

We begin a new adventure together and as individuals today!

Pope Francis has designated December 8, 2015 through the Feast of Christ the King in November 2016 as a

“Jubilee Year of Mercy.”

So many thoughts might run through our heads:

- What IS mercy?
- I don't deserve mercy.
- How do I forgive?
- I thought I had forgiven but everything keeps coming back over me again.
 - What if the other person never admits he or she is wrong?
 - What is Compassion?
- I've heard about corporal and spiritual works of mercy, but what are they?
 - Can I accept God's mercy? What would that feel like?
 - Can I accept others' mercy? What would that feel like?
- Can I show God's mercy? I am afraid because I don't know what it will require of me.

I am the door of Life.

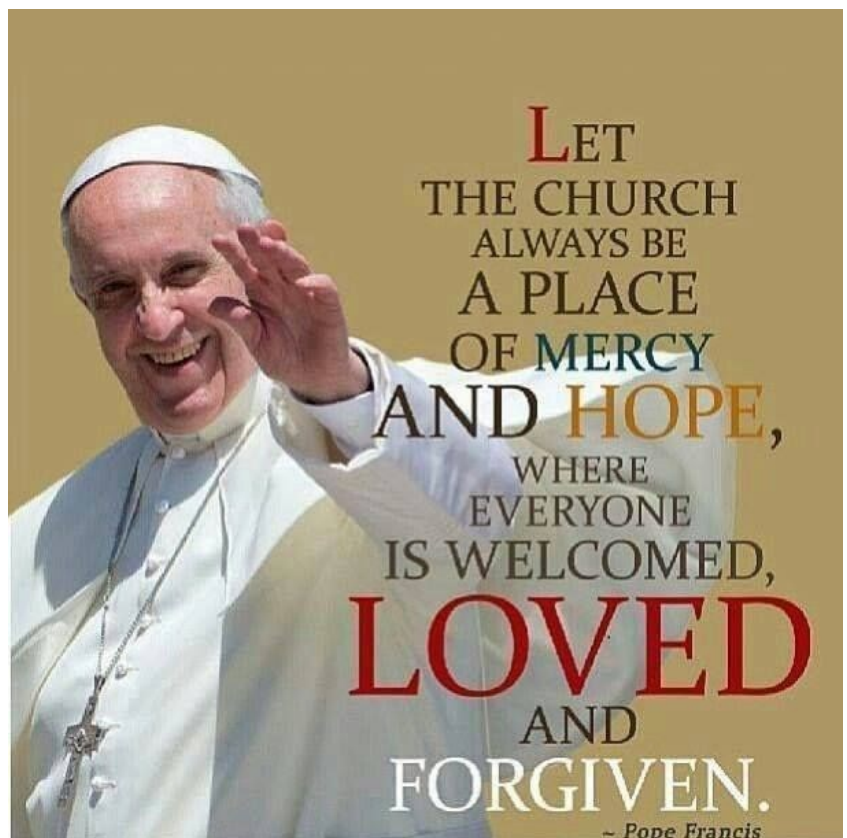
I entreat all: “Enter!”

*Whoever seeks the joys of heaven will
cross through me.*

*He who was born of the Virgin but not
created by the Father*

*– he himself will save those who enter
and guide those who go out.*

Engraved on the Church of Saint George in Milan, 1505



What
is

Mercy ?

1. kind or forgiving treatment of someone who could be treated harshly
2. kindness or help given to people who are in a very bad or desperate situation

1. Jesus' example of the Prodigal Son's Father



(1773) by Pompeo Batoni

2. Jesus' example of the Good Samaritan



(1880) by Aimé Morot

We pray that we have the courage and strength to show these faces of mercy to others when God challenges us to do so. We must also remember, though, **that Mercy has a face that often goes unseen . . . not because it isn't there but because we do not trust that we will see it.** . . . **THE MERCIFUL FACE OF GOD LOOKING AT US.**

Pope Francis:

“What a beautiful truth of faith this is for our lives: the mercy of **God!** God’s love for us is so great, so deep; it is an unending love, one which always takes us by the hand and supports us, lifts us up and leads us on.”

“God’s mercy can make even the driest land become a garden, can restore life to dry bones. Let us be renewed by God’s mercy, let us be loved by Jesus, let us enable the power of his love to transform our lives, too; and let us become agents of mercy, channels through which God can water the earth, protect all creation, and make justice and peace flourish.”

THE SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY

1. Admonish the sinner
2. Instruct the ignorant
3. Counsel the doubtful
4. Bear wrongs patiently
5. Forgive all injuries
6. Comfort the sick
7. Pray for the living and the dead

The Corporal Works of Mercy are kind acts by which we help our neighbors with their everyday material and physical needs. The Spiritual Works of Mercy are kind acts by which we help our neighbors with their everyday spiritual and emotional needs. While the **Corporal** Works of Mercy are fairly self-explanatory, some of the **Spiritual** Works of Mercy might need some clarification or explanation.

Admonish the sinner

The word “admonish” comes from the Latin verb *monere* meaning to warn, advise, or alert someone to a threat or danger. As such, its purpose is the good of another; it is an act of love and concern. To admonish the sinner is not to belittle or humiliate him, but rather to alert him to the danger of a sinful course of action. This admonishment is rooted in love, not pride. <http://blog.adw.org/2015/04/admonish-the-sinner-a-reflection-on-the-first-spiritual-work-of-mercy/>

Instruct the ignorant

As humans we can have intellectual, moral, and spiritual ignorance. We are ignorant when we lack knowledge or awareness about a specific subject or lack knowledge or awareness in general. Many of us, for example, are ignorant about nuclear physics or physics in general. We instruct the ignorant by giving them knowledge—by helping them seek the truth—which will, as Jesus says, make them free. Instructing the ignorant, then, is also rooted in love rather than pride. The biggest challenge here is that we do not pass on our own ignorance as knowledge. We must strive for understanding the whole truth and not just a version of it.

Counsel the doubtful

We all experience doubt and confusion at times when faced with challenges or difficult certain decisions. Giving good advice is an act of charity and justice; we ask the Holy Spirit to give us the gift of good counsel in order to help others.

Forgive all injuries

Saint Pope John Paull II met the man who attempted to assassinate him; Marietta Jaeger Lane forgave the man who murdered her daughter; Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Others can hurt us so deeply in all kinds of ways. Some may feel remorse. Others may dig their heels in, believing that their actions were justified. Sometimes it feels that our hearts would have to be wrenched out of us in order to be able to forgive someone who has wronged hurt us. Forgiveness is one of the most powerful and liberating human experiences—and it is often the most difficult acts to offer. Mercy comes to the forgiver and to the forgiven.

Pray for the living and the dead every day . . . for guidance, for help, for grace, in thanks, and for intercession.

Resource: <http://www.slideshare.net/pcuadra/the-seven-spiritual-works-of-mercy>



LET'S JOURNEY TOGETHER IN THE LIGHT OF MERCY!

Just as St. Helen School has set aside a Colossians virtue for our teachers and students to focus on each month, our parish has also designated a particular Corporal and Spiritual Work of Mercy for us to dedicate ourselves to each month . . .

Stepping out of our comfort zones

may be necessary.

Month	Corporal Work of Mercy	Spiritual Work of Mercy	Colossians Virtue
December	Shelter the homeless	Forgive all injuries	Compassion
January	Bury the dead	Pray for the living and the dead	Humility
February	Visit the sick	Instruct the ignorant	Love
March	Visit those in prison	Admonish the sinner	Forgiveness
April	Clothe the naked	Counsel the doubtful	Gentleness
May	Feed the hungry	Bear wrongs patiently	Patience
June	Give drink to the thirsty	Comfort the sorrowful	Your choice/need
July	Shelter the homeless	Forgive all injuries	Your choice/need
August	Comfort the sick	Counsel the doubtful	Kindness
September	Clothe the naked	Instruct the ignorant	Kindness
October	Bury the dead	Bear wrongs patiently	Peace
November	Feed the hungry	Pray for the living and the dead	Thankfulness

PRAYER FOR THE EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE OF MERCY

Lord Jesus Christ,

you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father
and have told us that whoever sees you sees Him.
Show us your face and we will be saved.

Your loving gaze

freed Zacchaeus and Matthew from being enslaved by money,
freed the adulteress and Magdalene from seeking happiness
only in created things,
made Peter weep after his betrayal,
and assured Paradise to the repentant thief.

Let us hear, as if addressed to each one of us,
the words you spoke to the Samaritan woman:
“If you knew the gift of God!”

You are the visible face of the invisible Father,
of the God who manifests his power above all
by forgiveness and mercy:
*let the Church be your visible face in the world,
its Lord risen and glorified.*

You will that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness
in order that they may feel compassion
for those in ignorance and error:
*let everyone who approaches them feel sought after,
loved, and forgiven by God.*

Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its anointing
so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord,
and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm,
may bring good news to the poor,
proclaim liberty to the captives and the oppressed,
and restore sight to the blind.

We ask this through the intercession of Mary,
Mother of Mercy,
you who live and reign with the Father,
and the Holy Spirit
for ever and ever. Amen.

Mercy is relief, release, joy, freedom, love, and lightness of being!

The path Mercy takes *might be* rough and painful,
but the end destination is all things good in and through Jesus.

* * *

We must NEVER think we do not DESERVE God's mercy or the mercy of others,
and we must never sell ourselves short of extending it.

Know Mercy. Show Mercy.

* * *

Mercy is a gift that invites us to "come as we are."

* * *

Showing Mercy is a gift and also a challenge,
whether it be in terms of forgiveness or extending love and compassion to those in
need—and "those in need" include our family members, friends, neighbors, and
co-workers as much as it does strangers.

TAKE THE MERCY CHALLENGE

No ice, no bucket, no



video camera required

... just a heart that is willing to open
a little further than it thinks it can go!

