

Jubilee Year of Mercy – Jesus Christ, Mercy Incarnate (from <http://archphila.org/mercy>)

What is mercy? It is “heartfelt sympathy for another’s distress.” Mercy is a generous readiness to help others even if they have brought their troubles on themselves. Even more, mercy is loving compassion that is willing to forgive insults and injury.

God is just, but we have the courage to ask him to help us in our misery and forgive us our trespasses because we know that he is “slow to anger and abounding in mercy” (Psalm 103:8). God does not treat us as our sins deserve, but invites us to repent and assures us of his willingness to forgive.

As disciples of Jesus Christ who is “Divine Mercy incarnate,” we have confidence in God’s mercy. Jesus fed the hungry, healed the sick, drove out demons, and raised the dead. He sought out sinners, ate with them, and offered them forgiveness and new life in his kingdom. In parables, Jesus taught that the Father’s mercy exceeds all expectations and is bestowed on the most unlikely candidates.

Jesus’ words were confirmed by his deeds. The Son of God assumed not only our flesh, but our burdens, our pain, and our sins. He took our part and our place, and freely laid down his life on the wood of the cross to redeem us. He displayed the astonishing mercy of God who “did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all” (Romans 8:32).

Jesus admonishes us: “Be merciful just as your heavenly Father is merciful” (Luke 6:36).
-Sr. Sara Butler, MSBT

How to Live It

This month, spend time prayerfully reading the Gospel of St. Luke, placing yourself in each of the stories. Listen to what Jesus says as if spoken to you and attend to his actions as if addressed to you. Allow Christ’s presence in the Word of God to transform your thinking and acting so as to more closely imitate Christ’s merciful love.

Quote from Catholic Tradition:

“In this way the cross of Christ, on which the Son, consubstantial with the Father, renders full justice to God, is also a radical revelation of mercy, or rather the love that goes against what constitutes the very root of evil in the history of man: sin and death. The cross is the most powerful condescension of God to man...The cross is like a touch of eternal love upon the most painful wounds of man’s earthly existence...”

-Pope St. John Paul II, *Dives in Misericordia* 8

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

- **Recommended Reading for the Month:** Gospel of St. Luke
- **Lighthouse Catholic Media CD:** *Jesus the Bridegroom: The Greatest Love Story Ever Told*, by Dr. Brant Pitre