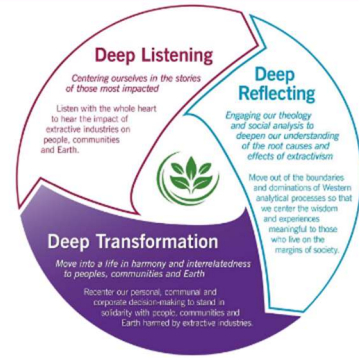


Awakening to a New Consciousness

*Listening to the Cry of Earth
and the Cry of the Poor*

Mercy's Theological Reflection Process



Overview – Deep Transformation

New Consciousness — Conversion — Action

The Sisters of Mercy of the Americas' Chapter 2017 calls us to a new consciousness of this harmful practice of extractivism – to a new consciousness that leads us to action. What is that new consciousness?

Deep Transformation – Move Into A Life In Harmony And Interrelatedness To Peoples, Communities And Earth

In our conversations, we have listened to, read about, and seen video accounts of the life experiences of people and Earth who have been negatively affected by extractivism.

We have analyzed and interpreted what we saw and heard. We applied various lenses, different perspectives to help us make meaning of those horrendous accounts. We have explored some of the difficulties wrought by the lens of the traditional Western theologies that have so long supported domination, subjugation, oppression and devastation through economic, political, cultural, religious and social means.

Our conversation has animated us to respond to and center our response in the cries of those made poor and the cries of Earth. The devastation of extractivism is unquestionable, yet the issue is complex. We know we may be complicit in the extractive development model by consumption of the products made with extractive industries byproducts as well as through our investment in extractive companies.

Now we are called to respond in a way that continues to center the voices of the people, communities, and Earth most impacted by extractives that have transformed our understanding.

- What might we see differently and understand differently now?
- How do we ensure that we continue to move forward centered in the voices of people most impacted by extractives over stories corporations, consumerism and those who have traditionally held power?
- How do we engage with each other?
- How can we use our individual, communal and corporate voices to awaken our world to what we have learned?

How In The World Am I/Are We Called To Respond By And With Those Who Have Been Most Impacted? That Is Our Question!

How our Theological Lenses move us to transformation:

Pope Francis in *Laudato Si!* challenges us “Many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change.” Common home — kinship of all creation. Pope Francis calls for “new attitudes, new convictions — new ways of being together in this world.” We need to be against what is death-dealing, disastrous, destructive. We need to be protective and caring for all creation.

#225 *An integral ecology includes taking time to recover a serene harmony with creation, reflecting on our lifestyle and our ideals, and contemplating the Creator who lives among us and surrounds us, whose presence “must not be contrived but found, uncovered.”*

#229 *We must regain the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility for others and the world, and that being good and decent are worth it.*

Ivone Gebara [Ecofeminism Lens] shares Pope Francis belief that humans are called to change: “The invitation to love and to be mercy does not come from a reality that is external to us; rather, it is an urge that is present in our very humanity. Within our very being, there throbs in us an incredible attraction toward other beings, toward creation. We must allow our life experiences to be our first teacher.”

Daniel Castillo [Ecoliberation Lens] teaches that Christians are to respond to our planetary emergencies in a way that is grounded both in the preferential option for those made poor and Earth. Our response must reflect our belief in who God is and what God desires.

Mercy Lens challenges us to be centered in God as we go about creating conditions for all in creation to thrive.

Engaging In Transformation

As we move forward in the third dimension of our theological reflection of extractivism, we may be tempted to act big, be bold and make a significant change. Let us keep those decisions and those actions in perspective:

- **Who is leading our decision-making? What do we need to prioritize in our decision-making regarding extractives?**
- **How can we continue to learn and be open to continued transformation? We acknowledge this is not the END of the process but part of the circle.**
- **What does it mean to acknowledge our individual and collective power and ensure that our actions, while courageous and compassionate, are not driven by that power but in solidarity with BIPOC communities and Earth?**