



# GREAT TENDERNESS IN ALL THINGS



Catherine reminded her companion to have '**great tenderness in all things**' as they walked the streets and alleys in poverty stricken Dublin.

I recently valued scrolling through our Mercy Works Facebook page reading back over the post throughout the year enjoying their creativity and variety. Lauren Stariha, our Communications Officer, regularly posts some lovely stories, photos and videos from our projects as they happen around Australia, Papua New Guinea and Timor Leste. I was reminded of a phrase used often by Catherine McAuley, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy. Catherine reminded her companions to have “great tenderness in all things” as they walked the streets and alleys in poverty-stricken Dublin.

These same words of Catherine can be a reminder to us of what is at the heart of the Christmas story - “great tenderness in all things”. The Christ child teaches us all about the need for “great tenderness” when we are faced with human vulnerability and weakness. Many of our Mercy Works projects aim to live out this same “great tenderness” in action.

With our tree planting project with the youth in Mt Hagen, PNG they put back **"great tenderness"** into our ravished Mother Earth and improve the environment by planting thousands of trees.

Our Maucatar Nutrition project at the health clinic in Maliana in Timor Leste brings **"great tenderness"** to improve the nutrition of mothers and children. This program has introduced egg-laying chickens, a source of nutrition, in 22 villages in the region.

Mercy Connect volunteers in various places across Australia bring **"great tenderness"** to mentoring asylum seekers and refugees, students and adults, as they settle into a whole new country. They provide support that nurtures well-being, self-esteem and language skills.

So I invite each of us when we gather with our families, communities and friends this Christmas to bring **"great tenderness in all things"** to all our relationships and to all our actions, a reflection of the presence of the Christ child in and to each other.

Sally Bradley RSM  
**Executive Director**  
MERCY WORKS



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