

St. Mark
the
Evangelist

**PARISH
PENANCE
SERVICE**

THURSDAY
MARCH 22
5:30 PM

Examination of Conscience Based on the Works of Mercy

The Corporal Works of Mercy

The seven corporal works of mercy are feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, harboring the homeless, visiting the imprisoned, giving alms to the poor and burying the dead. We have a moral obligation to help others with fundamental needs.

Giving drink to the thirsty

What do you thirst for? St. Theresa of Calcutta attended to tremendous suffering in India. She observed that the real suffering in the west was loneliness and isolation. People all around us are thirsty, spiritually and emotionally. Others' thirst is physical because they don't have clean drinking water. We shouldn't waste water in our homes and, at the same time, attend to the emotional and spiritual thirst of our friends and family. Do I attend to others' thirst?

Feed the hungry

There are many people in this world who go without food. When so much of our food goes to waste, consider how good stewardship practices of your own food habits can benefit others who do not have those same resources. Do I waste food or act gluttonously? Do I respond to those who ask me for help?

Clothing the naked

The scripture says if you have two cloaks, give one to someone who doesn't have a cloak. Lk. 3:11. Ever notice how we all buy, buy, buy, but don't give anything away. When I donate, do I give good useable clothes or junk? Do I lack prudence in my consumption of the goods of this world?

Harboring the homeless

If you have good usable home items that are not being used, clean out your garage and cupboards to make someone else's home better. Do I give things away that I don't use that might make someone else's home better? Do I treat the homeless on the street with the dignity their humanity requires?

Visiting the sick

What to do? Do I visit and pray with the sick? Do I avoid them?

Visit the imprisoned

Do you pray for and support the imprisoned when the opportunity arises? Do you reach out to those imprisoned in bad relationships or loneliness?

Burying the dead

Do I attend the funerals of others? Do I treat the human remains of my family with the dignity they require? Do I treat them as the apostles treated Christ?

The Spiritual Works of Mercy

The spiritual works of mercy attend to the social, religious, emotional and intellectual needs of others. The works of mercy join in the healing power of God and they are the means by which we grow in vision.

Instruct the ignorant

Religion requires sound teaching, but is more than just information. Ignorance is not stupidity; it is just not knowing. Am I willing to share my faith or understanding with others that simply do not know? Do I work at understanding my Catholic faith? Do I have an adult understanding?

Counsel the doubtful

Without doubt, the most important aspect of counseling the doubtful is to be worthy of another's trust. The only way to help others come to clarity is a bridge of trust. Otherwise, our advice is useless. Can I talk to other people honestly about my faith and my struggles?

Admonish the sinner

To admonish the sinner, you have to have something happier and better to offer. Do I make sincere efforts to live my faith in a manner that is joyful or do I bear it like a cross?

Bear wrongs patiently

Do I accept the reality of my own failures as well as those of others?

Forgive offenses willingly

In order to forgive offenses, you must first acknowledge that there is an offense. What has this person cost me? Add it up. Do I count the cost of the injustice against me and write that debt off?

Comfort the afflicted

Who do you talk to at a party? Do I seek out only the comfortable people? Do I every choose to sit with someone who could just use a friend because of illness, marital problems, children problems and the death of a loved one?

Pray for the living and the dead

Do I make it a daily habit to remember in prayer my family, living and dead, and those who I met yesterday and need prayer?