

# Empowerment

## Introductory Prayer



Catherine McAuley believed that strong leaders enable others to lead. She was generative, collaborative and collegial in her leadership, developing trust and nurturing the gifts of others. As Sister Mary C. Sullivan, RSM, notes: "... the future of the Sisters of Mercy rested in a particular way on the new members whom God sent. Thus, they had to be welcomed, loved, taught, and given a true sense of belonging and inclusion and their care could not be left entirely to others."

Catherine practiced consultative management and autonomous governance. She sent her strongest sisters to start new foundations, trusting them to lead in the way of mercy. Catherine McAuley empowered others to lead and supported them in every way she could.

## Scripture: Luke 9:1-2, 6

Jesus summoned the Twelve and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal [the sick]. He said to them, "Take nothing for the journey, neither walking stick, nor sack, nor food, nor money, and let no one take a second tunic. ...Then they set out and went from village to village proclaiming the good news and curing diseases everywhere.

## Intercessions

O God of Mercy, Catherine McAuley is a model of empowerment as she entrusted the education of children to women who studied abroad; as she sent off newly joined members to start foundations all over Ireland; and as she commissioned a small group of her sisters to cross the Atlantic and found schools and hospitals. Fill us with the same spirit of trust both in God and in the power of God's Spirit to call others to use their talents for good and to foster the spread of the charism entrusted to them. Guide us in our times to bring out the best in others and to support those willing to respond to the call to leadership:

Because Catherine McAuley empowered Frances Warde, Mercy spread throughout the Americas.

*May we empower others to spread Mercy with courage.*

For those charged with mentoring new members of our faculty and leaders, we pray:

*Spirit of God, guide them to foster collaborative leadership.*

For those who are reluctant to get involved:

*That the Spirit will encourage them to take risks.*

For those who moderate teams, clubs and schoolwide events, we pray:

*Spirit of God, guide them to tap the talents of young leaders.*

For those who seek ideas for planning community service events:

*Spirit of God, empower them to trust their creativity.*

For parents who are the key formators of their children, we pray:

*Spirit of God, guide them to empower their children to live up to their potential.*

## **Reflection Questions**

Catherine trained and empowered the teachers at Baggot Street to begin new schools and hospitals throughout Ireland and across the ocean.

- How do you empower others in your leadership role?
- What leadership succession strategies do you have in place?

## **Closing Prayer**

Gracious God, your Son, Jesus Christ, is the head of every leader and authority. Inspire us to follow the example of Jesus and Catherine with confidence in the power of your Spirit at work in all of us. Help us to listen to our ongoing call to lead and serve as they did. Amen.

## **Sources**

- *Be as Shining Lamps*, p 54
- *Intercessions of Mercy*