



### **“Gender Identity and Mercy Love” Process and Videos**

We welcome you into the Mercy conversation on gender identity. By engaging the videos linked below, you will connect with 150 Mercy sisters, associates and partners in ministry who gathered on Zoom October 3–4, 2020, to kick off the learning and conversation. Now it’s your turn to join in and widen the circle by one more.

Each of the three videos is between one to two hours. There are short descriptions of each segment below, plus questions for personal reflection. You may want to plan out a few blocks of time in which to watch the videos. We understand that engaging these videos will take a certain commitment, but we are in this together. We hope you will experience these videos at your own pace and then come together with others in your Mercy circle to share community conversation and get lingering questions answered.



### **Pre-Work**

Participants in the Zoom program were asked to read this [article](#) before the event. You might find it helpful too. If you scroll down to the introduction in the article, there is a link to the Spanish version of the same materials.

### **Questions for Personal Reflection**

1. What do you already know about gender identity? What are your questions?
2. Sit with this scripture. What is the invitation?

#### **Luke 6:46–49**

**Building on a Solid Foundation:** “So why do you keep calling me ‘Lord, Lord!’ when you don’t do what I say? I will show you what it’s like when someone comes to me, listens to my teaching and then follows it. It is like a person building a house who digs deep and lays the foundation on solid rock. When the floodwaters rise and break against that house, it stands firm because it is well built. But anyone who hears and doesn’t obey is like a person who builds a house right on the ground, without a foundation. When the floods sweep down against that house, it will collapse into a heap of ruins.” (*New Living Foundation*)



### **Segment 1: Laying a Foundation**

In this Gender Identity 101 segment, [Dr. Erin Cross](#), director of the University of Pennsylvania LGBT Center, presents a concise and engaging introduction to what gender identity is and how it is formed. She also answers questions posed by the Zoom participants.

[Click here to play video in English.](#) [Click here for the video in Spanish.](#)

### **Questions for Personal Reflection**

1. What has been your personal lived experience of gender identity? What factors (Church, family, society, culture, media, school, peers, etc.) have affected your understanding?
2. What did you hear that was new? Or what did you hear presented in a new way?



## **Segment 2: Framing Context and Experience**

In this highly engaging segment, [Dr. Erin Swenson](#), a Presbyterian minister and marriage and family therapist, guides us through the evolving historical, theological and social understandings of gender identity. She draws upon her own experiences as a trans woman to teach through story and make connections. She answers questions posed by the Zoom participants.

[Click here to play the video in English.](#) [Click here to play the video in Spanish.](#)

### **Questions for Personal Reflection**

1. How did this presentation affect you? What does her sharing mean to you?
2. What did you hear that surprised you? That further expanded your mind and heart?



### **Segment 3: Coming Home to Self**

In this moving segment, four diverse panelists who identify as transgender or gender nonbinary share their personal journeys of discovering and living into their gender identities. The sharing is inspiring, vulnerable, thoughtful and graced. The panelists generously engage with the Zoom participants' comments and questions.

[Click here to play video in English.](#) [Click here to play video in Spanish.](#)

### **Questions for Personal Reflection**

1. What touched you in these stories?
2. What intersectionalities between gender identity, race and socio-economic factors do these stories reveal?
3. When was a time in your life that you felt similarly to one or more of the panelists?



### **Sharing Hospitality**

We encourage you to come together with others in the Mercy family to cement your learning through shared conversation and experience.

Consider gathering with a virtual group of sisters and associates to unpack what you have learned and experienced. What does this mean for our ministries? How does all this relate to our lives as Sisters of Mercy?

We will be happy to receive the fruits of your conversation. Please write us at [SOGI@sistersofmercy.org](mailto:SOGI@sistersofmercy.org).