

MERCY:

A Way of Being in the World

Facilitators Discussion Questions

Session 1 – Archbishop of Brisbane and Member of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications

Topic: Pope Francis' vision and dream of Mercy in our Church and world

Reading: Pope Francis, "The Name of God is Mercy"

Question: Why has Pope Francis struck such a chord in focusing on mercy in what he says and does?

Session 2 – Mr Phil Glendenning, Director of the Edmund Rice Centre and President of the Refugee Council of Australia

Topic: The Cry of the Poor, the Cry of the Earth

Readings: Australian Catholic Social Justice Council (ACSJC) 2015 -2016 *Social Justice Statement For Those Who've Come Across the Seas*: [Link](#); and

Phil Glendenning's launch address to the 2015-2016 Social Justice Statement on refugees: [Link](#)

Question 1: In launching the 2015-2016 *Social Justice Statement* on refugees, Phil Glendenning said "Compassion is the antidote to the globalisation of indifference and it is probably our greatest civilising strength. It needs to be embraced, mobilised and lived – so that together we can live on this planet like human beings."

With the eyes and ears of mercy, how is a Global Response of Compassion possible? (Perhaps start by sharing an experience from your life where you have witnessed or experienced mercy as a way of being helpful to uphold the dignity of humanity).

Question 2: Pope Francis calls upon all people of faith and good will, to look into the face of the asylum seeker and really hear their story. When we do this they are no longer a stranger to be feared. We can no longer be indifferent to their need.

How can we show mercy to our neighbour? What do you see yourself taking back to your community or building on in your community towards a more just treatment of refugees?

Session 3 – Sr Veronica Lawson RSM, Scripture scholar and author of the highly praised book, *The Blessing of Mercy*

Topic: Leaving Space for Mercy: a Hebrew Perspective

Reading: Veronica M. Lawson, *The Blessing of Mercy: Bible Perspectives and Ecological Challenges* (Northcote: Morning Star Publishing, 2015), 19-42.

Question: Pope Francis invited us to celebrate a Jubilee Year of Mercy. In *Laudato Si'* he has called us to hear and respond with compassion to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. How does the Exodus story of a child at risk (2:1-10) speak to the distress of the Earth community today? How does it speak of mercy as a way of being in the world?

Session 4 – Archbishop of Brisbane and Member of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications

Topic: Leaving Space for Mercy: the Sermon on the Mount

Reading: Matthew 5:1-12, 20-48; 25:21-46

Question: What connection do the Gospels make between mercy and hope?

Session 5 – Sr Veronica Lawson RSM, Scripture scholar and author of the highly praised book, *The Blessing of Mercy*

Topic: Leaving Space for Mercy: a Lucan perspective

Reading: Barbara E. Reid, *Parables for Preachers: The Gospel of Luke* (Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical Press, 1999), 105-118.

Question: Luke's gospel tells of the mercy of God. How do both human and other-than-human elements function as agents and instruments of God's mercy in the story of the one who fell among the bandits (Luke 10:25-37)?