



The deep Mystery held in these beautiful Advent words impel us to look forward with courage and gratitude – to stay alert with expansive hearts and buoyant hope as we prepare to celebrate Christmas! Elizabeth Dowling guided us into our Advent Reflection and Comfortable cuppa through these words.

It has been an extraordinary year for all of us! As we slowly come back to our various ministries and communities from the extended lockdown of the past few months, we are keenly aware of the fragility of all life. This Christmas 'Hub Highlights' offers a glimpse of some activities and stories of recent weeks. We gathered virtually together, to celebrate the 'Season of Creation.' The sessions have been recorded and highlighted in the Institute's 'Just Mercy' publications. The gatherings were certainly appreciated by Sisters and colleagues around the Institute.

The 'Laudato Si Circle' a new initiative, has also now begun to provide ongoing awareness and education.

As 2021 now draws closer to Christmas we remain grateful for this year and Advent time that helps remind us to keep in our hearts those whose lives have been deeply uprooted and who continue to suffer. Many are in our neighbourhoods and in places not far from our shores. May we all find a welcome and peace this Christmas!

On behalf of everyone at the Mercy Hub,
 Margaret Moore RSM

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YOUNG MERCY LINKS & THE WORLD NEXT DOOR ART EXHIBIT

‘The World Next Door’ art exhibition, organised by Angela Scarafilo, Young Mercy Links Coordinator, at Melbourne’s Mercy Hub, had its opening night on Monday November 29 featuring a large collection of Naser Moradi’s artwork. Naser is a Hazara man from Afghanistan, a self taught artist and unique talent, who is also a detainee in the Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation Centre. His works deal with the reality of his own detention, and are filled with hope as he looks towards a future where all are valued and loved for who they are. A video of the launch exhibition can be viewed at: <https://vimeo.com/653514470>
 Katherine Rodriguez interviewed Eve, one of the Young Mercy Links members about her impression of the exhibition.

Did you have a favourite painting from the exhibit?

They are all so beautiful, it’s hard to pick just one. My personal favorite though seemed to be unnamed. It includes various shades of red and black and has a girl reaching out to a heart dangling from the sky. To me this painting had a beautiful balance between light and dark, between despair and hope. I love this painting and believe it is an excellent representation of his work overall.

If you can describe the exhibit in one word, what would it be?

Breathtaking.

Regardless of people’s general reactions or specific emotional responses to particular paintings, everyone was in awe. Some at the beauty, some at the heartbreak some at the perseverance of hope.

How would you describe what Young Mercy Links does to other people who may be interested to take part in what you do?

We are a group of young people who care about our community and want to make positive changes. When acceptable (COVID interferes), we volunteer and host education events. Our group leader Angela supports us in our social justice interests, and we meet to discuss the ways we can help others and educate the community. Recently our focuses have included justice for refugees, climate action and racial equality in Australia. Our work is not limited to these topics and we welcome new ideas and opinions on how we can make a difference.

What message do you think the exhibit brings to the community?

This exhibition was an excellent teaching tool which brought injustices against asylum seekers to the attention of our patrons and community. We demonstrated that the people our government keep in detention can have a lot to offer our society and that no matter how poorly they are treated, hope will prevail. I think the exhibition has also brought a message of hope to the community and inspire people to take action where they can.



We bring to light the hope and inspiration for a better world - Katherine Rodriguez



A FLOURISHING AND NURTURING SEASON OF CREATION



The Mercy Hub hosted weekly virtual Comfortable Cuppa sessions for the Season of Creation. We were joined by friends across Australia and Cambodia to support each other's journey of ecological awakening.

Through this year's theme 'A Home for All' we explored diverse topics, from honouring the ancient wisdom of indigenous peoples to participating meaningfully in the impact economy. As one of our speakers, Mary Tinney rsm, shared with us, "We need to take the science seriously... we've done it for Covid-19, and we need to do it for climate change."

We extend gratitude to our speakers, Veronica Lawson rsm, Mary Tinney rsm, Sally Neaves, Juliet Talarico, Jemima Welsh, and Helen Nolen rsm.

JULIET TALARICO

ADVENT WEEKLY CONTEMPLATION AND REFLECTION WITH ELIZABETH DOWLING, rsm



It was with joy that in November we welcomed people back to the Mercy Hub, in person, to appreciate our time together for reflection and to enjoy the comfortable cuppa. This was followed by the virtual Advent sessions, which we had been eagerly anticipating, prepared and presented by Liz Dowling. Liz treated us to fresh insights of the Advent Scripture readings with her clear and inspiring interpretations of readings that can become so familiar to us, that we can maybe miss some gems. We are grateful to Liz for her generosity in providing the series, which has given us a joyful pathway to celebrated the awesome mystery of the Incarnation of God in our world.

MARY GEASON RSM



A PERFECT GIFT

Mercy Place Parkville was able to gift this wonderful sewing machine to Niraimathi and her three boys. She is an amazing seamstress and was so thrilled to receive this delightful gift. The machine fits into a locked cabinet below where there is also storage for cottons and machine accessories. Niraimathi is a single mum who came to Australia from Nauru with her three boys. Two of her boys have now completed their secondary education here in Australia but not able to go to university. The boys are so caring of me when I visit.

ROSEMARY PATTERSON RSM



AN AFTERNOON OF POETRY AND MUSIC



What a wonderful way to spend a Sunday afternoon! On Sunday 5 December, a very appreciative audience of thirty people enjoyed readings of Irish poetry and live harp music. Mr. Chris Watson is a lover of Irish poetry whose readings evoked many happy and sometimes sad images with which to become immersed. When Sr. Ursula Gilbert asked Chris to advise about some Irish music to complement the readings, he suggested the harper, Catherine Connelly. Catherine brought along her Celtic harp and delighted all with the gentle music including some of her own compositions. She included information about the Celtic harp and other types of harps. Leonard Cohen's rendition of "Alleluia", with apologies to the Irish, was the final piece. A delicious Devonshire tea provided the opportunity for conversation and further appreciation of a beautiful afternoon of poetry and music.

MARY GEASON RSM

COOKHOUSES 'N TANKS A LOT



Above is a photo of the site of the Posulim cookhouses in the Southern Highland of Papua New Guinea and the community volunteer construction team. The site is on a mountain ridge, next to the Posulim Catholic church, that overlooks the river valley. The building materials and tanks were delivered just before the interprovincial border closure as the Covid Delta variant spread in the local communities.

Volunteer with us. Help us make masks.
Support our fundraising efforts.
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"GOOD TIDINGS WE BRING
TO YOU AND YOUR KIN."
WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.



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