

Awakening to a New Consciousness

*Listening to the Cry of Earth
and the Cry of the Poor*

Mercy's Theological Reflection Process



Session Two | Facilitator's Guide

October 2021

PREPARATION FOR SESSION TWO

Using the *Call to a New Consciousness: Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor* webpage, please complete the following materials before the second session:

- [read] Overview: Seeing—Deep Listening ([click here](#))
- [view] In *Defence of Life* (33 min.) ([click here](#))
- [read] Theological Lenses
 - Mercy Lens ([click here](#))
 - Ecofeminism Lens ([click here](#))
 - Laudato Si' Lens ([click here](#))
 - Ecoliberation Lens ([click here](#))

SESSION TWO: FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

Below you will find a brief overview for this session, followed by a more extensive description of the process. Each session will take place via Zoom and will start with a large group gathering. The large group gathering will last approximately 15 minutes and will consist of the following:

- Welcome
- Prayer
- An invitation to move into smaller assigned groups

Things you will need for this session

- Prayerful space
- Journal
- PowerPoint for screen sharing

Participants will not return to the large group. As the facilitator, you will conclude the session when the session is complete, no longer than 90 minutes.

After the participants move into their smaller assigned groups, you will guide your group through the content outlined below. You will gauge when the energy of the group is ready to wrap-up the session, between 60 and 90 minutes. An overview of the facilitated part of this session consists of the following:

- Introduction of participants
- Presentation of content (videos, short readings, etc.)
- Engagement in reflection, journaling, and discussion
- Identifying what has emerged
- Preparation for the next session

The following hyperlinks and explanations will help you navigate any materials for this session. Facilitators may, of course, use their own approach to the guide.

Invite the small group participants to introduce any new participants and check-in.

- **Facilitator:** (If there are any new participants in the group, please share your name, where you live and what has drawn you here?)
- **Facilitator:** Let's begin with a check-in. Using no more than one brief sentence, describe what remained with you after the first session, perhaps a feeling, an insight, a thought, or something you did.
- Now, we are going to move into the content for this session.

FIRST CONTENT: DEEP LISTENING

The facilitator will read the following brief excerpt from the preparation materials, Seeing—Deep Listening.

Facilitator: Let's take a moment to recall an important passage from our preparatory materials for this session.

By listening deeply to the stories and testimonials of exploitation and suffering, we engage our whole body in the process of knowing. Knowing is different from empirical knowledge. It is an "inner knowing." We move into the place of our inner knowing, we engage our heart, and we hear the knowing of those who have experienced and continue to experience harm and suffering. We hear the cries of the poor and the cries of Earth.

Facilitator: As Mercy, we are being challenged to de-center ourselves and to listen to the experiences of those persons and communities most impacted by extractivism. We are not being called to solve any problem from our own perspective. Instead, we are called to listen deeply.

What experience do you have of deep listening? If it is directly related to extractivism, please share, but it can be from any issue.

SECOND CONTENT: *IN DEFENCE OF LIFE*

The facilitator will now present, *In Defence of Life*. ([Click here to access the video](#)). The facilitator may determine the time frame for each round of questions to keep the sharing within the timeframe of 60-90 minutes of the session. Each participant should have watched the video in advance, so you can choose to watch a segment together as a group or simply check in that everyone did watch it.

Facilitator: After the conclusion of the video (or after agreement not to rewatch the video), ask the participants to reflect and journal on the following questions.

Facilitator: After watching *In Defence of Life*, what is emerging from our hearts? What values are creating tension within us? What is clear in us and what remains unresolved?

Facilitator: I invite you to share briefly what stirred in you as you reflected on these questions. Please keep in mind, we have ____ minutes and we need to hear from everyone in the group.

Facilitator: Now let's take a few minutes and reflect on these questions. What was moving in you as you listened to the concerns in *In Defence of Life*?

- What impacted you the most as you watched and listened to the voices in the video?
- How is extractivism challenging our personal, communal and corporate complicity?

Facilitator: I invite you to share briefly what stirred in you as you reflected on these questions. Again, please keep in mind, we have ____ minutes and we need to hear from everyone in the group.

Facilitator: For this final set of questions on the video *In Defence of Life*, we will take a few minutes to reflect and consider these questions.

- Who benefits and who is harmed by extractive industries?
- Does this system support or destroy life?

Facilitator: I invite you to share briefly what stirred in you as you reflected on these questions. We have ____ minutes for this sharing.

THIRD CONTENT: STORIES OF Exploitation

With consideration for time, offer space for any participant in the group to share his/her own story of direct experience with extractivism. Lay ground rules in advance that we are creating a safe space for sharing, and the goal is simply for others to listen. It is not an expectation that all or even any group member will have something to share, but this is a chance to hear directly from another member of the Mercy family to share his/her direct experience. Any follow-up questions should be only for clarification.

As we have listened to stories of those persons and communities most impacted by extractivism-through the video and through the conversation, we reflect on what NEW understanding we now have about the impact on people, communities and Earth. In what way(s) did these voices share a new insight or perspective that had not been seen before?

Facilitator: We have ___ minutes. Share one brief sentence on one new understanding or insight gained in deeply listening to these stories.

What to listen for:

- That responses are centered in the experience of people, communities and Earth.
- Avoiding generalizations and focusing on specifics of what was heard.
- Not moving to answers, but sitting in the discomfort and the understanding of the suffering.

IDENTIFYING WHAT HAS EMERGED - Following the conversations so far, the facilitator encourages group members to send on what are the thoughts and perspectives that should be brought to the whole to the following email: extractivism@sistersofmercy.org.

PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT SESSION

Facilitator will wrap up with overview of how to prepare for the next session which is listed in the participant guide.