

The Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy are good for the body and the soul, of both performer and recipient alike. These gems of Catholic action provide a visible means of acting on one's faith commitment. An excuse like, "We have a social ministry committee at church to do those things" just isn't valid because each of us has a personal obligation to be like Christ and to bear witness to our Catholic faith through acts of justice and charity. We can't leave it up to a committee.

Think about it. Pray over it. Then add to your self-improvement: schedule the practice, in some way, of the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy. Christ's own works should provide motivation: *whatsoever you do to the least of My brothers that you do unto Me. (Mt: 25:40)*

THE GOOD SAMARITAN- A PARABLE OF MERCY (LK10:29-37)

To a lawyer who asked Him." And who is my neighbor?" Jesus responded with the parable of the Good Samaritan, ending the parable with the exhortation, "Go and do likewise." The usual interpretation is that we ought to be good Samaritans when we see our neighbor in need. And this is right: we must be merciful to those in misery.

There is, however, another way to interpret the message of the parable, and that is to identify ourselves with the poor man who has been robbed, stripped, and beaten up. We are the poor miserable one left on the side of the road, half dead. Jesus is the Good Samaritan who comes along as our Savior to bind up our wounds, pouring oil and wine on them, and bearing us to the place of rest where He takes care of us and pays the price for all our needs.

This is Mercy! Jesus has reached out to us while we were still sinners and laid down His life for us (Rom 5:6-8). Jesus has washed us clean through the water of Baptism, anointing us with His Holy Spirit, feeding us with His own Body and Blood, bringing us home into His Body, the Church. All of this love through no merit of our own. That is Divine Mercy- and He wants no one to escape from that Mercy!

“BE MERCIFUL EVEN AS YOUR FATHER IS MERCIFUL” (LK6:36)

“Jesus Christ taught that man not only receives and experiences the Mercy of God, but that he is also called “to practice Mercy’s towards others. “(Mt 5:7). The Church sees in these words a call to action, and she tries to practice Mercy. All the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount indicate the way of conversion and of reform of life, but the one referring to those who are Merciful is particularly eloquent in this regard. Man attains to the merciful love of God, His Mercy, to the extent that love towards his neighbor, (#14 Rich in Mercy, John Paul II).

THE CHURCH TEACHES US TO BE MERCIFUL IN VARIOUS WAYS:

THE SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY:

1. To admonish the sinners.
2. To instruct the uninformed.
3. To counsel the doubtful.
4. To comfort the sorrowful.
5. To bear wrongs patiently.
6. To forgive offenses.
7. To pray for the living and the dead.

THE CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY:

1. To feed the hungry.
2. To give drink to the thirsty.
3. To clothe the naked.
4. To shelter the homeless.
5. To visit the sick.
6. To visit the imprisoned.
7. To bury the dead.

DEEDS OF MERCY

Our Lord's works: "I demand from you deeds of Mercy, which are to arise out of love for Me. You are to show Mercy to your neighbors always and every-where. You must not shrink from this or try to excuse or absolve yourself from it. I am giving you three ways of exercising Mercy toward your neighbor: the first –by deed, the second- by word, the third-by prayer. In these three degrees is contained the fullness of love for Me. By this means a soul glorifies and pays reverence to My Mercy" (Diary of St Faustina Kowalska#742).

“... Write this for the many souls who are often worried because they do not have the material means with which to carry out an act of Mercy. Yet spiritual Mercy, which requires neither permission or storehouses, is much more meritorious and is within the grasp of every soul. If a soul does not exercise Mercy somehow or other, it will not obtain My Mercy on the day of judgment. Oh, if only souls knew how to gather eternal treasure for themselves they would not be judged, for they would forestall My judgment with their Mercy” (#1317)

THE DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET
Group founded April 12, 2012
Atlanta, GA



The Chaplet of The Divine Mercy

Oh, and one other thing about the Three O'clock Hour: Jesus promised that it's a huge time of grace: "This is the hour of great mercy for the whole world. ... I will refuse nothing to the soul that makes a request of Me in virtue of My Passion" (1320). Thus, we can look at this hour as a kind of mini-Mercy Sunday that we have every day. So, it's also a great time to pray for our loved ones, especially for the conversion of unrepentant sinners, and to recite the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

1. Make the Sign of the Cross.

2. Optional Opening Prayers.

You expired, Jesus, but the source of life gushed forth for souls, and the ocean of mercy opened up for the whole world. O Fount of Life, unfathomable Divine Mercy, envelop the whole world and empty Yourself out upon us.

***O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fountain of Mercy for us, I trust in You! (Say three times)

3. One Our Father and One Hail Mary.

4. The Apostle's Creed.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day He rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

5. On the large bead before each decade:

Eternal Father, I offer you the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your Dearly Beloved Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ. * In atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.

6. On the ten small beads of each decade, say:

For the sake of His sorrowful Passion. * Have mercy on us and on the whole world.

7. Conclude with (Say three times):

Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

8. Optional Closing Prayer:

Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is Love and Mercy itself.

The Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy how many of us can even name them let alone say that we sincerely attempt to practice them? Back in catechism lessons we learned that doing these works of mercy was our Christian duty. It was also a means of satisfying the temporal punishment due to sin. It was being like Christ. Those reasons are still valued and a fresh look at these works of Mercy should inspire us to take up their cause if we have been forgetting the need for doing Mercy in our day

SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY

ADMONISH SINNERS.

Correction is sometimes as hard to give as it is to take It means standing up for moral principles at work, at school, in politics, or in the home. It means taking time to give needed correction, even discipline, especially to children whose minds are impressionable and whose wills are not yet steadfast in truth.

INSTRUCT THE UNINFORMED.

Not everyone can be a school teacher, but taking time out to help a child with math or selling or religion homework is instruction as well. So is showing the ropes to a new person at work, teaching CCD, and reminding oneself and one's own religious values often leaves a thought provoking impression on others.

CONSEL THE DOUBTFUL.

Advice is cheap, so the saying goes, but counsel implies something more loving. It's a Christian approach to solving problem, Doubts about one's faith, about abortion, marriage, or questions arising from death or divorce, do not need a brush-off with a lame excuse. Doubts need direction in the Christian point of view.

COMFORT THE SORROWFUL.

Sorrow and suffering take many forms: death, divorce, grave illness, unemployment, family problem, mental distress, surgery. How many of these sorrows afflict the people around us and yet go unnoticed without so much as a kind word, without so much as a whispered prayer's ? Sometimes giving a sympathetic ear or just "being with" a sorrowing person is a great act of Mercy.

BEAR WRONGS PATIENTLY.

Patience - the bane of a world which hurries only to have to stand in line. Strive for patience with the small child's constant prattling or the chronic complaints of the elderly. Try patience with the slowness of the freeway traffic or the drudgery of a job. Maintain patience with those who never say a kind word, with those whose nagging puts your teeth on edge. Have patience with your own personal pain and suffering; don't add to griping around you.

FORGIVE OFFENSES.

Forgive the sharp criticism, the angry retort so easily and thoughtlessly said. Physical injuries heal faster than mental or spiritual ones; dwelling on a wrong only increases its size, breeding hatred, the antithesis of Christ's love. Injuries, voluntary or involuntary, are inescapable; forgiveness heals them.

PRAY FOR THE LIVING AND THE DEAD.

It is impossible to physically aid the many people-even those in our own families-who need our help. But we can reach out to them in prayer. All people, dead or alive, benefit from a remembrance in prayer, including those praying.

CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY



FEED THE HUNGRY. GIVE DRINK TO THE THIRSTY.

These two works of Mercy start out in the home, from the hot meal on the table or the cup of water for a child, and extend to the community. The unemployed, the elderly, and the sick benefit from care programs, but these programs are ineffective without food donations, cash contributions, and volunteered time. The doer of Mercy can also support national and religious relief organizations and self-help projects such as the market or the repair shop run by a minority group.

CLOTHE THE NAKED.

Our Savior tells us that if a person has two coats he should give one away. Perhaps the need isn't apparent in the immediate neighborhood but it does exist. Excess clothing can be donated to: Clothing Shelf, Birthright, Maternity Closet, the Bishops' Thanksgiving Clothing Drive, or local refugee aid groups. Without the excess, storage problems disappear.

SHELTER THE HOMELESS.

The unemployed living in cars or abandoned

tunnels and caves are in desperate straits and those who help them need bacterial and spiritual support. Aging relatives may just as homeless when they must leave their homes for apartments or are made to feel unwelcome-even as visitors- in the homes of their kin. The refugees transplanted to a strange country, the building tenants forced out of their apartments by fire or eviction, the battered wife or unwed mother on her own are all homeless in need of shelter, companionship help in resettlement.

COMFORT THE IMPRISONED.

Helping captives or the imprisoned is not limited to joining prison volunteer organizations. Some people are imprisoned within the walls of their own homes-the handicapped, the sick, the elderly, the new mother. For them, ransom may be a visit, a shopping trip, a helping hand once a week, or merely a short chat on the telephone.

VISIT THE SICK.

Hospital visits or the semi-weekly trudges to the nursing home are often viewed with chagrin. But put yourself in their shoes. A short visit to a hospital room, a neighbor's bedside, or the local nursing home is time-consuming, but for the person being visited, that time which is given is very precious.

BURY THE DEAD.

Plague-ridden bodies no longer litter the streets. Modern funeral practices have taken the details of caring for the dead off our hands. But the personal expression of sympathy, the hug or handshake at the vigil or funeral service, the donation of food, are important to the grieving. The ceremonies remember the dead, but we are expected to support the living in their sorrow.