

Advent Session

Corporal and Spiritual Works Mercy

Corporal Works of Mercy: (Taken <http://thedivinemercy.org/library/article.php?NID=3479>)

Don't be too hasty, however, in dismissing the usefulness of this old list of the corporal works of mercy. It may be more helpful than you think in challenging us to discern new ways that our merciful Savior is calling us to follow Him.

- (1) Feed the hungry.
- (2) Give drink to the thirsty.
- (3) Clothe the naked.
- (4) Shelter the homeless.
- (5) Visit those in prison.
- (6) Comfort the sick.
- (7) Bury the dead.

Discussion Questions

As a family discuss and answer the following question on a separate sheet of paper. Use this to help you decide what corporal work of mercy you will perform.

1. In what new way could you practice one of the corporal works of mercy on a personal level?
2. In what new way could you practice one of the corporal works of mercy on a wider social or even political level?
3. People often say that practicing the corporal works of mercy is very rewarding. What do you think they mean by that?

FILL OUT THE ATTACHED CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY REPORT.

Spiritual Works of Mercy

Works of mercy can be directed not only toward the needs of the body, but the needs of the soul as well. Indeed, the most serious form of poverty of all can be the *poverty of the spirit*, not only because it drains life of all energy, joy, and sense of purpose, but also because it is the one kind of poverty that can last forever.

The evangelist Billy Graham tells the story of a private dinner he shared with one of the wealthiest men in the United States. During the meal the man confessed that despite having every good thing money could buy, he was miserable beyond words. The lesson: money cannot buy happiness. It's a cliché, but it's true. Clearly, this wealthy gentleman suffered from moral poverty.

Indeed, the human spirit longs for the nourishment of truth, goodness, and beauty if it is to be healthy and strong and if it is to grow in sanctification and be prepared for the life to come.

That's why, in addition to the corporal works of mercy, the Church has outlined the spiritual

works of mercy. Look to these works as preventative medicine for poverty of the spirit. The spiritual works of mercy are as follows:

- (1) Admonish sinners.
- (2) Instruct the uninformed.
- (3) Counsel the doubtful.
- (4) Comfort the sorrowful.
- (5) Be patient with those in error.
- (6) Forgive offenses.
- (7) Pray for the living and the dead.

Discussion Questions

Use the following questions to discuss the some ideas about the spiritual works of mercy. We recommend that you choose a form of prayer that you can do as a family to complete this part of your assignment. Answer the following question on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Why is "admonishing sinners" so difficult today? Have you ever been effectively "admonished" by someone else?
2. What new way could you find to "instruct the uninformed" in the truth of the Catholic faith?
3. What new way could you find to "forgive offenses," praying for those who mistreat you rather than "cursing the darkness?"

FILL OUT THE ATTACHED SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY REPORT.

Corporal Works of Mercy Report Form

Family Name: _____

Date that you performed your corporal work of mercy: _____

What corporal work of mercy did you perform?

Where did you perform your corporal work of mercy?

Why did you choose this corporal work of mercy as a family?

What was the most important thing you learned as a family by performing this corporal work of mercy?

Spiritual Works of Mercy Report Form

Family Name: _____ TRACK 1

Date that you performed your spiritual work of mercy: _____

What spiritual work of mercy did you perform?

Where did you perform your spiritual work of mercy?

Why did you choose this spiritual work of mercy as a family?

What was the most important thing you learned as a family by performing this spiritual work of mercy?
