

# A Welcoming Spirituality

## Introduction prayer

Hospitality is the principal characteristic of Mercy identity, spirituality, and mission. Hospitality, as understood by Catherine McAuley, the Sisters of Mercy, and their associates, is both an individual and communal way of living faith in relation to God and others, expressed in practical response to today's human needs. Today let us pray and reflect for ourselves as Mercy leaders.



## Scripture: John 21:4-14

*An example of Jesus' hospitality after His resurrection becomes a gesture of forgiveness and spiritual nourishment and communion with Him, even after death.*

When it was already dawn, Jesus was standing on the shore; but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, "Children, have you caught anything to eat?" They answered him, "No." So he said to them, "Cast the net over the right side of the boat and you will find something." So, they cast it, and were not able to pull it in because of the number of fish. So, the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he tucked in his garment, for he was lightly clad, and jumped into the sea. The other disciples came in the boat, for they were not far from shore, only about a hundred yards, dragging the net with the fish. When they climbed out on shore, they saw a charcoal fire with fish on it and bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you just caught." So, Simon Peter went over and dragged the net ashore full of one hundred fifty-three large fish. Even though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, "Come, have breakfast." And none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they realized it was the Lord. Jesus came over and took the bread and gave it to them, and in like manner the fish. This was now the third time Jesus was revealed to his disciples after being raised from the dead.

## Intercessions

As followers of Jesus, who welcomed all with open arms and shared meals with sinners and saints alike, let us now bring these intentions before God. May our hearts be open to the needs of others, and may our schools reflect the generous hospitality of God's Kingdom.

- ✚ That the Church may always be a welcoming home for all people, especially the poor, the stranger, and the marginalized.

*God of Mercy, hear us.*

- ✚ That our schools may be places of warmth, generosity, and open-hearted hospitality to friends and strangers alike.

*God of Mercy, hear us.*

- ✚ That those who are displaced may find shelter, safety, and kindness in the hearts of those who receive them.

*God of Mercy, hear us.*

- ✚ That all who work in shelters, food banks, and outreach ministries may be strengthened in their mission to serve with love and dignity.

*God of Mercy, hear us.*

- ✚ That we may grow in the grace of hospitality, seeing Christ in every person we meet, and welcoming them as we would welcome Him.

*God of Mercy, hear us.*

- ✚ That hospitality may be a bridge to healing divisions, fostering understanding and reconciliation among peoples and nations.

*God of Mercy, hear us.*

## Reflection questions and small group discussion

When have you looked for opportunities to practice inclusion and welcome?

Take a moment to consider how you could be a more welcoming leader.

## Music Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nj1d4iNRj9g>

## Closing prayer

Loving God, You chose Catherine McAuley for the service of Your people who are poor, sick, and uneducated. You inspired her to found the Sisters of Mercy so that these good works might endure. Give to each of us a portion of her compassionate spirit and ardent desire to serve. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Source

*Be as Shining Lamps*