

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas



# Mercy Day Prayer

SEPTEMBER 24, 2018

## Invitation to Prayer

**Leader:** *We gather for prayer in the Spirit of Jesus.*

**All:** We praise God's Spirit who animated Catherine,  
who animates us.

**Leader:** *We pray in memory of Catherine and women of Mercy”  
who have sung praise to God,  
and in union with all women of Mercy living today.*

**All:** We celebrate Catherine's life and legacy.

**Suggested Opening Song:** *Path of Mercy* (verses 1, 2)  
*Schneider or any appropriate song*

*Karen Kirner*



2. God of ris-ing, God of la-bor, May our lives re-  
3. God of rest-ing, God of dream-ing, May your vi-sion



2. flect your call. Curb our pride-ful self-de-struc-tion,  
3. be en-fleshed, While we strive to live your prom-ise,



1. and re - spond with heart a - flame. May my hands em -  
2. give us strength to trust in you. While we work to  
3. and pro - claim your love now known. Guide our tri - umphs



1. brace your like - ness, So your love trans -  
2. share your har - vest, May your mis - sion  
3. and our fail - ures, Let us come to



1. forms my life, As I walk the path of mer - cy,  
2. be ours, too, As we walk the path of mer - cy,  
3. know your peace, As we walk the path of mer - cy,



1. May your mer - cy be my own.  
2. May your mer - cy be our own.  
3. May your mer - cy be our own.

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## Opening Prayer

**Leader:** *We pray to you, our good and merciful God. We ask you to renew your gift in us that we might more passionately celebrate your mercy in our midst and share it in response to the critical needs of our time. May our actions reflect the love we profess. We make our prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.*

**Scripture:** Micah 6:8 (NIV)

He has shown you, O Mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

**Reading One:** “The Bishop’s Ladies” from *Frances Warde and the First Sisters of Mercy* by Sister Marie Christopher, RSM

The Sisters of Mercy had arrived at Pittsburgh. It was three days before Christmas, 1843, when they walked through the door of the four-story brick building at the corner of Penn Street and Strawberry Alley. Fanny looked the house over, lit a fire in the stove and put the kettle on to boil for tea. Then she and her six sisters set to work to make a convent home for themselves. Pittsburgh’s citizenry gaped the first times the Sisters walked through the streets on the way to visit the sick, or the poor, or the prisoners in the penitentiary. By the time Reverend Mother Francis Xavier looked back on her first year in the United States, the “bishop’s ladies” were a familiar sight trudging through the main streets and byways of Pittsburgh. Fanny’s heart was taking roots. She was learning to love the mines, the miners, the hills and the Monongahela. And she knew that her love was being returned. The people of Pittsburgh were glad that the Sisters of Mercy had come.

**Quiet Reflection**

**Reading Two: *The Door of Mercy* – Mary Wickham**

The Door of Mercy is double-hinged,  
swinging in, opening out,  
sturdy, yet easily moved.  
My friend says: You only have to knock once,  
and you only have to knock lightly.

The Door of Mercy rests on the threshold of need.  
Its single key is kindness, which is always in the lock.  
Faithfulness is its lintel,  
hope and healing the strong jambs either side.  
The Door of Mercy might be splendidly red,  
it could be unobtrusive brown.  
It will need to be carefully handled  
and its fittings are locally sourced.



Mostly the Door of Mercy stands ajar.  
In spirit and in flesh you cross its threshold each day,  
often unmindful, but sometimes,  
and increasingly, amazed at its potent familiarity.  
The smell of the food of home wafts out,  
the blood of the wounds of the earth flows in.

It is not immediately apparent  
which side is which of the Door of Mercy,  
since they interchange fluidly,  
pain and promise etched sharply on both.  
Blessing is for all who come and go, stay and return,  
helper and helped,  
all belonging, each bestowing.

My friend says: You only have to knock once,  
and you only have to knock lightly.  
The God of Mercy, whose door it is,  
is always home.

## **Sharing**

*What captures your imagination?*

*What does it say to you?*

*What offers you the greatest challenge?*

## **Closing Prayer**

**Leader:** *Most holy God, through Jesus we know the depth of your love for us. Keep us mindful that we are indeed called to make incarnate your mercy in the world. We ask for the grace to live lives worthy of this call—to be signs, in active and practical ways, of the tender love with which you embrace us all. As we celebrate this feast of Our Lady of Mercy, strengthen our resolve to work for the transformation of our world into a place where all can know themselves to be blessed, welcomed and embraced as your beloved daughters and sons. We make our prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.*

**All sing verse 3 of “Path of Mercy,” page 1.**

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