

Mercy in the Sacraments and Acts of Mercy

Father Jeff Tunnichiff, Pastor - Immaculate Conception Church, Ithaca, NY
January 14, 2016

Prayer of Pope Francis for the Jubilee

(<http://www.im.va/content/gdm/en/giubileo/preghiera.html>)

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;

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 that 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 willed 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 captives and the oppressed,

and restore sight to the blind.

We ask this of you, Lord Jesus, 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.

<i>Misericordiae Vultus</i> , 15.	“Let us open our eyes and see the misery of the world, the wounds of our brothers and sisters who are denied their dignity, and let us recognize that we are compelled to heed their cry for help”
<i>Confession, the Sacrament of Mercy</i> , 5.	quotes Pope Francis’ homily “I am convinced that the whole Church will find in this Jubilee the joy needed to rediscover and make fruitful the mercy of God, with which all of us are called to give consolation to every man and woman of our time” (Homily at St. Peter’s Basilica, March 13, 2015)”
<i>The Corporal Works and Spiritual Works of Mercy</i> , 15.	“The word for mercy in Latin is <i>Misericordia</i> . The etymology of the word derives from the Latin <i>misere</i> (misery, necessity) and <i>cord/cordis</i> (heart) and is identified with having a heart full of solidarity with those in need.”
Matthew 9:36	“At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd.”
Matthew 14:4	“When he disembarked and saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, and he cured their sick.”
<i>Misericordiae Vultus</i> , 10.	“Mercy is the very foundation of the Church’s life. All of her pastoral activity should be caught up in the tenderness she makes present to believers/ nothing in her preaching and in her witness to the world can be lacking in mercy. The Church’s very credibility is seen in how she shows merciful and compassionate love. The Church “has an endless desire to show mercy.”
<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i> , 2447.	“The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities.”
James 2:14-17	“What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,” but you do not give them the necessities of the body, what good is it? So also faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”
<i>Misericordiae Vultus</i> , 16.	“May the words of the Apostle accompany us: he who does acts of mercy, let him do them with cheerfulness (cf. Rom 12:8).
<i>The Corporal Works and Spiritual Works of Mercy</i> , 15.	“With this tradition in mind, the listing of the six works of mercy present in Matthew 25 is more than a novelty. It is a development of biblical and Jewish texts.”
<i>The Corporal Works and Spiritual Works of Mercy</i> , 37.	“In short, since hunger is the symbol of the need for real food, the Gospel of John states that Jesus alone can satisfy it, being himself “the bread of life” (John 6:35).”
<i>The Corporal Works and Spiritual Works of Mercy</i> , 38.	“It also has a deeper meaning linked to Jesus’ ardent desire to return to the Father according to the invocation of the psalmist: “O God... for you my soul thirsts” (Ps 63:1-2).... These resonate with the emphatic request, “Give me a drink!” (John 4:7), spoken to the Samaritan woman by Jesus.”

Leviticus 19:34	<i>“You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you; you shall love the alien as yourself; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt. I, the Lord, am your God.”</i>
<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1500.</i>	“Illness and suffering have always been among the gravest problems confronted in human life. In illness, man experiences his powerlessness, his limitations, and his finitude. Every illness can make us glimpse death.”
<i>The Corporal Works and Spiritual Works of Mercy, 43.</i>	““Do not shrink from visiting a sick man, because for such deeds you will be loved” (Sir 7:35). This text expresses the Jewish understanding which emphasizes the visitor and not the sick.”
Hebrews 13:3	“Be mindful of prisoners as if sharing their imprisonment
<i>The Corporal Works and Spiritual Works of Mercy, 45.</i>	“Important examples include the proximity of the community through intercessory prayer to Peter who was imprisoned: “So Peter was kept in prison; but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the Church” (Acts 12:5). For his part, Paul expresses his gratitude for the closeness of Christians in Philippi during his detention, as well as the aid he received (see Phil 1:13, 17; 2:25; 4:15-18)”
<i>The Corporal Works and Spiritual Works of Mercy, 46.</i>	“In Israel, to be deprived of burial was seen as a horrible evil (see Ps 79:3)”
<i>The Corporal Works and Spiritual Works of Mercy, 35.</i>	“Each of the seven corporal works of mercy remedies a deficiency in our neighbor.”
<i>The Corporal Works and Spiritual Works of Mercy, 50.</i>	“Biblical tradition stresses the importance of counsel: “In an abundance of counselors there is safety” (Prv 11:14).”
<i>The Corporal Works and Spiritual Works of Mercy, 51.</i>	“Do you understand what you are reading”” (Acts 8:30), Philip asks the official reading the prophet Isaiah. And the reply is, “How can I, unless one guides me”” (v.31).”
John 8:11	“Then Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin anymore.”
<i>The Corporal Works and Spiritual Works of Mercy, 53.</i>	“In this sense, then, it should be noted that correction should be made not as a judgment, but as a service of truth and love, since it addresses the sinner not as an enemy but as a brother (see 2 Thes 3:15). It can thus result in leading a brother who was becoming lost back to life (Jas 5:19). This fraternal correction is to be exercised firmly (see Ti 1:13), but without harshness (Ps 6:2), without exacerbating or humiliating the one admonished (Eph 6:4).”
Matthew 5:38-46	“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil... Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you... For if you love those love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?”

Job 1:21	<i>“Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I back there; the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”</i>
<i>The Corporal Works and Spiritual Works of Mercy, 59.</i>	“In short, “Christian prayer is a covenant relationship between God and man in Christ” (<i>Catechism</i> , 2564) and therefore sustains all the works of mercy.”
Colossians 3:12	“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience”
James 5:14-15	<i>“Is anyone among you sick? He should summon the presbyters of the church, and they should pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of Lord, and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed any sins, he will be forgiven.”</i>
<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1513.</i>	“Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and MERCY help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up.”
<i>Confession, the Sacrament of Mercy, 5-6.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “widespread disaffection” • “denial of its usefulness” • “forgiveness is a purely private affair” • “uncomfortable confessing their sins to a priest” • “disappointment at the unavailability of priests and well-prepared confessions”
<i>Confession, the Sacrament of Mercy, 10.</i>	“When society exalts the individual to the point of placing him in continuous competition with others, and at all costs, the very concepts of “forgiveness” and “salvation” become incomprehensible and intolerable.” So confessing our sin sounds like weakness and invoking God’s forgiveness seems like a humiliating rite to leave behind.”
<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1847.</i>	“To receive his mercy, we must admit our faults. “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 8-9.”
<i>United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, 236.</i>	“The Sacrament of Penance must be seen within the context of conversion from sin and a turn to God.”
<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church, Glossary</i>	“ CONTRITION: Sorrow of the soul and hatred for the sin committed, together with a resolution not to sin again. Contrition is the most important act of the penitent, and is necessary for the reception of the Sacrament of Penance.”
<i>United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, 238.</i>	“When other motives, such as the ugliness of sin or fear of damnation, bring us to confession, this is called “imperfect contrition,” which is sufficient for forgiveness in the Sacrament.”
Isaiah 43:25	“It is I, I, who wipe out, for my own sake, your offenses; your sins I remember no more.”

<i>United States Catholic Catechism for Adults</i> , 236.	“Only God can forgive sins. But Jesus willed that the Church should be his instrument of forgiveness on earth.”
<i>United States Catholic Catechism for Adults</i> , 236.	“As the Father has sent me, so I send you... Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained (Jn 20:21-23).”
<i>Misericordiae Vultus</i> , 17.	“I will never tire of insisting that confessors be authentic signs of the Father’s mercy. We do not become good confessors automatically. We become good confessors when, above all, we allow ourselves to be penitents in search of his mercy.
<i>Confession, the Sacrament of Mercy</i> , 62.	“The Catechism recommends the following about the minister: “He should have a proven knowledge of Christian behavior, experience of human affairs, respect and sensitivity toward the one who has fallen; he must love the truth, be faithful to the Magisterium of the Church, and lead the penitent with patience toward healing and full maturity. He must pray and do penance for his penitent, entrusting him to the Lord’s mercy. (1466).”
<i>Confession, the Sacrament of Mercy</i> , 54.	“Forgiveness is not simply a gift given to the sinner independent from his will but aims to move his will to recognize in God a Father full of love, a love one which the life of faith is nourished for conversion. The absolution of sins is therefore not a mechanical, quasi-magical gesture. It is the grace that pervades the sinner by opening his heart, mind, and will to a life of communion with God.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church. Second Edition. Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997.

Compendium: Catechism of the Catholic Church. Libreria Editrice Vaticana. USCCB, 2006.

Hahn, Scott, *Lord, Have Mercy: The Healing Power of Confession*”. New York: Doubleday, 2003.
 Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, *Mercy in the Fathers of the Church: Pastoral Resources for Living the Jubilee*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2015.

Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, *Confession, the Sacrament of Mercy*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2015.

Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, *The Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2015.

Pope Francis, “*Misericordiae Vultus* Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy”. Available online at the official Jubilee website – www.im.va.

USCCB, *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*. Washington, DC: USCCB, 2006.

To learn more about the Sacrament of Reconciliation, please watch Fr. Jeff’s previous videos on this sacrament at <http://www.renewaloffaith.org/reconciliation.html>

Corporal Works of Mercy

Feed the hungry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew 25:35 • Isaiah 58:7a • Tobit 1:16-17 • Tobit 4:16 	<p>What can you do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donate to Food Pantry (time or food) or Kitchen Cupboard • Fast in recognition of others who go without • Offer food to elderly neighbor • Support farmers and the environment
Give drink to the thirsty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew 25:35 • Job 22:7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consume less water <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watering garden • Watering lawn in drought • How much laundry (change of clothes)?
Welcome the Stranger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew 25:35 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate and improvement how we treat strangers and immigrants • Donation to a shelter
Clothe the naked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew 25:36 • Job 22:5-6 • Isaiah 58:7b • Tobit 1:16-17 • Tobit 4:16 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donate clothing – Catholic Charities Clothing Closet
Visit the sick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew 25:36 • Sirach 7:35 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit the sick/take Communion • Shovel sidewalk for elderly neighbor
Visit the prisoners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew 25:36 • Isaiah 58:6 • Isaiah 61:1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the families of the imprisoned
Bury the dead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tobit 1:16-18 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dignified burial

Spiritual Works of Mercy		
Counseling the doubtful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proverbs 11:14 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rather than offering unsolicited advice, do this with an attitude that shows we care
Instructing the ignorant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isaiah 61:1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “To lead people to discover both their capacity to know the truth and their yearning for the ultimate and definitive meaning of life.” <i>The Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy</i>, 52.
Admonishing the sinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John 8:1-11 • 2 Thessalonians 3:15 • James 5:19 • Titus 1:13 • Psalm 6:2 • Ephesians 6:4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak up for what you believe in, pray for wisdom/courage to do this • Importance of timing for when we speak up
Comforting the sorrowful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isaiah 40:1 • Isaiah 61:2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calling hours • Take food • Show we care!
Forgiving injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew 5:38-46 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FORGIVE!
Bearing wrongs patiently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job 1:21 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think before speaking/acting
Praying for the living and the dead		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRAY!