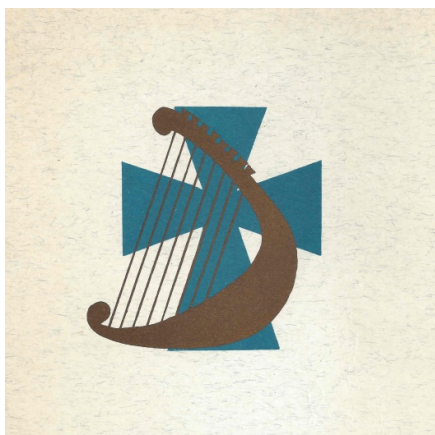


INSTRUMENTS OF MERCY



The heart of DMJ spirituality lies in a deep faith in the love and mercy of the Father as shown to us by Jesus Christ. Drawn by the Spirit, through the invitation of the Founder, we are called to “be there for the whole Church, to be there as pardoned sinners.”

Like the Sisters, Associates are called to be adaptable to the needs of today’s world as “instruments of mercy in God’s hand”..

Together, led by the Spirit, we, Associates and Sisters, reach out to bring God’s life, love and compassion to all people.

(This is an extract from a statement drawn up at an international gathering of DMJ Associates and Sisters in California in October 1999).

While preparing to write this Reflection, I was drawn over and over again to the words of Psalm 119:- ‘Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light for my path’ and to an image of Constant van Crombrugge as the torch bearer, going before us into the unknown, walking on ahead and lighting the way for those he invited and encouraged to share in his vision for the world, and the work that God was calling him to do. The Founder is a supreme example of one who ‘reads the signs of the times’: he looks out into the world, sees its needs and sets about trying to make a difference, be that as a politician in the Belgian Parliament, or in providing the children of the poor with a basic education and the skills to earn a living.

‘I arise today

*In the name of Silence,
Womb of the Word,
In the name of Stillness,
Home of Belonging
In the name of the Solitude
Of the Soul and the Earth.’*

(John O’Donohue – Matins)

At the same time, the Founder was profoundly aware of the need, both for himself and for those walking with him, to seek a place of quiet and solitude, to go into a place apart, to enable them to draw ever closer to Jesus Christ, thus making it possible for them, - and for us in our day walking the same path, - to be transformed by Christ into Instruments of Mercy for others. The Founder wrote to one of the early Sisters: - “Thus you will become an instrument of divine mercy, you will really love God and you will be, in the hands of the merciful one, a means of drawing others to this same happiness.”

In her book, ‘Instruments of Mercy’, Sister Teresa Clements DMJ wrote: - “In silence and solitude the mind has the opportunity to enter into communion with Christ and at the same time discover the mercy of the Lord. The heart becomes the place where Christ establishes His throne of love and mercy..... It is only through allowing ourselves time and silence to be with Christ that we may be transformed by Him into instruments of mercy for others.....To be an instrument of mercy means to live a life of love expressed through prayer and service.”

On 12 March of this year Pope Francis announced to the world a Holy Year, a Jubilee Year of Mercy

“Let us not forget that God forgives and God forgives always. Let us never tire of asking for forgiveness.



"I am convinced that the whole Church – which has much need to receive mercy, because we are sinners – will find in this Jubilee the joy to rediscover and render fruitful the mercy of God, with which we are all called to give consolation to every man and woman of our time."

In these words taken from Pope Francis' proclamation of the Jubilee Year of Mercy we see a reflection of the Founder's message, 'Be there for the whole Church, be there as a pardoned sinner, who has found peace and rejoices in the merciful love of God.'

"Through our daily prayer we grow in a deeper commitment to Christ and his Church. We are also led to greater solidarity with the whole world, especially with those who suffer. In prayer we hear again the Founder's call to be instruments of the merciful love of God."

(Associate Constitution No.13)

"The Founder experienced God as all-merciful, all-compassionate, and he calls us to reflect in our lives the merciful love of God, centred on the heart of Christ. We return love for love, allowing God to use us as instruments of mercy in his hand. By drawing close to Christ, who is gentle and humble of heart, growing in his attitudes of tenderness, humility and patience, we become flexible instruments of the mercy of God."

(Associate Constitution No.2)

*May I live this day
Compassionate of heart
Clear in word,
Gracious in awareness,
Courageous in thought,
Generous in love.*

(John O'Donohue – Matins)

(Verses taken from Benedictus – A Book of Blessings)

*May the peace of Jesus Christ that gentle and powerful peace
which surpasses all good
Always enlighten our minds and direct our love.*

(Constant Van Crombrughe)

*Anne Wilkinson - With the Associates of the English Region
March 2016*

IN THANKSGIVING

