



Go...and Make Disciples

**The Corporal and Spiritual Works
of Mercy for the Mission Church**



The Holy Year of Mercy



On March 13th, 2015, the Fourth Sunday of Lent, Pope Francis declared that there would be an *Extraordinary Jubilee Holy Year of Mercy*, opening on December 8th, 2015, The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and closing on November 20th, 2016, The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe.

Throughout this Jubilee of Mercy, the Church is called to emphasize her mission of mercy. We are called to be “missionaries of mercy” to witness to the world the act of mercy that Jesus displayed on the cross- forgiving those who crucified him. “This supreme act of mercy towards those who crucified him shows us the point to which the mercy of God can reach.” (*Misericordiae Vultus*, 24).

What is a Jubilee?

In the Hebrew Scriptures, a jubilee is every fiftieth year during which the land remains uncultivated, debts and mortgages are forgiven, and slaves are set free. This tradition takes root in our own belief that all we have comes from God: life, land, and possessions. The Catholic Church has a very long history of designating a [Holy Year](#), in the spirit of jubilee, whereby the Church seeks live to out and call all people to right relationship with God and one another. The last Jubilee was in 2000.

This Holy Year will focus on Mercy as it is something very dear to Pope Francis. His papal motto, the same one when he was a bishop, is “*miserando atque eligendo*,” which in Latin means “by having mercy, by choosing him.” which can also be translated as “because he saw him through the eyes of mercy and chose him.” It is taken from a homily of the Venerable Bede on the call of St. Matthew: “Jesus saw the tax collector and by having mercy chose him as an Apostle saying to him: Follow me.”



The Holy Year of Mercy

The opening of the Holy Door at St. Peter's.

The initial rite of the Jubilee is the opening of the Holy Door (December 8th, 2015). This door is one which is only opened during the Holy Year and which remains closed during all other years. Each of the four major basilicas of Rome has a Holy Door: Saint Peter's, St. John Lateran, St. Paul Outside the Walls and St. Mary Major. This rite of the opening of the Holy Door illustrates symbolically the idea that, during the Jubilee, the faithful are offered an "extraordinary pathway" towards salvation. The Holy Doors of the other Basilicas around the world will be opened after the opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica.



Mercy?

Mercy is God's unconditional loving care for humanity reflected throughout all of history in God's desire to be close to all people – to be an intimate, loving relationship with us. As Pope Francis explains in his announcement of this special Jubilee Year, mercy is the "bridge that connects God and humanity, opening our hearts to the hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness." So, while mercy first of all comes from God, for it is central to who God is, mercy likewise is something that God invites us to show to others in order to truly live as children of God.

In his Angelus on January 11, 2015, he stated: "There is so much need of mercy today, and it is important that the lay faithful live it and bring it into different social environments. Go forth! We are living in the age of mercy, this is the age of mercy".

The Holy Year of Mercy

Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy?

The Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy are charitable actions motivated by Christian love by which we help our neighbor obtain what he or she needs spiritually and materially. The Works of Mercy are not optional but are absolutely essential to living the Christian life of holiness and goodness (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2447).

Instructing, advising, consoling and comforting are Spiritual Works of Mercy, as are forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently. The Corporal Works of Mercy consist especially in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and burying the dead.

Remembering Jesus' command to "*make disciples of all nations...teaching them to observe all that I commanded you*" (Mt. 28:19-20) we cannot forget about our brothers and sisters around the world and those in the Mission Church when it comes to the Spiritual and Corporeal Works of Mercy. We are called to be "Missionaries of Mercy" wherever we are, but especially to the poor, vulnerable and abandoned. Our brothers and sisters in the Missions many times are "*the least of these*" (cf. Mt. 25:40) whom we are called to provide for their needs, spiritually and materially. This booklet is designed to help you fulfill both Jesus' command to go out to the Nations and the Spiritual and Corporeal Works of Mercy for the Mission Church no matter where you are.



Missionaries of Mercy

By our Baptism, **all** of God's faithful are called to be missionaries to the nations, through their prayers and sacrifices. We are baptized in to and called to participate in Jesus' mission, no matter our age, in sharing the Good News of God's Saving Love.



One young woman, [Pauline Jaricot](#), in the year 1816, in Lyons, France heeded this call to be a missionary by her prayers and sacrifices and asked her co-workers to gather in circles of 10 and to donate a penny (*a sou*) and a prayer every week for the Mission Churches, which at the time included the United States and China. Pauline did not envision what would later become the [Society for the Propagation of the Faith](#), but her desire and longing to help the Mission Churches did not end with her.

Bishop Forbin-Janson, one of Pauline's old friends, had been working in the young Mission Churches for some years and when he returned from his missionary work in the United State, he was determined to "arouse great interest for the useful work of the Propagation of the Faith" among French Catholics. He shared with Pauline his long-time dream - "to help the children of the Missions." Bishop Janson was convinced that though weak and needing care, children rich in faith and love were capable of playing their own part in the Church's mission – and of even stirring adults to the same generous missionary spirit. Sometime during the course of their talk, the Holy Childhood Association (HCA), a second Pontifical Mission Society, was born.

Like the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, HCA would encourage daily prayer and regular sacrifice for all the Church's Missions, gathering support into one general fund. Bishop Forbin-Janson started appealing to the children of France to reach out – in faith and love – to help the children of our country and China.

Today, HCA (now known as MCA: Missionary Childhood Association) continues to follow the vision of Bishop Forbin-Janson – "Children helping Children." After learning about the great needs of the world's poorest children, young people are invited to pray and to offer financial help so that children in the Missions today may know Christ and experience His love and care.



The Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy for the Mission Church

AN INTRODUCTION

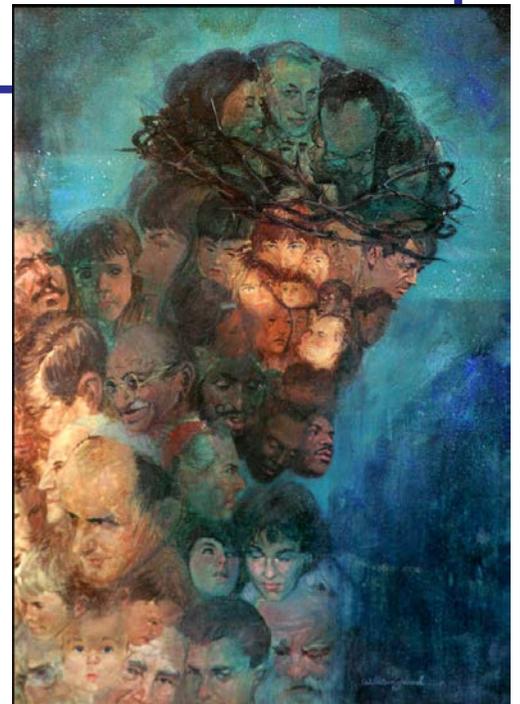
Scripture teaches that the Church is one Body in Christ and through Baptism we are all baptized into one body. Through the reception of the Eucharist, we are brought even closer as a Body as we all partake of the Body and Blood of Christ.

“Now the body is not a single part, but many. If the foot should say, ‘Because I am not a hand I do not belong to the body,’ it does not for this reason belong any less to the body. Or if an ear should say, ‘Because I am not an eye I do not belong to the body,’ it does not for this reason belong any less to the body...” (Cf. 1 Cor. 12:14-17)

As in a human body, the members of the Body of Christ, the Church, are interdependent and what little good that is done affects all of the members and the Church as a whole as the converse is true as well.

“If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy.” (1 Corinthians 12:26)

Nevertheless, Scripture and the Church teach that the poor and less vulnerable members of the Body have a “preferential” and special claim to our charity. In serving and loving our poor and less vulnerable brothers and sisters in the Mission Church, we can fulfill the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy for the neediest of God’s children. We can hear Jesus say, “Whatever you did to the least of these, you did for me.” (Mt. 25: 40)



The Corporal Works of Mercy

“The Scriptural basis for the Corporal Works of Mercy is the parable in the Gospel of Matthew in which Jesus assembles the nations and judges them based on their actions for their brothers and sisters (cf. Mt. 25:35-42). In this parable, the just and the un-just discover that in their merciful actions on behalf of the brother/sister they have been merciful to the Lord Jesus, who identifies completely with the hungry, homeless, sick, imprisoned and even the dead. God, who is rich in mercy, invites his sons and daughters to imitate his abundant mercy and loving kindness towards all his children.”

(Adapted from Office of Evangelization, Mercy Tool Kit)

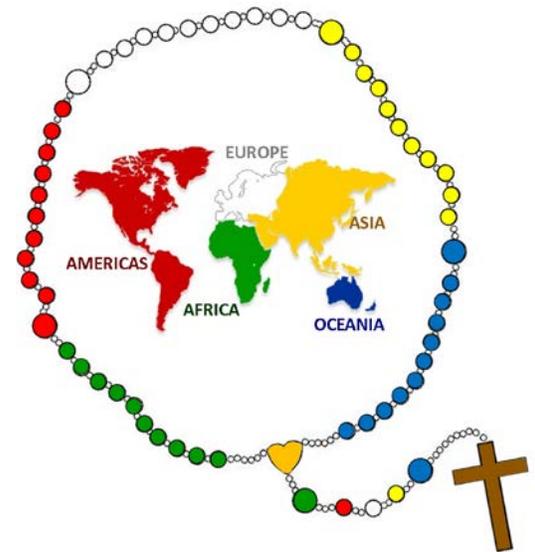
Through offering our sacrifices to God and uniting them to Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross, we become “missionaries of mercy” to the Mission Church. Our sacrifices and offerings, united to Jesus, have power that can bring grace and help to those whom we may never see, but are part of members of the Body of Christ. Just as Jesus’ sacrifice extends through time and space, so our little sacrifices, only united to Jesus’ sacrifice, can also extend time and space to help our brothers and sisters around the world.

Corporal Works of Mercy

-  **Feed the hungry**
-  **Give drink to the thirsty**
-  **Shelter the homeless**
-  **Clothe the naked**
-  **Care for the sick**
-  **Visit the Imprisoned**
-  **Bury the dead**

The Spiritual Works of Mercy

- ✚ Advising others
- ✚ Instructing the ignorant
- ✚ Consoling the doubtful
- ✚ Comforting the sorrowful
- ✚ Bearing wrongs patiently
- ✚ Forgiving all injuries
- ✚ Praying for the living and the dead



The spiritual works of mercy are drawn from a variety of Old and New Testament sources:

Help carry one another's burdens; in that way you will fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:2)

Pray constantly and attentively for all. (Ephesians 6:18)

Let the word of Christ, rich as it is, dwell in you. In wisdom made perfect, instruct and admonish one another. (Colossians 3:16)

If we pray and carry the burdens of the Mission Church while also instructing others about our brothers and sisters, we will be fulfilling the Spiritual Works of Mercy for the Mission Church.



Go...and Make Disciples

Corporal Works of Mercy for the Mission Church

Feed the Hungry and Give Drink to the Thirsty

- ✚ Eat all the food on your plate and say prayer for those who do not have enough to eat around the world.
- ✚ Donate appropriate food items to your local Office of Immigration and Migrant Services for Refugees and Migrants living in your area.*
- ✚ Pick one day of the week to only drink water as a liquid and offer to God this small sacrifice for those who do not have enough clean and fresh water resources.
- ✚ Educate yourself and others about World Hunger.
- ✚ Give up eating your favorite dessert and snack for a day. Donate the money to help the Mission Church.
- ✚ Support and pray for a Missionary who works in another country to feed the hungry physically and spiritually.**
- ✚ Teachers, have an annual fundraising activity/event that collects funds and then donate the funds on World Mission Sunday which helps feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty in the 1,150 Mission Churches around the world.
- ✚ Teachers, have a simple daily fundraising activity that collects funds from your students and then donate the funds to the Missionary Childhood Association which helps feed and clothe the children around the world.



Go...and Make Disciples

Shelter the Homeless

- ✚ Pray for people around the world to have proper housing.
- ✚ Pray for protection and safety for those who are fleeing their homes and countries - the Syrians, Iraqis, Middle Eastern Refugees - because of persecution and violence.
- ✚ Support and/or volunteer for organizations who care for the homeless, build homes, and provide support for countries hit by natural disasters.
- ✚ Create a “Welcome Home” Basket for recently displaced Immigrants and Refugees in your area.*
- ✚ Pray that all people will feel safe and protected in their home countries.
- ✚ Pray that Refugees and Immigrants get the proper housing in their places of destination.
- ✚ Make a small sacrifice of sleeping on your bedroom floor for a night and offer that sacrifice for all the people who live in difficult living conditions.
- ✚ Take a cold shower and/or use minimal water for a day and offer that sacrifice to God for all the people who do not have running water or electricity in their homes.



Go...and Make Disciples

Clothe the Naked

- ✦ Give up buying a new clothing item and donate the money to organizations that support the Mission Church.
- ✦ Make a list of what are needs versus wants and try to live for a week or a month on only what you need.
- ✦ Donate used, but good condition clothing items to Organizations or Missionaries who work overseas with the Mission Church.
- ✦ Teachers, offer to students a day where they can pay a small fee to take off their shoes (only during your class), remembering all the children and people who don't have shoes to wear around the world. Donate the money to the Mission Church.

Visit the Sick and Imprisoned

- ✦ Pray for children and the young who are captured and forced into joining terrorist groups, i.e. ISIS, Boko Haram, etc.
- ✦ Pray for those who are imprisoned in other countries due to violence, war, religious persecution and cultural racism.
- ✦ Pray for all the children around the world who do not have proper access to health care.
- ✦ Pray for all the people in the world who get sick due to lack of food, clean water and unsanitary living conditions.
- ✦ Make a small sacrifice of keeping silent for a certain amount of time during the day and offering that sacrifice to God for all those who have no voice in other countries because they are sick or unjustly imprisoned.



Go...and Make Disciples

Bury the Dead

- ✚ Pray a World Mission Rosary for all those whom have lost their lives due to war, persecution and natural disasters in other countries.
- ✚ Pray for all the children who die daily because of lack of clean water, food and violence.
- ✚ Send a Mission Mass card to families of those who have died.



Go...and Make Disciples

Spiritual Works of Mercy for the Mission Church

Advising Others

- ✚ Be courageous yet compassionate in calling people and institutions to respect other cultures and values.
- ✚ Respond to negative and prejudicial comments with positive statements.
- ✚ Invite someone to speak about the Mission Church and/or different cultures and traditions.

Instructing the Ignorant

- ✚ Commit yourself to learning about the Mission Church and other cultures and share your understanding of the faith with others and with those who welcome it.
- ✚ Share your insights, knowledge and experience of the Mission Church and other cultures with others, especially family, friends, co-workers and fellow students.



- ✚ Read and listen to good stories and literature about the Mission Church and Missionaries and encourage others to do the same.
- ✚ Learn some simple phrases in another language.
- ✚ Help others to see those in other cultures and countries as our brothers and sisters.
- ✚ Pray for more missionaries to go out and preach the Gospel to the Nations.

Go...and Make Disciples

Consoling the Doubtful

- ✦ Pray for Missionaries to not lose hope and to persevere in their work for the Mission Church.
- ✦ Pray for Christians who are being persecuted for their faith to be strengthened with perseverance and courage.

Comforting the Sorrowful

- ✦ Reach out to a new person in your school or community who is of a different culture, tradition and/or country.

Bearing Wrongs Patiently and Forgiving

- ✦ Work at being less critical of those with different cultures, languages, religions and traditions.
- ✦ Pray for those who are persecuting others around the world because of race, religion or other reasons.
- ✦ Pray for those who have wronged you and the Mission Church and pray for the courage to forgive.

Pray for the Living and the Dead

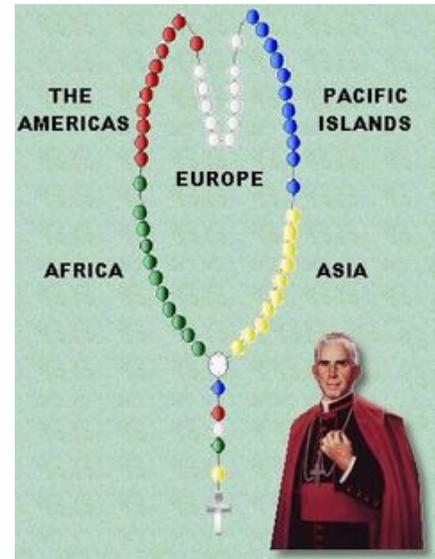
- ✦ Pray for living and deceased Missionaries.
- ✦ Pray for the poor, orphans, widows, and less vulnerable members of the Mission Church.
- ✦ Pray for the Gospel message to go out to all the Nations and those who are in most need of hearing the “Good News.”

The World Mission Rosary

What is the World Mission Rosary?

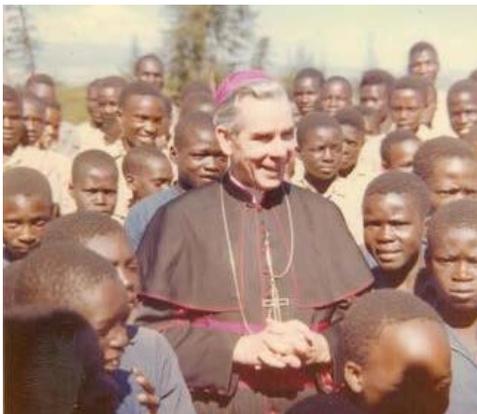
In February of 1951, Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen (national director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith from 1950 to 1966), in a radio address (The Catholic Hour), inaugurated the World Mission Rosary. This rosary is made up of five different colors that represent five continents. Archbishop saw the need for us to pray not just for ourselves, but for the whole world, and especially for those who are poor and vulnerable at home and around the world.

Give the World One Great Big Hug With The World Mission Rosary!



What do the colors signify?

Each decade of that World Mission Rosary calls to mind an area where the Church continues her evangelizing mission: **green** for the forests and grasslands of Africa; **blue** for the ocean surrounding the islands of the Pacific; white symbolizing Europe, the seat of the Holy Father, shepherd of the world; **red** calling to mind the fire of faith that brought missionaries to the Americas and **yellow**, the morning light of the East, for Asia. Archbishop Sheen himself linked this Rosary to the missionary work of the Church and to the Holy Father. Praying this Rosary, he explained in that radio broadcast, would “aid the Holy Father and his Society for the Propagation of the Faith by supplying him with practical support, as well as prayers, for the poor mission territories of the world.” “When the Rosary is completed, one has...embraced all continents, all people in prayer,” he added. “Won’ t you please make a tour of the world on your World Mission Rosary?”



“When the World Mission Rosary is completed, one has embraced all continents, all people in prayer.”

- Venerable Archbishop Fulton Sheen

My Missionary Disciple Checklist

Spiritual Works of Mercy for the Mission Church:

Advising

Instructing

Consoling the Doubtful

Comforting the Sorrowful

Bearing Wrongs Patiently and Forgiving

Pray for the Living and the Dead

My Missionary Disciple Checklist

Corporeal Works of Mercy for the Mission Church:

- Feed the Hungry and Give Drink to the Thirsty

- Shelter the Homeless

- Clothe the Naked

- Visit the Sick and Imprisoned

- Bury the Dead
