



FORMATION SESSION 5:

MAM Value of Hope

‘Trust in Divine Providence’ (Spirituality of Possibility) refer: btewk.com.au

There are many different approaches to formation as well as stages or phases that participants experience while engaged in formation. The overall goal is to assist leaders to be confident and competent in guiding and directing their ministries. A critical element in effective leadership formation for MAM is to realize that it is beyond theory and focused on the lived experience of mission and ministry. It involves information and understanding of content yet goes beyond this to elicit commitment to lived values... Extract from MAM Leadership Framework.

The relationship between the Foundational Christian story of Jesus, the Mary Aikenhead tradition and the evolving spirit of Mary Aikenhead Ministries, should be consistent in the delivery of all mission formation programs in accordance with our commitment to the preferential option for the poor.

The principles, which guide mission development, are forward-looking and engage in the three levels of story: the Enduring story of God through Jesus, the Expressive story of Mary Aikenhead and the Evolving story of the Spirit alive in the hearts of those engaged in the service through Mary Aikenhead Ministries. Mission formation is an important and ongoing priority in the context of Mary Aikenhead Education Australia; it is central to who we are and what we do. ... Extract from the MAEA Formation Policy

	Program and Focus	Guide Notes
Welcome Setting the Scene: 5 min	Leader: This session is intended as invitational, providing the space to be forward-looking and to reflect on the story you/ we are part of. This is a place of trust. Hope and Trust in Divine Providence.... How do we understand this?	
Scripture: 5 min	From MAM Vision, Mission and Values p.13: ‘Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.’ John 14:27 ...Mary Aikenhead Ministries trust in the providence of God and seek to provide a wide range of ministries that are beacons of hope...	Copy pages 13 from VM&V

	Today's session asks us to think about our particular ministry and how we strive to be a ministry of hope. Click here	
<i>By this Everyone Will Know...</i> refer btewk.com.au 5 min	If time and internet access permit, spend 5 minutes as a group looking at the dimension 'Trust in Divine Providence' - consider how this dimension can form and inform your work. Refer btewk.com.au	
20-25 minutes	<p>a) There are four different stimulus pieces that will prompt participants' thinking and reflections on the value of 'Hope' and 'Trusting in Divine Providence'. Invite/ allocate each person one piece and then match them up with another person who has read the same piece. - Discuss the question, allow 7-10 minutes.</p> <p>b) In the whole group, share the reflections of the four pieces. 10-15 minutes, depending on the group.</p> <p>Alternatively, if the group is small, combine a) and b) into the same discussion.</p>	
Heritage and Story – Informing the present and future... 20 min	<p>Reference: Ministry of Love: Education Pages 32-37. Provide a copy for each participant. Click here</p> <p>Leader to share a summary overview of these pages, then the group consider the following:</p> <p><i>Hope and Trust in Divine Providence...</i> As a leader/ director within MAM, what is being asked of me?</p>	
Concluding comment 3 min	<p>Leader:</p> <p><i>Invite participants to sit quietly for a couple of minutes: Ponder own reflections, motivations and commitments as you collectively lead and serve your college. If reflective music available include.</i></p>	
Final Prayer/ Reflection. 5 min	<i>Resource 2: God of Love, Justice, Compassion and Hope</i>	Attached

Reference Material:

Bible

Mary Aikenhead Ministries' Vision, Values and Mission

By this Everyone Will Know... refer <https://www.btewk.com.au/>

Ministry of Love: Education Pages 32-37

RESOURCE 1: articles from Thomas Groome, Joyce Rupp, Joan Chittister.

Pilgrims... - Thomas Groome

We are a pilgrim people in time, coming down through history, moving forward.... Along the way we develop and devise ways of being in time, with systems and artefacts to support us in being together. But the ongoingness of the pilgrimage is not something automatic, as if driven by a mechanistic source outside of us.

It is not a conveyor belt carrying us forward even as we stand still. There is a pilgrimage only because we are pilgrims... Pilgrims can be where they are, only because of where pilgrims before them have been, and they will be where they will be because of where they are now.

It is imperative that the past of the pilgrims' progress be intentionally carried forward into the present as we work into our future. Without it we cannot know who we are, why we are here, or where we can go. Without a common past to live out of we become aimless and wandering individuals instead of a pilgrim people. Thus, the past of our people, with its stories, discoveries, customs, myths, symbols, rituals, artefacts, systems, institutions, skills and so forth are precisely why we can have the present we can have and out of it, shape our future.

Question: In my role, how do I/we intentionally carry the past of pilgrim's progress into the present as we work into our shared future?

The Quality of Our Hearts – from *Constant Hope* - Joyce Rupp

'A good tree does not bear rotten fruit, nor does a rotten tree bear good fruit.' Luke 6:43

Jesus often referred to the landscape around him to present some basic principles. In the teaching form Luke's gospel, he uses clear contrasts to make a point about the quality of our hearts. First, he compares good fruit to rotten fruit. Then he adds weight to this by reminding the people they cannot 'pick figs from thorn bushes.' As if that is not enough, Jesus tosses in yet another image by saying that cannot 'gather grapes from brambles.' He obviously felt rather strongly about his teaching: *the quality of what we do externally comes forth from how we are internally*. What is in the heart makes a great deal of difference. Our intentions matter. There are days when I am a tree with bushels of fine fruit. On other days nary an edible piece can be found. What makes the difference between the two? My 'tree' lacks good fruit when I lose sight of who reigns at the centre of my life, when I forget love as my core inspiration by only concentrating on my self-oriented desires, or when I act in a way that disparages others' well-being.

Question: How would you describe your basic quality of heart in what you do?

Sent Forth - from *Constant Hope* - Joyce Rupp

He summoned the Twelve and gave them power. Luke 9:1

What must the Twelve have felt when Jesus summoned and 'sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.' (Luke 9:2) Did their egos momentarily become puffed up with their power – until the reality of what they were to do became clear to them? Did they hesitate and question whether they were fully prepared for what lay ahead? There is no indication of this. Rather, the summoning is followed immediately with 'Then they set out...' (v.6.). So, the Twelve must have trusted the power given to them, believing they would have what was needed for each situation. There have been times when I longed to have that kind of trust, especially when I sensed an interior summoning to do something new. I remember feeling inadequate at the first retreat I gave, when I was assigned my first patient as a hospice volunteer, and the first time I sat across from another person as his spiritual director. My fear and anxiousness eventually eased with the realization that God's power was there for me if I would allow this gift to be used.

Question: How do you see the power of God at work in your life? What does it look like?

Change – From: *The Story of Ruth: Twelve Moments in Every Woman's Life* - Joan Chittister

'...In the country of Moab, Naomi heard that the Lord had taken note of his people and given them food. Accompanied by her two daughters-in-law, she left the place where she had been living; and they set out on the road back to Judah.' Ruth 1: 6-7

Confronted with the consequences of loss, Naomi, Ruth and Orpah face great changes in their lives. They can do everything possible to minimise them, to deny them, to ignore them, or they can see them for what they are: God's invitations to development... Change and loss are two different things. Loss takes something away from life. Change adds something to it. Loss is a black well; change is a fork in the road. Loss is not an option; it is a necessary and inevitable part of life. Change, on the other hand, is only a possibility...It can be borne reluctantly, or it can be chosen. Change that is real is different. It is a change that is out of my control...These are the changes that come from life's discontinuities. The spiritual offshoot of discontinuity, however, is evolution. It grows us. It cracks us open to God in whole new ways. Creation goes on creating us. Given new horizons, we become new people...Change points are those moments in life at which we get inside ourselves to find that we are not, at the end, really one person at all. We are many...Every stage of life is another grace of being that teaches us something new about ourselves...that enables us to learn something deeper about our God... Like Naomi and her daughters-in-law, change points us up the road of reflection... And the mosaic of life shifts again as we pilgrim it, awake to the possibility as we have not been for ages and attuned to the God who beckons us, who companions us on the way.

Question: What learnings about change from this reflection support my/our work?

RESOURCE 2: Concluding Prayer:

God of Love, Justice, Compassion and Hope

Ours are the hands and hearts, through which you work, weaving justice and freedom, weaving hope and life.

May we be people who always see the dignity and potential in others, enabling them to find ways of weaving their own lives, meaningfully, whoever they are, wherever they are.

May we be humble and optimistic in our work, knowing and trusting that it is your work and that you will provide.

May we be steadfast in our search for truth, opportunities and solutions, and in our willingness to stand with and work on behalf of those who suffer injustice.

All: And may we find strength in the connections that make us community, in your service, the service of those in need and the service of each person in our college community.

We make this prayer, in the name of Christ Jesus, who lives forever and ever.

Amen