



In response to an invitation sent through Congregation Leaders in August and advertised in *MercyNews*, 85 Sisters of Mercy across the Mercy world under the age of 60 have formed a discussion group.

Members of the group met through video conferencing for prayer together on Mercy Day and again a month later.

The group have spent time introducing themselves through the online discussion page and in the month of October shared their responses to the invitation from the 6-month MIRP report to **explore ecological conversion in relation to religious life**.

The following is a snapshot of our discussion:

We heard from one another the stories of natural disasters, including typhoons in the Philippines, when the power of nature was so evident. This month saw a hurricane in Ireland, a visible sign of the reality of global warming. We heard about cultural connections to Earth, such as Africans who depend on God not only for their spiritual needs, but also for rain, sun, fertility, peace, justice and reconciliation, God the beginning of all of life, occupies a central role in any ecological conversation. We listened to experiences lived in Ichocan, Cajamarca and in Lima and about research being conducted by Sisters to gather the impacts of mining on peasant communities.

The discussion included how our relationship with Earth calls us to live differently, to make significant changes to our lifestyles and ethical actions. We are invited not to think about the environment as an add-on to our ethics, but to use an 'integral ecology' to shape our ethics from the beginning.

We shared our fears around the changes that are demanded in our lifestyles and around the ecological crisis itself. However, we also shared our hopes. Religious life has a role to play in presenting a different and a more needed stance as engage in a mutual interdependence with the reality surrounding us'. Such is the narrative that will inform formation programs in our houses of formation, find its entry into theological colleges and stir us up in favour of the awakening of an ecological consciousness that expresses itself through concrete, and coherent options. Religious life of the NOW and the FUTURE will need to reform itself within this framework.

- Mercy Under 60s