Student Activity
Works of Mercy

Goal: To introduce the students how we as Catholics are called to be merciful to others, by familiarizing them with the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.

Materials: Copy of worksheets “Corporal Works of Mercy” and “Spiritual Works of Mercy”

Instructions: Make enough copies of the worksheets. Then, have the students match the work of mercy to their description.

St. Peter Claver was merciful with those whom he served as a missionary in Colombia because he saw Jesus Christ in them. He had the desire to evangelize and help others build a relationship with God. He realized that in order to experience the love of God, he first had to show mercy to those suffering. He was the face of God to those suffering. He would often say that in the suffering of those he served he saw the suffering of Jesus. He heard in their cry: “What you do for others, you do for me.” He would help to alleviate the most basic needs of people, food, clothing, water and comforting them through any illness.

In our Catholic faith we have the Works of Mercy. They are actions that we can perform to extend God’s compassion and mercy to those in need. As missionary disciples, we are called to put these works of mercy into action.

Mercy is the disposition to be kind, compassionate and forgiving. It is a trait, a characteristic of God. “The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness” Exodus 34:6. In the bible, we have many examples of God’s mercy for us; however, mercy is not reserved for God alone. We his children are also called to be like him and show mercy to one another. To be merciful means that we must be willing to help anyone in need by being kind, compassionate and forgiving to everyone. Mercy is the strength of God’s love.

Let’s talk more about what are the works of mercy. We have the Corporal Works of Mercy and the Spiritual Works of Mercy.

**Corporal Works of Mercy:**

- “The Corporal Works of Mercy are found in the teachings of Jesus and give us a model for how we should treat all others, as if they were Christ in disguise. They “are charitable actions by which we help our neighbors in their bodily needs.” They respond to the basic needs of humanity as we journey together through this life.” (USCCA,USCCB)

- Through these works, we help our neighbors with their material and physical needs.

**Spiritual Works of Mercy:**

- “The Spiritual Works of Mercy have long been a part of the Christian tradition, appearing in the works of theologians and spiritual writers throughout history. Just as Jesus attended to the spiritual well-being of those he ministered to, these Spiritual Works of Mercy guide us to “help our neighbor in their spiritual needs” (USCCA,USCCB)

- These are works of compassion that help our neighbors with their emotional and spiritual needs.

St. Peter Claver practiced the works of mercy and fulfilled his mission to spread the Good News of the Gospel. He had to travel across the world to fulfill his missionary call, but we can start here at home to answer ours. We too can follow his example and practice the works of mercy in our own neighborhoods by being the face of God to all we encounter so they too may know the love He has for all his children.
Prison chaplains and other adults in ministry visit those who are imprisoned to speak to them about God. You can make cards or gather religious pamphlets for prison chaplains to hand out in the prisons that they work in.

Saying goodbye to someone that has passed away can be difficult. Our faith teaches us that those who pass away are with God in a better place. We can help those who have lost a loved one know that their community is with them. Write sympathy cards for families in your community or families that have lost a loved one.

There are many circumstances that can lead a family to be homeless. We have to be considerate. You can ask your parents to help you find out how you as a family can help a homeless shelter.

Sometimes we complain that we don’t have anything to wear when our closet is full of clothes. We can donate clothes that are in good condition if we are not wearing them anymore, for others who don’t have clothes.

We have access to clean water in our homes. There are families that have to travel very far to get a bucket of clean water. We can help save water by turning off the faucet when brushing our teeth.

We can always cheer someone that is sick by visiting them. All it takes is just spending a few minutes with someone who is homebound or in the hospital to show them someone cares about them. Ask your parents to go with you and visit someone that you know who is sick or is homebound.

There are many people in the world that do not have food to eat. We can avoid wasting food by taking only what we are going to eat. Or when we have to much food we can share with others.
We have all been hurt when someone has said something hurtful to us. Just like when we ask God to forgive us. We too must also forgive those who have hurt us.

Admonish means to advise, to encourage a person, or to warn against danger. If we see that someone is doing something that is wrong we should let them know that they should be careful or avoid it. Our warning or advise should be done with love and patience so that when others do the same for us we can listen.

This work of mercy asks us to practice patience and humbleness with those who annoy us. It teaches us to bear with our neighbors and their imperfections. It also allows us to ask ourselves how are we acting towards others.

Whenever we need advice about something, we go to a person we trust. This work of mercy calls for us try and always ask the Holy Spirit to help us give the best advice possible whenever anyone comes to us for counsel.

The “ignorant” are “people who do not know” or “people who do not have an education”. This work of mercy reminds us of the importance of being instructed and informed. To make decisions in an informed manner and be able to help those who are not informed.

We are being called to comfort those who suffer. Like when someone we love comforts us when we are sad or something is bothering us. If we see that someone is sad or is bothered by something we can give a word of encouragement or just listen to them.

With our prayers we “intercede” and bring the suffering, joys, needs and hopes of our brothers and sisters to God. By praying for our neighbors to God we become closer to Him and our brothers and sisters.
Student Activity
Works of Mercy
Grades: 3rd - 5th

Goal: To introduce the students how we as Catholics are called to be merciful to others. Familiarizing them with the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Giving examples of how they can practice them.

Materials: Copy of Works of Mercy Worksheet

Instructions: First, explain what are the Works of Mercy to the students by saying what is below or something similar to it. Then, allow them to match each corporal and spiritual work of mercy to their description. Afterwards discuss with your students practical ways to put into action the works of mercy.

St. Peter Claver was merciful with those whom he served as a missionary in Colombia. He had the desire to evangelize and help others build a relationship with God. He realized that in order to experience the love of God, he first had to show mercy to those suffering. He would often say that in the suffering of those he served he saw the suffering of Jesus and heard in their cry: “What you do for others, you do for me.” He would help to alleviate that suffering by helping with the most basic needs. He helped to feed them, cloth them, give them water, comfort and help cure them of any illness, because he would also see God in all he served.

In our Catholic faith we have the Works of Mercy. They are actions that we can preform to extend God's compassion and mercy to those in need.

Mercy is the disposition to be kind, compassionate and forgiving. It is a trait, a characteristic of God. “The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness” Exodus 34:6. In the bible we have many examples of God's mercy for us. However mercy is not reserved for God alone. We His children are also called to be like Him and show mercy to one another. To be merciful means that we must be willing to help anyone in need by being kind, compassionate and forgiving to everyone we meet. Mercy is the strength of God's love.

In Matthew 25: 31-45 Jesus spoke of how we must show compassion for those in need as if we were extending a helping hand to Him. (Read the bible passage with your students and discuss what they understand from the passage).

1. How can we put into practice what Jesus is asking his followers to do in this bible passage?
2. How did St. Peter Claver put into practice what Jesus said?

The scripture speaks of the works of mercy Jesus asks us to practice. The Corporal Works of Mercy and the Spiritual Works of Mercy are:

**Corporal Works of Mercy:**
- The Corporal Works of Mercy are found in the teachings of Jesus and give us a model for how we should treat all others, as if they were Christ in disguise. They “are charitable actions by which we help our neighbors in their bodily needs.” They respond to the basic needs of humanity as we journey together through this life. (USCCA,USCCB)
- Through these works we help our neighbors with their material and physical needs.

**Spiritual Works of Mercy:**
- The Spiritual Works of Mercy have long been a part of the Christian tradition, appearing in the works of theologians and spiritual writers throughout history. Just as Jesus attended to the spiritual well-being of those he ministered to, these Spiritual Works of Mercy guide us to “help our neighbor in their spiritual needs. (USCCA, USCCB)
- These are works of compassion that help our neighbors with their emotional and spiritual needs.

St. Peter Claver practiced the works of mercy and fulfilled his mission to spread the good news of the Gospel. He had to travel across the world to fulfill his missionary call, but we can start here at home to answer ours. We too can follow his example and practice the works of mercy in our own neighborhoods by being the face of God to all we encounter so they too may know the love He has for all His children.
Student Worksheet
Works of Mercy

**Word bank:**
1. Comfort the sick
2. Give food to the hungry
3. Bury the Dead
4. Clothe the naked
5. Visit the imprisoned
6. Shelter the homeless
7. Give drink to the thirsty
8. Counsel the doubtful
9. Instruct the ignorant
10. Admonish the sinner
11. Comfort the afflicted
12. Forgive offenses willingly
13. Bear wrongs patiently
14. Pray for the living and the dead

**Grades:** 3rd - 5th

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**Corporal Works of Mercy**

1000: This is calling us to give those who are hungry and help them get what they need to live. There are many people who do not have enough to eat. We can help feed others by doing a food drive and donating it to a food bank in our neighborhood.

1001: Water is vital for our survival. More than a billion people do not have access to drinkable water. We can help give drinking water to those who need it. You can give water to someone in the street that might be homeless, especially when the weather is extremely hot. Also remember to not be wasteful.

1002: How many of you have your closets full of clothes and still in the mornings or when going to a party hear yourself say “I have nothing to wear”. Well there are people in places of the world that don’t have a piece of clothing until they are about five or six years old. Even then their clothes are torn and tattered. You can practice this corporal work of mercy by donating articles of clothing that you don’t wear anymore to a shelter.

1003: There are many circumstances that can lead a family or person to be homeless. You can ask your parents to help you find out how can you as a family help at a homeless shelter. This corporal work of mercy can also be interpreted as welcoming the stranger or those who are on a long journey. You too can help someone feel welcome in your home, community, or school. Do you have a new student in your school, perhaps a new family has moved into your neighborhood. Welcome them and help them feel a part of the community.

1004: Those that are imprisoned have made the wrong decisions and are suffering the consequences of their choices. There are prison chaplains who work with those people in jail to help them know that no matter what they have done God is there for them. You can help to write notes for prison chaplains to distribute during Christmas, Easter or any other time. To let them know that they are also children of God.

1005: Centuries ago many people did not have the means to bury their loved ones properly. Many religious organizations including the church would help the poor give their loved ones a dignified burial. This corporal work of mercy reminds us that we have to care for those who are nearing the end of their lives. For those that have passed away, we can help by cleaning the church before a funeral or help write sympathy cards for a family that has lost a loved one.

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**Spiritual Works of Mercy**

1006: We are all called to forgive and be like God who is full of mercy. We have all been hurt when someone has said something hurtful to us. God invites us to forgive as he has forgiven us. Without counting our neighbors offenses and without putting limits on the number of times we must forgive. For how can we ask God for forgiveness of our offenses if we are not willing to do the same.

1007: Admonish means to advise, to encourage a person, or to warn against danger. If we see that someone is doing something that is wrong we should let them know that they should be careful and or avoid it. Our warning or advise should be done with love and patience so that when others do the same for us we can listen. We have to care for one another and make sure that we make good moral decisions in our lives.

1008: This work of mercy ask us to practice patience and meekness with those who annoy us. It teaches us to bear with our neighbors and their imperfections. As followers of Christ we must posses these qualities for He Himself showed us by example to never lose patience with anyone, even with those who did all they could to get Him in trouble.

1009: Whenever we need advice about something. We go to a person we trust. This work of mercy calls for us to try and always ask the Holy Spirit to help us give the best advice possible when ever anyone comes to us for counsel. Being asked for advice by someone is a responsibility that we cannot take lightly. Wise advice to someone can be of precious help to them.

1010: The ”ignorant” are “people who do not know” or “people who are not educated”. This work of mercy reminds us of the importance of being instructed and informed, so that we can make informed decisions as responsible members of society. To be able to help those who are not able to become instructed and informed, allows all of us to use our talents and gifts in a fruitful manner to build a better future for all of us.

1011: In the book of Isaiah we are presented with a beautiful image of God comforting His people. Like a mother comforts her child. In this work of mercy, we are being called to comfort those who suffer like God has done so. Just like when someone we love comforts us when we are sad or something is bothering us. If we see that someone is sad or is bothered by something we can give a word of encouragement or just listen to them.

1012: With our prayers we “intercede” and bring the suffering, joys, needs and hopes of our brothers and sisters to God. By praying for our neighbors to God we become closer to Him and our brothers and sisters. Prayer as Jesus taught us allows us to speak directly to God and express what is in our hearts. In praying for the dead we intercede and ask God to allow them to be in His presence.

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Missionary Childhood Association – September 2017

www.missionsla.org/mca
Student Activity
Works of Mercy

Grades: 6th - 8th

Goal: To introduce the students how we as Catholics are called to be merciful to others. Familiarizing them with the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Giving examples of how they can practice them.

Materials: Copy of worksheets for both the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy

Instructions: First, explain to the students what are the works of mercy by using the information below or something similar to it. Then, allow them to explain what each work of mercy is in their own words. Afterwards, use the check-off list to discuss with your students practical ways to live out the works of mercy.

St. Peter Claver was merciful with those whom he served as a missionary in Colombia. He had the desire to evangelize and help others build a relationship with God. He realized that in order to experience the love of God, he first had to show mercy to those suffering. He was being the face of God to those who suffered. He would often say that in the suffering of those he served, he saw the suffering of Jesus and heard in their cry: “What you do for others, you do for me.” He would help to alleviate that suffering by helping with the most basic needs. Feeding them, clothing them, giving them water, comforting and helping cure them of any illness, seeing Jesus in all he served.

In our Catholic faith we have the Works of Mercy. They are actions that we can perform to extend God’s compassion and mercy to those in need through our actions. By doing the works of mercy, we also serve God who is present in all of us.

Mercy is the disposition to be kind, compassionate and forgiving. It is a trait, a characteristic of God. “The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness” Exodus 34:6.

In the bible we have many examples of God’s mercy for us; however, mercy is not reserved for God alone. We his children are also called to be like him and show mercy to one another. To be merciful means that we must be willing to help anyone in need by being kind, compassionate and forgiving to everyone we meet. Mercy is the strength of God’s love.

In Matthew 25: 31-45, Jesus spoke of how we must show compassion for those in need as if we were extending a helping hand to him. (Read the bible passage with your students and discuss what they understand from the passage).

1. How can we put into practice what Jesus is asking his followers to do in this bible passage?
2. How did St. Peter Claver put into practice what Jesus said?
3. Have you ever done anything mentioned in this passage? If yes, what was it? How did it make you feel?

Let us talk about what are the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. You can use the following video to help introduce that we, as followers of Christ are His hands expressing his mercy to all we encounter: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OaFk7nIPmMU (You are the Hands) - After viewing the short video speak to them about what are the works of mercy.

Corporal Works of Mercy:

- “The Corporal Works of Mercy are found in the teachings of Jesus and give us a model for how we should treat others, as if they were Christ in disguise. They “are charitable actions by which we help our neighbors in their bodily needs”. They respond to the basic needs of humanity as we journey together through this life.” (USCCA, USCCB)
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Spiritual Works of Mercy:

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St. Peter Claver practiced the works of mercy and fulfilled his mission to spread the good news of the Gospel. He had to travel across the world to fulfill his missionary call but we can start here at home to answer ours. We too can follow his example and practice the works of mercy in our own neighborhoods. Being the face of God to all we encounter so they too may know the love He has for all his children.

In trying to help others and do as Jesus asks us, we should also be aware of a few things we should and shouldn’t do. You can use this clip to give your students and idea of how they should practice the works of mercy. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDZA1CExqo (Dos’ and don’ts of Corporal Works of Mercy)
### The Spiritual Works of Mercy

**[Student Worksheet](http://www.looktohimandberadiant.com/2016/02/from-kids-for-kids-practical-ideas-for.html)**

#### Instructions: Use this check off list to put into practice the spiritual works of mercy. Mark something off after you have done it.

- If someone asks you advice, be glad and humble.
- Be encouraging
- Willingly explain things
- Share why you have hope
- Encourage someone to talk to an adult like a teacher, deacon, priest, sister etc.
- Pray to the Holy Spirit to help you say the right words
- Pray for people with suicidal thoughts

- Give people more time - don’t rush them
- If you are good at something, be willing to teach that skill to others
- Be willing to tell stories that you know about the Bible, the Saints, etc. Talk about your faith
- Don’t think you are better than someone else because of your knowledge
- Don’t be prideful or arrogant when you know something

- Suggest that they go to Confession or get advice from a priest
- Help someone understand why something is wrong
- Lead people towards the good choice in a situation
- Stop the problem before it happens
- Consider the causes and effects of the problem
- Help someone to know that even little things are a big deal

- Pray for families that have lost loved ones
- Offer comfort by baking them cookies, making a meal, sending a card
- Go and visit someone who is sad, spend time with them, pray with them
- Do things that make another person happy
- Sit with someone who is sad. Perhaps words are not necessary, simply your loving presence.

- Always be willing to forgive someone
- Don’t hold a grudge
- Give people a second chance
- Accept other’s apologies with kindness

- Be patient when trying to help someone and they don’t want your help
- Don’t help people to expect a thank you
- Be kind to people who make mistakes
- Let people learn from their mistakes
- Don’t be mean back

- Pray with people who are going through hard times
- Ask your friends how you can pray for them
- Memorize the “Eternal rest” prayer and pray it for those who have died
- Pray when you drive past a cemetery
- Pray a Rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Mass, Holy Hour for a specific person
- Remember especially: Those working in mission countries away from their families and home.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spiritual Work of Mercy</th>
<th>Instructions: Write a short explanation for each of the spiritual works of mercy.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counsel the doubtful</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instruct the ignorant</td>
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<table>
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<th>The Corporal Works of Mercy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Give food to a homeless person</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Donate to a food drive/pantry</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Avoid wasting food. Take only what you can eat.</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Bring meals to someone who is sick/recovering</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Volunteer to serve food in a shelter or home</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Set the table, do the dishes, or help cook dinner for your family</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Go shopping &amp; deliver food to someone</td>
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</table>

| □ Donate water to shelters or in an emergency situation |
| □ Offer to get drinks for your friends or family members |
| □ Run a lemonade stand and donate the profits to MCA, or just give the drinks away for free |
| □ Take extra water/drinks with you to a sporting event and share |
| □ Don’t waste water. It’s a resource that we must care for. |

| □ Volunteer for organizations that build homes for people, have a fundraiser to help |
| □ Donate old furniture, pillows, blankets, etc. to those that need it |
| □ Know where safe places are and tell people about them |
| □ Help someone fix up their house that needs it |
| □ Invite people you know to stay with you when they need (traveling, buying a new house, in an emergency, foreign exchange student) |

| □ Buy & donate coats for people who need them |
| □ Clean out your closet and donate to an organization or even a family you know |
| □ Collect baby items for moms in need |
| □ Make your own things to donate- hats, scarves, etc. |
| □ Have a garage sale and donate the money to MCA |

| □ Ask a priest to visit a member of your community that is sick. |
| □ Make sure that someone brings them Communion & Anointing of the Sick |
| □ Make a card, call them, bring a thoughtful gift like pillows, games, books, etc. |
| □ Bring someone who is sick a home cooked meal |
| □ Spend time with them, especially if they are stuck at home or in the hospital |
| □ Be extra nice to family members when they are sick |

| □ Encourage your priest to visit someone in prison |
| □ Make cards and give to a prison chaplain to give to those he works with in prison |
| □ Visit someone who is homebound, send cards, call them |
| □ Cook for someone who is homebound |

| □ Attend funerals & visitations |
| □ Send cards and flowers to a grieving family |
| □ Donate to a cause that is special to the family |
| □ Make food for the family |
| □ Visit a gravesite to pray |
| □ Go visit the family and comfort them |
| □ Help clean out the home of the deceased |

**Instructions:** Use this check off list to help you put into practice the corporal works of mercy. Put a check mark next to something you have done to practice a work of mercy.

http://www.looktohimandberadiant.com/2016/02/from-kids-for-kids-practical-ideas-for.html
### Student Worksheet

**The Corporal Works of Mercy**

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<td>comfort the sick</td>
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<tr>
<td>visit the imprisoned</td>
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<tr>
<td>bury the dead</td>
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Instructions: Write a short explanation for each of the corporal works of mercy.

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