



EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY

Resource Guide for Parishes

December 2015 - February 2016 Edition

Diocese of Green Bay
Office of Divine Worship
Department of Living Justice
Department of New Evangelization

Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy

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Diocese of Green Bay

Office of Divine Worship; Department of Living Justice; Department of New Evangelization

INTRODUCTION TO THE EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY

December 8, 2015 - November 20, 2016

From Pope Francis:

"Dear brothers and sisters, I have often thought of how the Church may render more clear her mission to be a witness to mercy; and we have to make this journey. It is a journey which begins with spiritual conversion. Therefore, I have decided to announce an Extraordinary Jubilee which has at its centre the mercy of God. It will be a Holy Year of Mercy. We want to live in the light of the word of the Lord: '*Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful*' (cf. Lk 6:36). And this especially applies to confessors! So much mercy!"

"This Holy Year will commence on the next Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and will conclude on Sunday, 20 November 2016, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe and living face of the Father's mercy. I entrust the organization of this Jubilee to the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization, in order that it may come to life as a new step on the Church's journey in her mission to bring the Gospel of mercy to each person."

"I am confident that the whole Church, which is in such need of mercy for we are sinners, will be able to find in this Jubilee the joy of rediscovering and rendering fruitful God's mercy, with which we are all called to give comfort to every man and every woman of our time. Do not forget that God forgives all, and God forgives always. Let us never tire of asking forgiveness. Let us henceforth entrust this Year to the Mother of Mercy, that she turn her gaze upon us and watch over our journey: our penitential journey, our year-long journey with an open heart, to receive the indulgence of God, to receive the mercy of God."

Works of Mercy

"It is my burning desire that, during this Jubilee, the Christian people may reflect on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. It will be a way to reawaken our conscience, too often grown dull in the face of poverty. And let us enter more deeply into the heart of the Gospel where the poor have a special experience of God's mercy. Jesus introduces us to these works of mercy in his preaching so that we can know whether or not we are living as his disciples. Let us rediscover these corporal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead. And let us not forget the spiritual works of mercy: to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offenses, bear patiently those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead."

Misericordiae Vultus (The Face of Mercy): Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy:

https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco_bolla_20150411_misericordiae-vultus.html

JUBILEE YEAR PLENARY INDULGENCE

What is a plenary indulgence?

An indulgence is the remission in the eyes of God of the temporal punishment due to sins, the guilt of which has been absolved through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The Christian faithful who are rightly disposed and observe the definite, prescribed conditions gain this remission through the effective assistance of the Church. A plenary indulgence frees a person from all of the temporal punishment due to sins and may be gained only once on any one day. Indulgences are only applicable to oneself and to the dead.

How can one obtain a plenary indulgence during the Holy Year of Mercy?

1. By having the intention of acquiring the indulgence,
2. going to confession (before or after the visit),
3. receiving Holy Communion (before or after the visit),
4. making a profession of faith,
5. praying for the Holy Father and for the intentions that he bears in his heart for the good of the Church and of the entire world,
6. be truly free from all attachment to sin,
7. while doing any of the following:
 - a) **The faithful** by visiting one of the Diocesan Doors of Mercy;
 - St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Green Bay, WI
 - Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help, Champion, WI
 - National Shrine of St. Joseph, Old St. Joseph's Church, De Pere, W
 - b) **The sick and people who are elderly and alone** by receiving Holy Communion or attending Holy Mass and community prayer (even through the various means of communication);
 - c) **Those who are incarcerated** by visiting the chapel in the prison;
 - d) **The faithful** by personally performing one or more of the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy:

Spiritual Works of Mercy

Admonish the sinner.
Instruct the ignorant.
Counsel the doubtful.
Comfort the sorrowful.
Bear wrongs patiently.
Forgive offenses.
Pray for the living and dead.

Corporal Works of Mercy

Feed the hungry.
Give drink to the thirsty.
Clothe the naked.
Welcome the stranger.
Care for the sick.
Visit the imprisoned.
Bury the dead.

PRAYER FOR THE JUBILEE YEAR 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;
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 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.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Upcoming Diocesan Celebrations for the Holy Year of Mercy

December 13, 2015 Opening of the Cathedral Holy Door by Bishop Ricken
St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Green Bay

Vatican - Special Days of Prayer during the Holy Year

(On each of these days, let us join our Holy Father in prayer for blessings upon the people being remembered)

- January 19-21 Jubilee Prayers for those involved with organizing pilgrimages and religious tours.
- February 2 Jubilee Prayers for Consecrated Life and the closing of the Year for Consecrated Life
- February 10 Ash Wednesday and the sending forth of Missionaries of Mercy
- February 22 Jubilee Prayers for the Roman Curia
- April 3 Jubilee Prayers for those who are devoted to the spirituality of Divine Mercy
- April 24 Jubilee Prayers for teens ages 13-16 to profess their faith and construct a culture of mercy
- May 26 Jubilee Prayers for deacons
- June 3 Jubilee Prayers for priests
- June 12 Jubilee Prayers for those who are ill and for persons with disabilities
- July 26-31 Jubilee Prayers for youth (World Youth Day in Krakow)
- September 4 Jubilee Prayers for workers and volunteers of mercy
- September 25 Jubilee Prayers for catechists
- October 8-9 Marian Jubilee
- November 1 Mass celebrated by Pope Francis in memory of the faithful departed
- November 6 Jubilee Prayers for prisoners
- November 20 Conclusion of the Holy Year of Mercy

YEAR OF MERCY LOGO

From the announcement by Archbishop Salvatore Fisichella, President, Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization

“...The logo which represents a summa theologiae of the theme of mercy and the motto which accompanies it. The motto “Merciful Like the Father” (Luke 6:36) serves as an invitation to follow the merciful example of the Father who asks us not to judge or condemn, but to forgive and to give love and forgiveness without measure.

“It is an image quite important to the early Church: that of the Son having taken upon His shoulders the lost soul, demonstrating that it is Christ's love that brings to completion the mystery of His incarnation culminating in redemption. The logo has been designed in such a way so as to express the profound way in which the Good Shepherd touches the flesh of humanity and does so with a love that has the power to change one’s life.

“One particular feature worthy of note is that while the Good Shepherd, in His great mercy, takes humanity upon Himself, His eyes are merged with those of man. Christ sees with the eyes of Adam, and Adam with the eyes of Christ. Every person discovers in Christ, the new Adam, his or her own humanity and the future that lies ahead.

“The scene is enclosed in a mandorla, an element typical of ancient and medieval iconography. that recalls the coexistence of the two natures, divine and human, in Christ. The three concentric ovals, with colors progressively lighter as we move outward, suggest the movement of Christ Who carries humanity out of the darkness of sin and death. Conversely, the depth of the darker color suggests the impenetrability of the love of the Father Who forgives all.

The logo is the work of Father Marko I. Rupnik.

“The logo has been registered in the international forum in order to safeguard its rights and to prevent any inappropriate use. It is obvious that permission must be granted by the Pontifical Council for any non-religious use of the logo and that any infringement will be duly prosecuted.”



THE MASS EMPHASIZING MERCY

In the celebration of the Mass, the critical role of God's mercy frequently comes to the fore. As imperfect human beings, we encounter in the Mass God's merciful offer to raise us up and to give us hope and strength despite our weaknesses. To assist delving deeper into the content of the Mass itself, there follows a concise list of moments in the Order of Mass when the mercy of God is explicitly acknowledged or sought. Those who preach on the theme of mercy might wish to draw their hearers' attention to some of these passages, both to help strengthen their appreciation for God's mercy and to help pray the Mass with greater devotion.

In addition to the texts from the Order of the Mass, there are innumerable references to God's mercy which are encountered both in the proper prayer texts for the various Masses, as well as in the Scripture passages proclaimed in the Liturgy of the Word. Furthermore, there are numerous other moments in the Mass when mercy is sought, even if not mentioned explicitly by name. For example, the silent prayer of the deacon or priest who has just read the Gospel is clearly reliant on God's mercy: "*Through the words of the Gospel, may our sins be wiped away*" (Order of Mass, no.16). Whether or not the very word is used, God's mercy is truly never far from the many liturgical elements of the Mass:

Penitential Act

"Have mercy on us, O Lord. / For we have sinned against you.
Show us, O Lord, your mercy. / And grant us your salvation" (Form B, no. 5)

"[invocation], Lord, have mercy. / Lord, have mercy.
[invocation], Christ, have mercy. / Christ, have mercy.
[invocation], Lord, have mercy. / Lord, have mercy" (Form C, no. 6)

"May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life" (Priest's concluding prayer, nos. 4-6)

Rite for the Blessing and Sprinkling of Water

"Grant, O Lord, in your mercy, that living waters may always spring up for our salvation, and so we may approach you with a pure heart and avoid all danger to body and soul" (Appendix II, no. 2 [second option]).

"Lord our God, in your mercy be present to your people's prayers... You also made water the instrument of your mercy: for through water you freed your people from slavery and quenched their thirst in the desert..." (no. 2 [third option]).

Gloria

"...you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us" (no. 8)

Eucharistic Prayer I (The Roman Canon)

"To you, therefore, most merciful Father, we make humble prayer and petition through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord..." (no. 84).

"To us, also, your servants, who, though sinners, hope in your abundant mercies, graciously grant some share and fellowship with your holy Apostles and Martyrs..." (no. 96).

Eucharistic Prayer II

“Remember also our brothers and sisters who have fallen asleep in the hope of the resurrection and all who have died in your mercy: welcome them into the light of your face. Have mercy on us all, we pray, that with the blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, with blessed Joseph, her Spouse, with the blessed Apostles, and all the Saints who have pleased you throughout the ages, we may merit to be co-heirs to eternal life, and may praise and glorify you through your Son, Jesus Christ” (no. 105).

Eucharistic Prayer III

“...in your compassion, O merciful Father, gather to yourself all your children scattered throughout the world” (no. 113).

Eucharistic Prayer IV

“For you came in mercy to the aid of all, so that those who seek might find you” (no. 117).

“To all of us, your children, grant, O merciful Father, that we may enter into a heavenly inheritance with the blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, with blessed Joseph, her Spouse, and with your Apostles and Saints in your kingdom” (no. 122).

Eucharistic Prayer I for Reconciliation

“For you do not cease to spur us on to possess a more abundant life and, being rich in mercy, you constantly offer pardon and call on sinners to trust in your forgiveness alone” (Appendix to the Order of Mass [AOM], Eucharistic Prayer I for Reconciliation, no. 1).

“...we offer you, who are our faithful and merciful God, this sacrificial Victim who reconciles to you the human race” (no. 7).

“Help us to work together for the coming of your Kingdom, until the hour when we stand before you, Saints among the Saints in the halls of heaven, with the blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, the blessed Apostles and all the Saints, and with our deceased brothers and sisters, whom we humbly commend to your mercy” (no. 7).

Eucharistic Prayer II for Reconciliation

“In a similar way, on the same evening, he took the chalice of blessing in his hands, confessing your mercy, and gave the chalice to his disciples, saying...” (AOM, Eucharistic Prayer II for Reconciliation, no. 5).

Eucharistic Prayer for Various Needs

“Therefore, Father most merciful, we ask that you send forth your Holy Spirit to sanctify these gifts of bread and wine, that they may become for us the Body and † Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ” (AOM, Eucharistic Prayer for Various Needs, no. 3 [I-IV]).

Eucharistic Prayer for Various Needs (IV)

“It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father of mercies and faithful God” (AOM, Eucharistic Prayer for Various Needs IV, no. 1).

Embolism after the Lord’s Prayer

“Deliver us, Lord, we pray, for every evil, graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ” (no. 125).

Agnus Dei

“Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace” (no. 130).

Priest’s Prayer before Communion

“May the receiving of your Body and Blood, Lord Jesus Christ, not bring me to condemnation, but through your loving mercy before me protection in mind and body and a healing remedy” (no. 131 [second option]).

USCCB Secretariat of Divine Worship Newsletter, April-May 2015, Volume LI

SAMPLE INTERCESSIONS FOR THE YEAR OF MERCY

That the Blessed Virgin Mary, who patterned her life after the presence of mercy made flesh, be a source of comfort and strength to us as we cross the threshold of the Holy Year to experience the fruits of divine mercy.

For the Church as we journey throughout the world, that this Year of Mercy may be inspire us to be true witnesses of Christ, excluding no one, and giving consolation to all.

May this Year of Mercy be a time to renew our joyful call to bear the weaknesses and struggles of our brothers and sisters, reawakening us to new life and giving us the courage to look to the future with hope.

For our culture, that we may water its barren desert of judgement and condemnation with a river of mercy, which overflows unceasingly from the depths of the mystery of God.

For the Christian people, that we may be instruments of mercy to others, because it is we who first received mercy from God.

May this Holy Year fill our parish community with an outpouring of mercy, which is realized through our just abandonment of self to God's will alone.

May God the Father watch over and bless all families during the Year of Mercy that it may be a time to forgive past wrongs and grow closer to one another and to Christ.

May this Holy Year be an opportunity for Catholics to rediscover the value of silence, in order to contemplate God's mercy and adopt it as our way of life.

As this Year of Mercy begins, may it be a time for us to open the doors of our hearts, that we may feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned and bury the dead.

May the Year of Mercy call us to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offenses, bear patiently those who do us ill and pray for the living and the dead.

May the Year of Mercy be a time for all Catholics to foster fervent dialog with Jews, Muslims and members of other religious traditions, so that we may know and understand one another better, and drive out every form of violence and discrimination.

During this Year of Mercy, may all Catholics place the Sacrament of Reconciliation at the center of healing in their life, thus enabling them to touch the grandeur of God's mercy with their own hands.

May this Holy Year find us open to ways to serve those in our midst who are overlooked, ignored or rejected, so that all may contemplate the face of God's infinite mercy.

May the Holy Spirit guide the Church during this Holy Year so that all Catholics may live the season of Lent more intensely as a privileged moment to celebrate and experience God's mercy.

May young people be inspired by this Year of Mercy to listen attentively and respond to God's call to priesthood and religious life.

OTHER LITURGICAL RESOURCES

Please visit <http://www.gbdioec.org/departments/divine-worship.html> for additional liturgical resources for the Year of Mercy including:

- Seasonal Booklets
- Sheet Music for the Hymn of the Jubilee
- Questions and Answers regarding Jubilee Year of Mercy Liturgies



Disciples on the Way

Issue 1: December 2015 | "Merciful like the Father" Pope Francis, *Misericordiae vultus*, 13-14

Highlighted Scripture Readings:

November 29, First Sunday of Advent

- Jer 33: 14-16
- Ps 25: 4-5, 8-9, 10, 14
- 1 Thes 3: 12 – 4: 2
- Lk 21: 25-28, 34-36

December 6, Second Sunday of Advent

- Bar 5:1-9,
- Ps 126: 1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6
- Phil 1:4-6, 8-11
- Lk 3:4, 6

December 13, Third Sunday of Advent

- Zep 3:14-18 A
- Is 12:2-3, 4, 5-6
- Phil 4:4-7
- Lk 3:10-18

December 20, Fourth Sunday of Advent

- Mi 5:1-4 A
- Ps 80: 2-3, 15-16, 18-19
- Heb 10:5-10
- Luke 1:39-45

December 27, Feast of the Holy Family

- Sir 3: 2-6, 12-24
- Ps 128: 1-2, 3, 4-5
- Col 3: 12-21
- Lk 2: 41-52

The Jubilee Year of Mercy

Pope Francis has called for an extraordinary jubilee, a Holy Year of Mercy for the entire Church in the Papal Bull (document) called *Misericordiae vultus* (MV). This year of Mercy will begin on December 8, 2015 and end on November 20, 2016.

During this year, we are asked to pray with, reflect upon and live out the virtue of mercy as disciples of Christ. One of the ways that you can do this is by learning more about the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy and living them out in your life.

Corporal Works of Mercy

The Corporal Works of Mercy are acts by which we help our neighbors with their material and physical needs:

- feed the hungry
- give drink to the thirsty
- clothe the naked
- **welcome the stranger**
- heal the sick
- visit the imprisoned
- bury the dead



Spiritual Works of Mercy

The Spiritual Works of Mercy are acts of compassion, by which we help our neighbors with their emotional and spiritual needs:

- counsel the doubtful
- instruct the ignorant
- admonish sinners
- comfort the afflicted
- forgive offenses
- bear wrongs patiently
- pray for the living and the dead



Welcome the Stranger

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me." - Mt. 25:40

Reflect on the Year of Mercy:

Think of a time when you went on a long journey. How did you prepare for it? What feelings did you experience on your journey? How were you greeted upon your arrival at your destination? Did your family or loved one leap for joy when they saw you?

When we experience a warm welcome from someone we often say that we feel "at home" with them. How might your own home be a place of welcoming? Who will you make a special effort to invite to your home this week or during the holiday season?

Live the Year of Mercy:

Pope Francis asks us to encounter Jesus on the margins of life. The "margins" include the poor, the heartbroken, the lost, the downtrodden, those suffering from abuse or addiction for example.

What places in your community welcome those on the margins?

Hint: Catholic Charities; Casa Alba Melanie, Green Bay; Fr. Carr's Place 2B, Oshkosh; Micah Center, Green Bay, etc.

We know that there is a migrant and refugee crisis all over the world due to war, violence and terrorism.

In what ways can you be a part of the solution? Would you consider calling your local representative and encourage them to enact laws that will welcome the migrant and refugee stranger?

The first work of mercy that we will learn about is the corporal work of mercy to **welcome the stranger.**

During the holiday season, we often travel to be with friends and family so that we can celebrate and share quality time together. During Advent, we also hear in the Sunday scriptures many stories of traveling and welcoming.

Mary traveled to visit her cousin Elizabeth, and when she was welcomed upon entering the house, John the Baptist, leapt for joy in Elizabeth's womb!

Traveling to Bethlehem to register for a census, the heavily pregnant Mary and her husband Joseph traveled to Bethlehem. Instead of being warmly welcomed in this town however, they were rejected and turned away because there was no room in the inn!

Like Mary and Joseph, we too are a pilgrim people longing to be welcomed and loved. We are traveling with one another toward salvation in Christ Jesus. We are disciples on the way. This journey is communal, one which can be long, difficult and challenging but which we travel together as fellow pilgrims. When we reach our eternal destination, we pray that we will be warmly welcomed by the Father.

Pray the Year of Mercy:

Jesus, you practiced hospitality. You welcomed "strange" people: fishermen, tax collectors, lepers, prostitutes, centurions, widows, and even little children.

So convinced were you of God's personal love for you that you embraced God's will even when it meant dying on a cross.

Jesus, help me to be more hospitable. Help me to welcome strangers into my life, to believe in blessings in disguise; to see all of life as opportunity and promise.

Surprise me! Let me entertain angels. Better yet, may I entertain you! Amen.

Adapted from Sr. Melannie Svoboda
Religion Teachers' Journal, April/May, 1995



Disciples on the Way

Issue 2: January 2016 | "Merciful like the Father" Pope Francis, *Misericordiae vultus*, 13-14

Highlighted Scripture Readings:

January 3, Epiphany of the Lord

- Is 60: 1-6
- Ps 72: 1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13
- Eph 3: 2-3A, 5-6
- Mt 2: 1-12

January 10, Baptism of the Lord

- Is 42: 1-4, 6-7
- Ps 29: 1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10
- Acts 10: 34-38
- Lk 3: 15-16, 21-22

January 17, Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

- Is 62: 1-5
- Ps 96: 1-2, 2-3, 7-8, 9-10
- 1 Cor 12: 4-11
- Jn 2: 1-11

January 24, Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

- Neh 8: 2-4A, 5-6, 8-10
- Ps 19: 8, 9, 10, 15
- 1 Cor 12: 12-30
- Lk 1: 1-4; 4: 14-21

January 31, Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

- Jer 1: 4-5, 17-19
- Ps 71: 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 15-17
- 1 Cor 12: 31 – 13: 13
- Lk 4: 21-30

The Jubilee Year of Mercy

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Corporal Works of Mercy

The Corporal Works of Mercy are acts by which we help our neighbors with their material and physical needs:

- feed the hungry
- give drink to the thirsty
- **clothe the naked**
- welcome the stranger
- heal the sick
- visit the imprisoned
- bury the dead



Spiritual Works of Mercy

The Spiritual Works of Mercy are acts of compassion, by which we help our neighbors with their emotional and spiritual needs:

- counsel the doubtful
- instruct the ignorant
- admonish sinners
- comfort the afflicted
- forgive offenses
- bear wrongs patiently
- pray for the living and the dead



Clothe the Naked

"I was naked and you clothed me." - Mt. 25:36

Pray the Year of Mercy:

Heavenly Father, source of all light and love, surround us with your goodness and fill us with your Spirit. Lead us in your way to be light to all people, especially those most in need and in despair. Help us to reach out to the poor who are hungry and to give generously to all who need our help. We desire to be your loving presence to a world that is hurting. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Reflect on the Year of Mercy:

Baptism is one of the three Sacraments of Initiation along with Confirmation and Holy Communion, that lay the foundation for the Christian life. We are born anew by Baptism, strengthened by the sacrament of Confirmation, and receive in the Eucharist the food of eternal life.

Baptism has been called in the Catechism of the Catholic Church "God's most beautiful and magnificent gift".

Reflect upon your own baptism or the baptism of your children/grandchildren. Do you know the date of your baptism? Do you have a special gown that has been passed from generation to generation for baptism?

Share stories about your baptism, revisit photographs and memories that were made on this special day. Remember that on the day of your baptism that you were welcomed as a beloved child of God into his Church.

The second work of mercy that we will learn about is the corporal work of mercy to **clothe the naked**.

During the month of January, we celebrate two important days in the Church before moving into ordinary time: the Epiphany and the Baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The Epiphany of Our Lord is the Christian feast observed on January 6. The word "epiphany" comes from the Greek meaning "to shine upon," "to manifest," or "to make known." Thus, the feast of the Epiphany celebrates the many ways that Christ has made Himself known to the world. The visit of the Three Kings known as the Magi is emphasized on Epiphany Day, and Christ's baptism is celebrated the first Sunday that follows.

In the Scripture readings and psalms for those two days, we hear many times that Jesus is deserving of all our adoration and praise. He is treated like a king when given gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh by the Magi. While we think of royalty and the associated trappings of material wealth, we must remember that Christ entered into this world incarnate as a baby and swaddled in nothing else but a blanket. Any person, especially a baby, is at their most vulnerable state when they are naked, and Christ, the King of love, made himself vulnerable as a baby sent to save the world but also to save each one of us.

Live the Year of Mercy:

Clothing is a multi-million dollar industry with magazines and television shows devoted to keeping up with the latest "trends". We should never forget, that clothing is a basic right and for many around the world, access to more than one outfit is considered a luxury. Be conscious of where your clothing is made. The next time you go shopping, consider buying from a certified fair trade store, so that you can support fair wages for employees in other countries around the world.

Take some time to clean out your closet and find items that can be donated to a local St. Vincent de Paul store. Contact your local homeless shelter to see what specific winter clothing items are needed, and then host a clothing drive at your parish or school.



Diocese of
Green Bay

Disciples on the Way

Issue 3: February 2016 | "Merciful like the Father" Pope Francis, *Misericordiae vultus*, 13-14

Highlighted Scripture Readings:

February 7, Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

- Is 6: 1-2A, 3-8
- Ps 138: 1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 7-8
- 1 Cor 15:1-11
- Lk 5: 1-11

February 14, First Sunday of Lent

- Dt 26: 4-10
- Ps 91: 1-2, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15
- Rom 10: 8-13
- Lk 4: 1-13

February 21, Second Sunday of Lent

- Gen 15: 5-12, 17-18
- Ps 27: 1, 7-8, 8-9, 13-14
- Phil 3: 17 – 4: 1
- Lk 9: 28B-36

February 28, Third Sunday of Lent

- Ex 3: 1-8A, 13-15
- Ps 103: 1-2, 3-4, 6-7, 8, 11
- 1 Cor 10: 1-6, 10-12
- Lk 13: 1-9

"Lent comes providentially to reawaken us, to shake us from our lethargy."

- **Pope Francis**

The Jubilee Year of Mercy

Pope Francis has called for an extraordinary jubilee, a Holy Year of Mercy for the entire Church in the Papal Bull (document) called *Misericordiae vultus* (MV). This year of Mercy will begin on December 8, 2015 and end on November 20, 2016.

During this year, we are asked to pray with, reflect upon and live out the virtue of mercy as disciples of Christ. One of the ways that you can do this is by learning more about the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy and living them out in your life.

Corporal Works of Mercy

The Corporal Works of Mercy are acts by which we help our neighbors with their material and physical needs:

- feed the hungry
- give drink to the thirsty
- clothe the naked
- welcome the stranger
- **heal the sick**
- visit the imprisoned
- bury the dead



Spiritual Works of Mercy

The Spiritual Works of Mercy are acts of compassion, by which we help our neighbors with their emotional and spiritual needs:

- counsel the doubtful
- instruct the ignorant
- admonish sinners
- comfort the afflicted
- forgive offenses
- bear wrongs patiently
- pray for the living and the dead



Heal the Sick

“For I will restore you to health and I will heal you of your wounds,” declares the LORD.” - Jeremiah 30:17

The third work of mercy that we will learn about is the corporal work of mercy to **heal the sick.**

During the month of February, we enter into the liturgical season of Lent, where we pray, fast and give alms. While many individuals tend to focus on ‘what they are giving up’, Lent should be seen as a time for healing and growth. We are reminded in the Scriptures that because we have become “occupied with earthly things”, we have become spiritually ill and our hearts become harden to others.

Being a healthy Christian means that we should identify patterns of sickness in our own life whether physical, mental or spiritual. As human beings, we all experience sickness in our body, mind and spirit. These patterns of sin harm our relationships with others, God and we ultimately end up hurting ourselves.

It is through our sacrifices, the “giving up”, that we let go of those things in our lives that are hurting our relationship with God. Jesus Christ is called the Divine Physician because he is the ultimate healer, and it is through His mercy and compassion that we can be made whole again in order to serve others.

Pray the Year of Mercy: Scriptural Litany for the Sick

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall want for nothing;
I fear no evil; for you are at my side. (Ps. 23)
The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom should I fear?
The Lord is my life’s refuge; of whom should I be afraid?
Bless the Lord, O my soul; and forget not all his benefits.
He pardons all your iniquities; he heals all your ills. (Ps. 103)
Come to me, all you who are weary and find life burdensome,
and I will refresh you. (Mt. 11:28)
I am with you always,
until the end of the world. (Mt. 28:20)
I came that they might have life
and have it to the full. (Jn. 10:10)
I am the resurrection and the life: whoever believes in me,
even though he should die, will come to life;
and whoever is alive and believes in me will never die.
Do not let your hearts be troubled.
Have faith in God and faith in me. (Jn. 14:1)
God Our Father, source of healing and light,
we remember in a special way those who are ill.
In the midst of grief, suffering and pain, may all be united with Christ,
the Divine Physician who heals body and soul.
We ask this through Christ Our Lord.
Amen.

Reflect on the Year of Mercy:

We need Jesus’ merciful love to heal us, and the corporal work of mercy to comfort the sick is a way to reflect that healing love to others. Visiting the sick can be interpreted quite literally to go and visit a sick person in the hospital or tend to the needs of someone who is feeling lonely and forgotten.

It can also be interpreted as a way to revisit sickness in our own lives - whether physical, mental or spiritual that prevent us from being the truly healthy Christians that God calls us to be.

Live the Year of Mercy:

“Healing the sick” in our world can mean reaching out to individuals in our local nursing homes who are feeling lonely and forgotten. Pray for those in your life who are ill at this time and uplift them in your evening prayers. Take one hour after work to either visit them or stop by their house and drop off a meal.

Take some time during Lent to focus on your spiritual health. Our Catholic faith provides many ways for you to grow in your faith. Pray every day, attend the Sacrament of Reconciliation, attend Mass with a grateful heart, acknowledge God’s goodness in your life, open your hands and heart in service to others and spend some time alone with Christ in Adoration.

This Lent choose one or two new practices to focus on in addition to the ones that you currently practice.



Diocese of
Green Bay

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