



MERCY INTERNATIONAL REFLECTION PROCESS

Flaming the Fire of Mercy: Creation Waiting in Eager Longing

Doorkeepers of Mercy

Pope Francis says that, in this coming Year of Mercy, *“the Holy Door will become a Door of Mercy through which anyone who enters will experience the love of God.”* The logo for our mercy international reflection process, unfolding during this Year, is centered on the red doors of Baggot Street. In a profoundly mystical way, these red doors connect all our doors of Mercy – in our convents and houses, in our places of ministry, in holy places around us, in Earth which nourishes us, in the cosmos which holds us in communion, and in the hearts of all Sisters of Mercy, Associates and Partners-in-Mercy.

And now another metaphor emerges, that of the doorkeeper. The Hebrew word *Shaddai*, written on the back of the parchment attached to the doorpost of every Jewish home today, denotes that the Almighty is present in that house. It is said that Shaddai is short for Shomer Dal'tot Yisrael, Hebrew words for "Guardian of the Doors of Israel." In the days of the Jewish temple, one of the most important offices was that of doorkeeper. In the Litany to Our Lady, one of the titles of Mary is *Gate of Heaven*. One of the powerful offices in our own tradition was that of the portress, the sister who carried the keys and controlled all coming and going through the convent door.

In accepting our invitation to participate in this reflection process, you are agreeing to be guardians of the Door of Mercy, keepers of the in-between place of Mercy in this coming year. Will you as doorkeepers hold wide the door to invite Mercy to come in to be with us? Will you as doorkeepers hold wide the door to invite those who are hungry, thirsty, imprisoned, sick, strange, or naked to come in to find Mercy? Will you as doorkeepers help us find new ways of being Mercy on an Earth and among a people crying out for justice? Will you as doorkeepers guide us into a holy place of contemplation and vision? Will you as doorkeepers guard our “going out and our coming in” (Ps 121:8) as we dare this new way of seeing Mercy and being Mercy in times that can be so fearful and discouraging?

Thank you for agreeing to be Mercy doorkeepers of our international reflection process! With you, we rejoice that there is such depth and breadth of possibility in being people of Mercy in this time. May all the doors we keep, however we keep them, be truly doors of Mercy.

Elizabeth Davis rsm
edavis@sistersofmercynf.org