

Prayer Service One

Pour out compassion and mercy (CD 2001, *Woman's Song of God*: by Sr Breige O'Hare OSC and Sr Marie Cox RSM).

Quiet moment of recollection

Reading from the gospel according to Matthew 25: 34-40

Mercy and compassion in the ordinary round of every day

Jesus says;

Then the King will say to those at his right hand, 'Come you that are blessed by my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you? And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family you did it to me''

Quiet moment of reflection and welcome for the Word.

Reflection

Misericordiae Vultus

An extract from the Letter of Pope Francis for the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy (LEV 2015, 25);

Pope Francis writes:

"It is my burning desire that during this Jubilee, the Christian people may reflect on *the corporal and spiritual works of mercy*. It will be a way to reawaken our conscience, too often grown dull in the face of poverty. And let us enter more deeply into the heart of the Gospel where the poor have a special experience of God's mercy. Jesus introduces us to these works of mercy in his preaching so that we can know whether or not we are living as his disciples. Let us rediscover these *corporal works of mercy*: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead. And let us not forget *the spiritual works of mercy*: to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offences, bear patiently those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead.

We cannot escape the Lord's words to us, and they will serve as the criteria upon which we will be judged: whether we have fed the hungry and given drink to the thirsty, welcomed the stranger and clothed the naked, or spent time with the sick and those in prison (cf. *Mt 25:31-45*). Moreover we will be asked if we have helped others to escape the doubt that causes them to fall into despair and which is often a source of loneliness; if we have helped to overcome the ignorance in which millions of people live, especially children deprived of the necessary means to free them from the bonds of poverty; if we have been close to the lonely and the afflicted;

if we have forgiven those who have offended us and have rejected all forms of anger and hate that lead to violence; if we have had the kind of patience God shows, who is so patient with us; and if we have commended our brothers and sisters to the Lord in prayer. In each of these “little ones” Christ himself is present. His flesh becomes visible in the flesh of the tortured, the crushed, the scourged, the malnourished and the exiled ... to be acknowledged, touched and cared for by us. Let us not forget the words of Saint John of the Cross: “as we prepare to leave this life, we will be judged on the basis of love”. (Words of Light and Love, 57).

Reflection Question

In this excerpt from Francis’ Jubilee letter as in the gospel reading we have a clear mandate for living the ordinary round of our daily life in a way that gives meaning to everything we do, even something as ordinary as sharing food and drink. This is what gives meaning to our lives, which deepens the bonds of our love relationship with God and others and at the same time readies us for that great moment when we will be able to tell our love to God.

During the Jubilee Year of Mercy how might I/we respond practically to incarnate God’s mercy in the world where I/we live?

Quiet moment and sharing. (Mutual encouragement to put into practice the Jubilee Year promise)

Let us pray to the God of Mercy and Compassion

O God, you call us to a life in relationship. Help us to reveal your love and concern to our world. Thank you for your great Mercy and for the hope that gives meaning to all we do. We pray especially for the most vulnerable that they may know your care. Grant this in the name of Jesus. Amen

We bring our time of prayer to a close by praying with Mary her *Magnificat*

My soul glorifies the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour!

He shatters my little world and lets me be poor before Him.

He takes from me all my plans and gives me more than I can hope for or ask.

He gives me opportunities and the ability to become free and burst through my boundaries.

He gives me the strength to be daring, to build on Him alone, for he shows Himself the ever greater One in my life.

He has made known to me this: it is in my being servant that it becomes possible

For God’s kingdom to break through here and now.

(English translation from German by Olga Warnke IBVM)

AMEN

From: Brenda Dolphin rsm: Is there Anything More Extraordinary than the Ordinary? www.mercyworld.org