

# PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR PRACTICING MERCY (PART 1)

## **CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY**

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

### FEED THE HUNGRY AND DRINK TO THE THIRSTY

- see to the proper nutrition of your loved ones,
- support and volunteer for food pantries, soup kitchens, and agencies that feed the hungry
- make a few sandwiches to hand out as you walk through areas where you might encounter people in need
- educate yourself about world hunger
- avoid wasting food
- share your meals with others.

### SHELTER THE HOMELESS

- help neighbours care for their homes and do repairs
- support / volunteer at a homeless shelter
- support charitable agencies who care for the homeless, build homes, and provide support in the wake of natural disasters
- advocate for public policies and legislation that provide housing for low-income people
- consider becoming a foster parent.

### CLOTHE THE NAKED

- go through your drawers and closets and find good-condition clothes and shoes to donate to agencies that provide assistance for those in need
- participate in programs that provide towels and linens for hospitals in distressed areas
- Volunteer to work at a clothing drive or at a shelter where clothing is distributed to those in need
- Support the work of the St. Vincent de Paul Society

## VISIT THE SICK

- spend quality time with those who are sick or homebound
- take the time to call, send a card or an e-mail to someone who is sick
- volunteer to drive patients to medical appointments and treatment facilities
- volunteer at a hospital
- assist those who are full-time caregivers for family members
- cook and delivers meals to the sick and homebound

## VISIT THE IMPRISONED

- support and/or participate in ministries to those who are incarcerated
- support programs sponsored by agencies that advocate on behalf of those who are unjustly imprisoned
- support job-training and educational programs designed to rehabilitate prisoners
- pray for the families of inmates
- support programs that provide holiday gifts for prisoners and their families
- support efforts that seek the abolition of the death penalty

## GIVE TO THE POOR

- take some small bills or loose change with you to hand out to people you encounter who are in need
- throw your coin change into a jar and periodically donate it to a charity
- if possible make a regular monetary donation to a charity that tends to the needs of the poor.

## BURY THE DEAD

- be faithful about attending wakes/visitation
- support or volunteer at a hospice
- participate in a bereavement ministry
- spend time with widows and widowers
- take friends and relatives to visit the cemetery
- support ministries that offer free Christian burials to those unable to afford one
- offer daily prayers for those with terminal illnesses and for those who have died
- send Mass cards to families of those who have died.

*\* Some of the above suggestions need to be adapted for young children and should not be practiced without the supervision or accompaniment of an adult*