

Using Mercy Partners Prayer Resources

Prayer is essential at the commencement of a Board Meeting for focus, to reinforce Catholic identity and to call God's blessings on the proceedings. Prayer time is also formative as it allows those present to examine aspects of life, faith and experience.

The prayers in this package focus on the story of God's mercy through scripture, Church and human experience. Using extracts from Part 2 of the *Mercy Partners Theological Framework* and the stunning artwork of Kaye Redman, each prayer charts one aspect of the journey of God's mercy and the call for us to be hearts of mercy in our world.

The structure of each prayer is the same:

- **A gathering statement introduces the aspect of God's mercy which is the focus of the prayer** and is designed to be read by the prayer leader.
- **An extract from the Theological Framework provides a focus for personal reflection.** Questions are provided for this time of quiet contemplation. *Allow 3 to 5 minutes for this section.*
- **A number of additional readings are provided which further reflect on the prayer focus.** They are sourced from a variety of theologians and spiritual guides within the Christian tradition.
- **The discussion questions invite a sharing of responses which is critical for formation** and the development of a community of prayer. Leaders should stress that reflection time is not commentary on the thoughts of others but simply a time to share what ideas or thoughts the questions and readings have raised. *Allow 7 to 10 minutes for this section.*
- **Further scripture references are provided in the Read More box** so participants can choose to undertake further reading.
- **Prayer which can be led by one of the board members or said together.** At this time, board members could be asked for any specific prayer intentions or remembrances. *Allow 3 to 5 minutes for this section.*
- **The illustrations by Kaye Redman can be used for reflection or meditation.** The contemplation of artwork is important in prayer and can evoke ideas or feelings which can deepen understanding of, or connection with, the message.

Depending on the level of sharing it is estimated that these reflections will take 15 to 25 minutes. They are offered as a guide to the Theological Framework and can be supplemented with additional readings or other ritual elements such as the use of oil for anointing, the sprinkling of water, a sign of peace or other symbolic actions.

Prayer and reflection are a catalyst for change:

- They let in the Spirit of wisdom, presence, thanksgiving and communion.
- They invite participants to open their hearts to new ways of seeing and understanding.
- They bring God to the forefront of the meeting: its business, concerns, challenges and interactions.
- They provide a template for prayer in all parts of an organisation and model how such prayer can be facilitated.

**LET US NOT BE CLOSED TO THE NEWNESS THAT GOD WANTS TO BRING INTO OUR LIVES ...
MERCY IS THE LORD'S MOST POWERFUL MESSAGE ... (POPE FRANCIS)**

For any assistance with how to use these prayers please contact Dr Caroline Thompson at caroline.thompson@mercypartners.org.au or Ms Libby Blom at libby.blom@mercypartners.org.au.

Visit Mercy Partners website to download a printable version of this resource for your Board: www.mercypartners.org.au/prayer-resources.