

# Pathways of Mercy Project

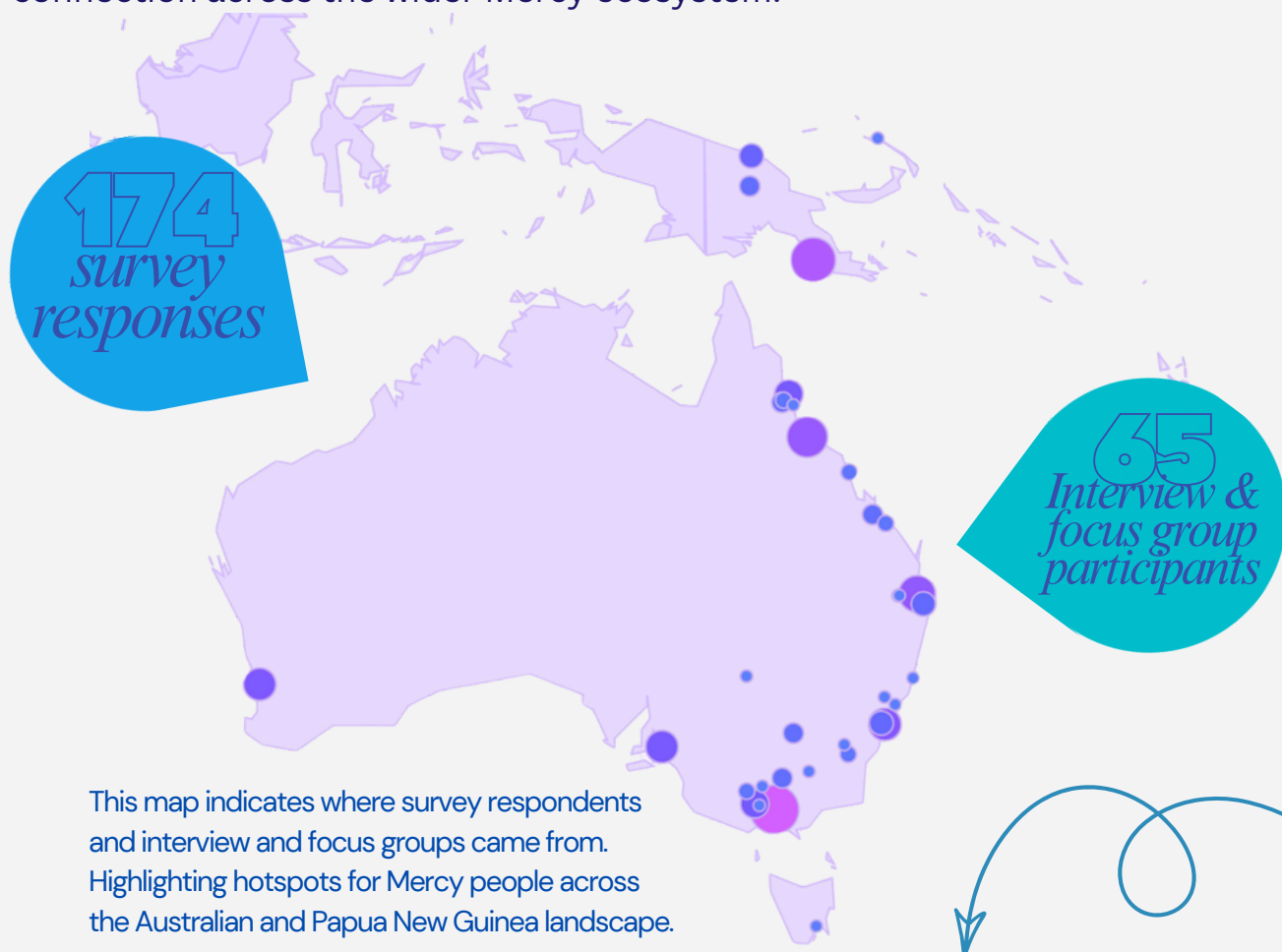


INSTITUTE OF  
SISTERS of MERCY  
OF AUSTRALIA & PAPUA NEW GUINEA

## WHAT IS PATHWAYS OF MERCY ALL ABOUT?

The Pathways of Mercy project was initiated by the Leadership team of the Institute of Sisters of Mercy Australia and Papua New Guinea to explore how lay people connected with Mercy across ministries, generations, and life stages might continue to live, lead, and shape Mercy into the future. As the context of Mercy evolves, with fewer Sisters in active ministry and increasingly diverse lay engagement, the project seeks to understand what supports, structures, and pathways are needed to sustain the Mercy charism beyond traditional institutional boundaries.

The project is grounded in a strong desire expressed by Mercy people to remain connected, formed, and engaged in mission, justice, and community in and outside of formal employment within Mercy ministries or PJPs. Pathways of Mercy is not intended to replace existing structures, but rather to listen deeply, identify gaps and opportunities, and propose ways to strengthen connection across the wider Mercy ecosystem.



This map indicates where survey respondents and interview and focus groups came from. Highlighting hotspots for Mercy people across the Australian and Papua New Guinea landscape.

### Network

**A Formalised and Inclusive Mercy Network** that connects people across cohorts, regions, and generations.

### Connection

**Central Connector Role** e.g. mission animator or pathways coordinator) to link people, projects, and resources.

### Mentoring

**Structured and Inclusive Mentoring Platform** that enables connection, formation, and action across regions and cohorts.

### Formation

**Expanded and Make Accessible Formation Opportunities** beyond current opportunities especially for lay people outside of current ministries and other cohorts.

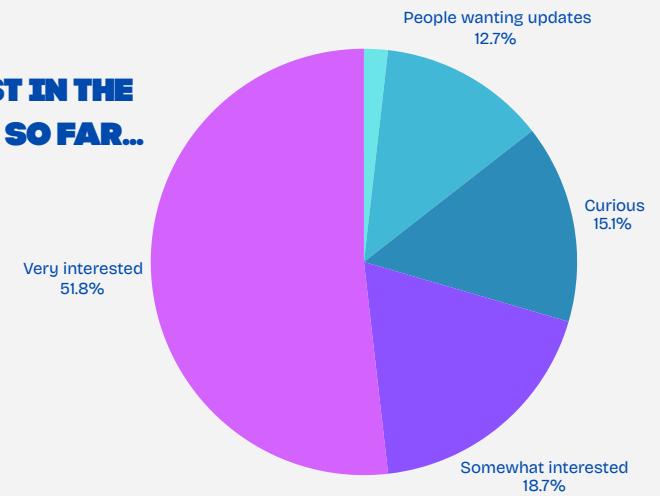
### Resource

**Centralised Resource and Story Space** to share formation materials, stories, and tools.

### Action

**Collective Mercy in Action** with an emphasis on advocacy, justice, and action as core expressions of Mercy charism.

## INTEREST IN THE PROJECT SO FAR...



## THE PROJECT SO FAR...

The project has taken a two phase approach, the first a research component which explored the want and need for such a project to exist and now, the second, looking to create a framework and implementation plan for a structure that can sustainably address these needs.

The research took a mixed methods approach, designed to clearly map current lay Mercy connections and explore the needs, wants and values of Mercy people across Australia and Papua New Guinea. It can be conducted in two parts the first a mapping survey that focused on connection, values and interest and then the second focus groups and interviews which delved deeper and explored these themes again as well as the needs, wants, challenges and opportunities.

Phase 1 showed a clear alignment between broad survey data and lived experience, reinforcing both the depth of commitment to Mercy and the need for intentional structures to support future engagement. Across both phases, the Pathways of Mercy Reference Group identified **six interconnected recommendations** consistently emerged. These recommendations are not standalone, rather the research indicates they are best addressed together, rather than in isolation.

## WHATS NEXT?

This next phase of the Pathways of Mercy project is prioritising the exploration and designing an inclusive Mercy network, within which the other five recommendations can be embedded. Led by the Pathways of Mercy Reference group and the Project Officer, this stage will work alongside leadership and those interested in the project to engage relevant stakeholder and thematic experts in putting together a proposal and implementation plan for an Inclusive Mercy Network across Australia and Papua New Guinea. This process will help to ensure the proposed network is both viable and sustainable.

SUBSCRIBE

**A message from the Pathways of Mercy Reference Group**

WE VALUE YOUR VOICE, YOUR STORY AND YOUR CONNECTION TO MERCY. IF YOU'D LIKE TO LEARN MORE OR EXPLORE HOW YOU MIGHT BE INVOLVED, WE WARMLY INVITE YOU TO...

CONNECT WITH US

