be glad, O people of the earth!
Lift up your heart with song and dance,
For I am with you, yes, within you, forever:
You are the heart of my heart.*

No longer will the circle of your life,
Its pain and goodness
Be just for yourself:
Your gift to share will flower.



*Be glad, O people of the earth!
Lift up your heart with song and dance,
For I am with you, yes, within you, forever:
You are the heart of my heart.*

As you work for others' freedom,
With a seed of hope within you,
Hunger shall not harm you,
Nor thirst withdraw your courage.

*Be glad, O people of the earth!
Lift up your heart with song and dance,
For I am with you, yes, within you, forever:
You are the heart of my heart.*

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2009 *The Liturgical Year* Thomas Nelson Nashville

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Pope Francis

24 May 2015 *Laudato Si*

1 September, 2016 *Show Mercy to Our Common Home*,

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2016 General Audience

2017 Angelus Reflection

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Pastoral Companion Image sourced from:

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Celebrating Community & Table

*Loving God,
bless all those gathered here today
as we come together in friendship and
celebration.*

*Bless those who prepared this meal
and those who serve it.*

*Bless all who have contributed
to making today a special occasion.*

*May the meal that we share remind us
of Your gracious faithful care and abundance.*

*Place in our hearts
the desire to make a difference
in the lives of those
who do not experience community,
friendship, food and peace.*

Amen.



