



AUGUST 2016: CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

Bulletin Reflection - *This reflection is sized to fit in a column of a parish bulletin.*

Jubilee Year of Mercy – The Corporal Works of Mercy

Jesus was a person of **action** who showed mercy and compassion in concrete ways. Jesus fed the hungry, sheltered those in need, visited the sick and buried the dead. Jesus took time and paid close attention to recognize the basic needs of the persons He encountered. He challenges us to do the same. The Catechism teaches that “human misery elicited the compassion of Christ the Savior. Hence, those who are oppressed by poverty are the object of a preferential love on the part of the Church” (2448).

The Corporal Works of Mercy are a roadmap for each of us to share in Jesus’ ministry. As St. Teresa of Avila reminds us: “Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which to look out Christ’s compassion to the world. Yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good.” Actions such as feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick and burying the dead are all actions that extend God’s compassion and mercy.

The scriptural basis for the works of mercy are laid out in Matthew 25 when Jesus reminds us that when we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, visit the sick and imprisoned, we are doing it for HIM. The works of mercy are not optional but rather essential to living the Christian life of holiness and goodness. We are not only to receive the mercy of God but to use it by being merciful to others through our actions.
–Anne Ayella, Diocesan Director, Catholic Relief Services

How to Live It

Discern the ways that God is calling to more deeply integrate the corporal works of mercy in your life. Here are all seven: Feed the hungry; Give drink to the thirsty; Clothe the naked; Shelter the homeless; Visit the sick; Visit the imprisoned; Bury the dead. To learn about practical ways to live the works of mercy, visit archphila.org/mercy/works.

Quote from Catholic Tradition:

“Extend your mercy towards others, so that there can be no one in need whom you meet without helping. For what hope is there for us if God should withdraw His Mercy from us?” -St. Vincent de Paul

“There is a terrible hunger for love. We all experience that in our lives - the pain, the loneliness. We must have the courage to recognize it. The poor you may have right in your own family. Find them. Love them.” -Blessed Teresa of Calcutta (Mother Teresa)

To continue reflecting on this theme, consider one of these resources!

- **Recommended Book for the Month:** *What to Do When Jesus Is Hungry?*, Fr. Andrew Apostoli, CFR
- **Lighthouse Catholic Media CD:** *Encountering the Poor: Biblical Roots for Catholic Social Teaching* by Dr. Tim Gray