

Exploring the Meaning and Need for Mercy

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May 12, 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.

	Matthew 25:31-46
<i>Beautiful Mercy</i> , 101	“To take notice of needs and afflictions is the first step of mercy.”
<i>Celebrating Mercy</i> , 48.	“True Compassion is not just a feeling but an action that leads to true care for the other.”
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>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>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i> , 2840.	“Now—and this is daunting—this outpouring of mercy cannot penetrate our hearts as long as we have not forgiven those who have trespassed against us. Love, like the Body of Christ, is indivisible; we cannot love the God we cannot see if we do not love the brother or sister we do see. (1John 4:20) In refusing to forgive our brothers and sisters, our hearts are closed and their hardness makes them impervious to the Father’s merciful love; but in confessing our sins, our hearts are opened to his grace.”
<i>Beautiful Mercy</i> , 40.	“Yet, as Pope Francis laments, many people in search of healing, rather than being met in their need by true “ministers of mercy,” are met by ministers of the Church who are either “too much of a rigorist, or too lax. Neither is merciful”
<i>Mercy in the Teachings of the Popes</i> , 47.	“We are well aware that <i>neither laxity nor rigorism foster holiness</i> ” (<i>Address to Parish Priests of the Diocese of Rome</i> , March 6, 2014)”
<i>Beautiful Mercy</i> , 157.	<p>“Forgive offenses willingly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is critical to understand what forgiveness is <i>not</i>. • Forgiveness is not saying “no problem” • Forgiveness is not saying “There’s nothing to forgive.” • Forgiveness is not forgetting. • Forgiveness does not mean that you trust the other person. • Forgiveness does not necessarily mean that the relationship is restored. • Forgiveness is not an “event.”
Matthew 12:31-32	“Therefore, I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.”
<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i> , 1864.	“There are no limits to the mercy of God, but anyone who deliberately refuses to accept his mercy by repenting, rejects the forgiveness of his sins and the salvation offered by the Holy Spirit. Such hardness of heart can lead to final impenitence and eternal loss.”

<p><i>The Corporal Works and Spiritual Works of Mercy</i>, 46.</p>	<p>“In Israel, to be deprived of burial was seen as a horrible evil (see Ps 79:3)”</p>
<p><i>Mercy in the Teachings of the Popes</i>, 49-50.</p>	<p>“The Church must consider it one of her principal duties – at every stage of history and especially in our modern age – to proclaim and to introduce into life the mystery of mercy, supremely revealed in Jesus Christ” (<i>Dives in Misericordia</i>, 14).”</p>
<p><i>Celebrating Mercy</i>, 19.</p>	<p>“The specific vocation of pastors and sacred ministers is to make visible, particularly through the celebration of the sacraments and the words and gestures of the liturgy, the Father’s mercy and his care for each of his children expressed in the gift of sacramental grace.”</p>
<p><i>Celebrating Mercy</i>, 7.</p>	<p>“Above all else, the Jubilee of Mercy needs to be celebrated. The symbolic words and rituals that make it up culminate in the liturgical celebration by which the whole Church prays and intensely lives the mystery of her existence as communion.”</p>
	<p>How often is Mercy referred to in EVERY Mass?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We begin with the Sign of the Cross – recalls Jesus’ mercy on the Cross • Penitential Rite <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The theme is mercy ○ Depending on option chosen can explicitly refer to mercy ○ May almighty God have <i>mercy</i> on us.... ○ Not the same forgiveness as going to confession • Gloria – “mercy” explicitly used twice • Opening prayer, reading, homilies often refer to mercy • Creed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>For our sake he was crucified</i> ○ <i>The forgiveness of sins</i> • In the Prayers of the Faithful, we seek God’s mercy (help) • Eucharistic Prayer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Calls to mind Jesus giving up his body for us, his blood shed for us, Sacrifice of Jesus reveals God’s mercy ○ Reception of Communion gives us strength • Our Father <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Give us this day our daily bread</i> ○ <i>Forgive us as we forgive others</i> • Doxology at end of the Lord’s Prayer uses “mercy” • Lamb of God – <i>have mercy on us</i> • End with Sign of the Cross – again the face of the Father’s mercy
<p><i>Celebrating Mercy</i>, 11.</p>	<p>“In addition to the liturgical celebration, “Sunday should always give the faithful an opportunity to devote themselves to works of mercy, charity, and the apostolate.” To experience the joy of the Risen Lord deep within is to share fully the love which pulses in his heart.” as quoted from Pope John Paul II, <i>Dies Domini</i>, 69).”</p>

James 5:14-15	“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>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i> , 1513.	“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.”
From the Prayer for the Year of Mercy	“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.”
<i>Confession, the Sacrament of Mercy</i> , 25.	“As Pope Francis reminded us, “The problem is not that we are sinners, but that we do not allow ourselves to be transformed by the encounter with Christ in love” (Homily, May 17, 2013).”
<i>Beautiful Mercy</i> , 5.	“For thousands of years God has been using ordinary people to do extraordinary things. He delights in dynamic collaboration with humanity. He doesn’t necessarily choose the people who are the best educated or who are good looking; he doesn’t choose people because they are in positions of power and authority; he doesn’t always choose the most eloquent and persuasive. There is one type of person God has used powerfully throughout history: He does incredible things with the people who make themselves available to him; it is the prerequisite for mission.”
<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>Misericordiae Vultus</i> , 4.	“We recall the poignant words of Saint John XXIII when, opening the Council, he indicated the path to follow: “Now the Bride of Christ wishes to use the medicine of mercy rather than the taking up the arms of severity.... Show her herself a loving mother to all.”

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

To view Fr. Jeff’s previous presentations on the Year of Mercy, go to <http://www.renewaloffaith.org/the-jubilee-year-of-mercy.html>.