

# For Reflection & Discussion

## What does Catherine McAuley's life and ministry teach us about living mercy?

### **Mercy is a verb**

being the face of God's love to everyone we meet.

### **Mercy is a habit of the heart**

a way of seeing and living that grows deeper with every encounter.

### **Mercy is gospel-centred**

reflecting the example of Jesus and dedicated to bringing life and dignity to all. It is 'the beating heart of the Gospel' (Pope Francis, 2015, *Misericordiae Vultus: The Face of Mercy* # 12).

### **Mercy is prophetic**

a beacon and light for others on the power of love.

### **Mercy is built on limitless kindness**

as Catherine McAuley said - Sisters of Mercy should be the 'kindest people on earth'.

### **Mercy is reciprocal**

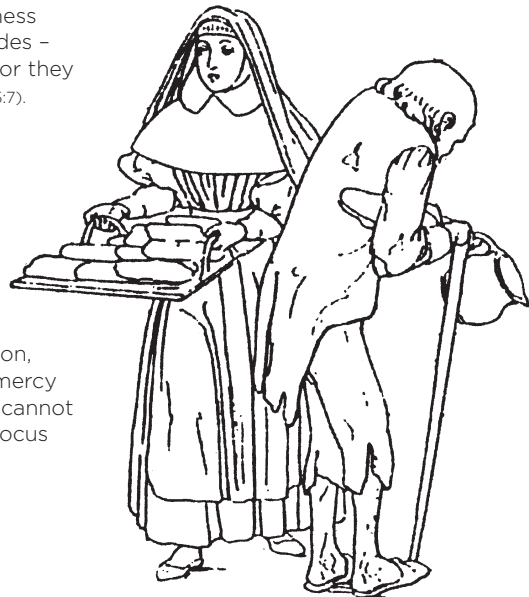
it is blessing and blessedness as revealed in the Beatitudes - 'blessed are the merciful for they shall be mercied' (Matthew 5:7).

### **Mercy is immediate and constructive**

Catherine McAuley reminds us that: the poor need help today not next week.

### **Mercy is universal**

it is not restricted to religion, doctrine or geography - mercy includes the neighbor we cannot see - mercy has a global focus and presence.



## For Reflection:

- How do the words of Mary Wickham's poem *Mercy Monosyllables* (on page 28) capture the understanding of mercy given and received?
- Examine the list of living mercy lessons from Catherine McAuley. How does your Mercy ministry embody these aspects of mercy? What challenges you about living mercy in the day to day of your ministry work?
- Read Rolheiser's *The Ten Commandments of Mercy* (on page 31). Use these to reflect on how your ministry develops or enhances a true culture of mercy and compassion. You might split larger groups into smaller ones and ask each to apply one of Rolheiser's Mercy Commandments to everyday practice in your ministry.
- How can you create a culture of mercy and compassion in your work and in society more broadly?