

# Awakening to a New Consciousness

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

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**Mercy's Theological Reflection Process**



**Session Three | Facilitator's Guide**

**November 2021**

## PREPARATION FOR THIS SESSION

Using the Call to a New Consciousness: Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor webpage, participants need to complete the following steps before the group meeting:

- [read] Overview: Judging—Deep Reflection ([click here](#))
  - This material covers the lenses that will be used. Each participant is asked to read through the overview, which includes a brief description of each lens. All participants will use the Mercy Lens, and then choose one additional lens that draws their interest (an ecofeminist theological lens, an ecological theology of liberation lens, or the integral ecological lens of Pope Francis' encyclical "Laudato Si").
- [read] Mercy Lens: A View toward Harmony and Right Relationship in Our Suffering World ([click here](#))
- [read] Select One of the Following Lenses: An Ecofeminism Lens ([click here](#)), An Ecoliberation Lens ([click here](#)), or Laudato Si' Lens ([click here](#)). Spend time with the reflection questions at the end of the chosen lens.
- [reflect] Use the following questions for additional reflection. Participants are encouraged to write your reflections, insights and emerging questions in your journal.
  - Which voices are prioritized in the Mercy lens and in the additional lens that you chose?
  - Whose voices are missing and why might that be?
  - What sustains an extractivist model of development?
  - In what ways does the lens you used challenge complicity in extractive industries?
  - How do we see ourselves contributing to and shaping a viable future for the whole Earth community?

## SESSION THREE: 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 in a Zoom meeting and will start with a large group gathering. The large group gathering will last approximately 10-12 minutes and will consist of the following:*

- *Welcome*
  - *Prayer*
  - *An invitation to move into smaller assigned groups*
- Participants will not return to the large group. As the facilitator, you will conclude the session when the session*

Things you will need for this session

- Prayerful space
- Journal

*is complete, no longer than 90 minutes. Remind participants to have a journal or other writing material for the time together.*

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:

- Participant introduction and check-in
- Discussion 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 in the guide below will help you navigate any materials for this session. Facilitators may, of course, use their own approach to the guide.

1. As you enter the small group, the facilitator invites the small group participants to reintroduce themselves and check in.
  - a. Facilitator: Let's begin with a check-in. Using no more than one brief sentence, describe what remained with you after the second session; perhaps a feeling, an insight, a thought, or something you did. Also, offer the opportunity to reflect on the prayer now that the two parts are completed.

If the group's makeup has changed from previous sessions, make sure to leave space for introductions and connections for what has brought them together.

- b. *Now we are going to move into the content for this session.*

## FIRST CONTENT: THE MERCY LENS

***Read the following brief excerpt taken in part from the preparation materials, *Judging—Deep Reflection*.***

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

***We are compelled to reflect deeply on what we have heard from those persons and communities who have been most impacted by the violent intrusions of extractivism. We have heard the call to decenter ourselves. Now we turn to engage with the theological perspectives rising from the***

***lands in which extractivism is exacting incredible wounds. Theological lenses serve to help us to see differently. They aim to decenter us so that we might listen more deeply to voices that may be unfamiliar to our way of seeing and understanding. And so, in addition to our familiar Mercy lens, we turn to engage in an ecological liberation lens, an ecofeminist lens, as well as the lens of Pope Francis' integral ecology. These theological lenses will guide us in responding to the cries of those who have been made poor and the cries of Earth.***

***Facilitator: For the next \_\_\_ minutes, we will enter a quiet reflection on the [Mercy Lens](#). Be prepared to discuss an element or description from the Mercy Lens that stays with you.***

- ***In what way does the Mercy Lens call us to respond to extractivism?***
- ***Is there a concept or insight that challenges you?***

***Facilitator: We have \_\_\_ minutes. In one brief sentence, share what is stirring in you as you reflect on the Mercy Lens?***

## **SECOND CONTEXT: THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES AND THE EXTRACTIVE MODEL**

Facilitator: In the preparatory materials for this session, you considered the Mercy Lens and three other theological lenses that challenge the dominant theological perspective of the global north. Through the theological lens of Ivone Gebara, Daniel Castillo (whose work builds on the work of Gustavo Gutiérrez), as well as the lens presented by Pope Francis, we have learned how Biblical interpretation and theological precepts can be skewed in favor of dominant powers. A classic example is the Biblical interpretation of the Genesis story. The original Hebrew context of Genesis 1-2 is not that the Earth must be subdued and dominated over for the benefit of humankind, but that humankind is called to be the stewards, the shepherds, of God's creation.

Facilitator: Now, let us enter a quiet reflection on one other theological lens that you chose to reflect on (Ecofeminism Lens, Ecoliberation Lens and Laudato Si' Lens). Each group member should plan to share which lens they chose and any explanation as to why they were drawn to that perspective.

- Be prepared to discuss an element or description from this theological lens that stays with you.
- What, if any, is the biggest difference between framing things with this lens and the lens with which you have been most comfortable?
- In what way does this lens call you to respond to extractivism?
- Is there a concept or insight that challenges you?

- How does this lens call you to consider a systemic response to extractivism beyond an individual response to considering the systemic issues?
- What exploitative and oppressive systems were identified as you reflected on the lens?

Facilitator: We have \_\_\_ minutes. In one brief sentence, share what is stirring in you as you reflected on the theological lens you chose?

## THIRD CONTENT: THE VOICE OF CATHERINE

Facilitator: Theological lenses guide us in how we might respond to the critical issues of our time. In this case, we are seeking ways in which we can respond to extractivism and its devastating effects.

Facilitator: For the next \_\_\_ minutes, we will enter a quiet reflection. During this time, we will reflect on the question,

- In what ways, are we (not just as individual decision makers but also as part of economic and development systems as a community and corporate decision maker) complicit in supporting extractivism?
- In what ways would Jesus and Catherine urge us to address the problem of extractivism? How would they encourage us to respond?
- How are the voices of the people, communities and Earth calling us to respond?
- What does it mean to use our collective power to engage systems change with our community and corporate decision making around extractives?

Facilitator: We have \_\_\_ minutes. In one brief sentence, what levels of response should we as Mercy make in response to extractivism?

**IDENTIFYING WHAT HAS EMERGED** - We also encourage you to consider how you might share your insights through other creative expressions — song, art, dance, poetry, story. The creative process may take some time, please know you can send your creative expression at any time to [extractivism@sistersofmercy.org](mailto:extractivism@sistersofmercy.org)

## PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT SESSION

Facilitator will wrap up with preparation for the next session. Details available in the Participant Guide.