



**Australasian Mercy Secondary
Schools Association**

Shining Lamps: Be the Light of Mercy

Term 1 – Wednesday 25 March

Term 2 – Wednesday 27 May and Wednesday 24 June

Term 3 – Wednesday 26 August

Start time: 1:00pm AEST

Delegates: Years 10/11 students with a demonstrated commitment to social justice and a willingness to collaborate and share ideas with likeminded others.

CONFERENCE THEME: SHINING LAMPS: BE THE LIGHT OF MERCY

Across four sessions throughout 2026, AMSSA student delegates will participate in virtual and in-person immersive experiences that will enhance their knowledge and understanding of the Mercy charism, and empower them to be courageous leaders within their own communities.

The initial session should include historical reflections on our Mercy story, as well as where and how Mercy is present in our times.



TERM 1, SESSION 1

Mercy in Motion: Turning Compassion into Action

FOCUS:

Mercy as action in the world. Moving beyond words into courageous, justice-centred living.

PURPOSE:

Formation in Mercy spirituality, history, and contemporary relevance, and building rapport across schools and states.

STRUCTURE:

1:00pm AEST Opening and Welcome

1:20pm AEST: National Keynote on Zoom, presented by Annette Schneider RSM

2:00pm AEST: Localised Workshop (in-person, facilitated by teachers)

- Mercy in your context: students map out local needs and examples of Mercy in their own school/community.
- Guided reflection

2:30pm AEST: National Student Dialogue (Zoom breakout rooms)

- Mixed-school discussion groups

2:50pm AEST: Closing prayer

OUTCOME:

Students have a shared language for and understanding of Mercy identity, and the conference theme.



TERM 2, SESSION 2

Living the Legacy: Young People of Mercy Today

FOCUS:

Connecting Catherine McAuley's legacy to contemporary youth identity.

PURPOSE:

Exploring how young people today embody Mercy in their schools, friendships, families, and local realities, and identify what is uniquely "Mercy" about this generation.

STRUCTURE:

1:00pm AEST: Opening and Welcome

1:20pm AEST: Keynote on Zoom (Speaker TBC)

2:00pm AEST: Localised Workshop (in-person, facilitated by teachers)
"What does Mercy look like in our school, and why does it matter?"

2:30pm AEST: National Student Dialogue (Zoom breakout rooms)

- Mixed-school discussion groups

2:50pm AEST: Closing prayer

OUTCOME

Students understand themselves as active bearers of the Mercy story, identify their strengths, and begin discerning where they feel called to lead.



TERM 2, SESSION 3

Hope Made Real: Justice, Advocacy and Citizenship

FOCUS:

Looking outward and understanding Mercy as social justice. Exploring communities of Mercy today through the work of local services in our own communities.

PURPOSE:

Connect the Mercy tradition with concrete justice issues affecting young people today. Students are encouraged to visit a local service assisting people in need, prior to this session, and reflect on their experiences.

STRUCTURE:

1:00pm AEST Opening and Welcome (10 Minutes):

1:20pm AEST: National Keynote on Zoom - Young Mercy Links

Mercy as Justice: Walking with People on the Margins Today

2:00pm AEST: Localised Workshop (in-person, facilitated by teachers)

Reflection and debriefing on community service experiences.

See:

- What did you notice in your service visit?
- Who did you meet?
- What challenged you?



Contemplate

- How does the Gospel/Mercy tradition speak into what we saw?
- What does Catherine McAuley teach us about walking beside people?
- Where do unjust systems show up in our community?

Act

- What could WE do? (small-scale, realistic, youth-led)

Students create a small “Action Proposal” summarising their idea.

2:30pm AEST: National Collaboration (Zoom breakout rooms)

Mixed-school groups compare their service experiences, common justice concerns across Australia, local issues that transcend geography (housing, mental health, equality, ecological crisis).

BREAKOUT PROMPT:

“If Catherine were your age in 2026, what issue would she be tackling first?”

2:50pm AEST: Closing Prayer

OUTCOME:

Students begin to move from reflection to action, see themselves as justice-bearers in Catherine’s spirit, and prepare to design a Mercy Leadership Project for Session 4.



TERM 3, SESSION 4

Be the Light: Mercy Leadership for a Hope-Filled Future

FOCUS:

Forming young leaders of Mercy in a complex, fractured world. How to be the light of Mercy in your relationships, communities and lives beyond school.

Final session: Becoming a “light of Mercy” in workplaces, relationships, and community life beyond school.

PURPOSE:

To integrate the learning and experiences from Sessions 1–3 and empower students to step into leadership—grounded in Mercy values, relational presence, and a commitment to justice. Students articulate a shared national vision for Mercy leadership and present their collaborative project ideas.

STRUCTURE:

1:00pm AEST: Opening and Welcome

1:20pm AEST: National Keynote: Sheila Curran RSM, from Ireland

2:00pm AEST: Localised Workshop (in-person, teacher-led)

Theme: “What kind of Mercy leader do I want to be?”

Refining region-based action proposals.

2:30pm AEST: National breakout discussions on Zoom

2:50pm AEST: Closing prayer

OUTCOME:

Students leave inspired as Mercy leaders centred in compassion, ready to act for justice, equipped to walk with dignity and courage into their communities, relationships, and futures.

They understand their agency, their voice, and their place in the living Mercy story. They finish the series united by a shared commitment to carrying the light of Mercy forward.