



Called to the Ministry of Mercy

PARTICIPANT COPY

THE JUBILEE YEAR ENDS, THE WORK OF MERCY GOES ON

The holy door remains open because it is the sign of the welcoming that God himself reserves for us, so also our doors, those of the heart—must always be open to not exclude anyone. Not even those who bother me. No one!

— Pope Francis

Welcoming Song:

What Mercy May Yet Be Cynthia Serjak RSM Americas

Verses 1 and 2

What Mercy may yet be is held in mystery,
 Yet we can a path that winds throughout our history.
 Where Mercy may yet go is in our hearts to grow.
 The Living Source reveals a course that we will come to know.

What Mercy may yet be is in us as a seed.
 It is our task to till and plant, to water and to weed.
 When Mercy may be strong is in us as a song.
 We shape our part within its art and for its time we long.

Reading 1

Response: "Open Wide the Doors"

Reading 2

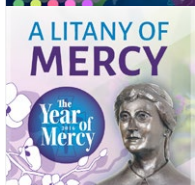
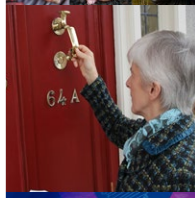
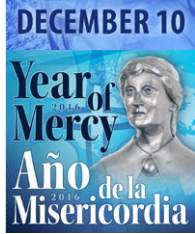
Response: "Open Wide the Doors"

Reflection/Homily

Ends and Ongoings

A poem by Mary Wickham. © 2016 Mary Wickham RSM, ISMAPNG

The great door in Rome will be sealed,
 jubilee revert to ordinary,
 and the surge of Mercy words subside to quieter waters.
 But we, who are claimed by the word and carry it as name,
 we will stir the waters and make yet the ordinary jubilant,
 since every year is of God's favour, every day waits for mercy.
 We will not close the Door of Mercy.
 We will stand as keepers, attuned, disposed.
 We will hold the door ajar
 for the desperate and the disruptive,
 the stray and the strange,
 the wounded wise and the child old too soon.
 They are looking for the door,
 waiting by the door,
 hoping for the door,
 and we must, with them, and for them,
 keep faith.
 We will not close the Door of Mercy.
 There will be room at our inn,
 we will make space at the table,
 the cooking pot holds ample.
 Through the door is feast and safety,
 hope and shelter.
 My friend, one of the wounded wise, says:
 You only have to knock once
 and you only have to knock lightly.
 The God of mercy, whose door it is,
 is always home.



The Work of Mercy Goes On

Intercessions

Leader: At the opening of the Jubilee Year of Mercy, we gathered in our holy places and prayed for the energy and the courage to “take up the joyful call to mercy” and to respond to the needs of our sisters and brothers. Conscious that these needs continue to call out for our response, we ask once again – **May we be signs of your mercy.**

Your people thirst for justice, for clean water – and so we pray: **May we be signs of your mercy.**

Your people long to be known, they long for a homeland, for right relationships, for welcome. They long to see your face, – and so we pray: **May we be signs of your mercy.**

Your people suffer from ills of body, mind and spirit. Your Earth suffers from pollution and degradation – and so we pray: **May we be signs of your mercy.**

Your people are imprisoned in unjust structures and political regimes, in dangerous relationships, in demeaning work environments. Your people seek compassion, comfort, companionship and counsel – and so we pray: **May we be signs of your mercy.**

We come to the end of this Jubilee Year, so conscious of the ongoing and insistent cries for Mercy in our world. For ears attention to those cries, hearts of compassion and hands ready to respond we pray: **May we be signs of your mercy.**

Concluding Prayer

Our good God, as we bring to a close this Jubilee Year of Mercy, we thank you for the insights and graces that have accompanied our observances. May the doors of our hearts, the doors of our lives remain open and ready to be living signs of your welcoming presence. We pray for the generosity and courage needed to enfold your mercy in our world and our prayer is filled with trust for we know that your love calls forth our action. And to this we say: Amen.

Concluding Song

What Mercy May Yet Be Cynthia Serjak RSM Americas

Verses 3 and 4

What Mercy may yet be is wanting to come free.
It's hard to know what must let go and how we shall agree.

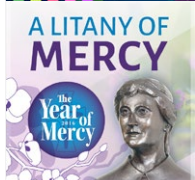
How Mercy may be formed is gospel in its core.
The path unfolds in minds and souls and shapes us more and more.

What Mercy may yet be is bound in Trinity:
Creating, saving, all embracing presence of the Three.
How Mercy may yet serve is wisdom to be earned.
As God allows, our time is not to God's will let us turn.



Become
the door of
Mercy through
which those who enter
experience the love of God.

Pope Francis



Readings

Option 1: Misericordiae Vultus by Pope Francis

These works of mercy are the features of the countenance of Jesus Christ, Who cares for the least of His brothers to bring God's tenderness and closeness to every one. May the Holy Spirit help us; may the Holy Spirit kindle in us the desire to live in this way. Do at least one of them a day, at least! Let us learn again by heart the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, and ask the Lord to help us to put them into practice every day and at the moment in which we see Jesus in a person in need. Pope Francis

Option 2: A Mercy Day reflection by Elizabeth Davis RSM Newfoundland

Since our last Mercy Day, we have shared globally in rich and deep experiences: opening our holy doors of Mercy and participating in the electronic pilgrimage with the Stations of Mercy, in the April pilgrimage to Rome, and in the Mercy International Reflection Process. We have opened our holy doors of Mercy, we have walked through the doors, and we have welcomed the many others who have accepted our invitation to come in. In these moments and movements shared together, we have deepened our influence on the globalization of mercy, compassion and the struggle for ecological social justice (to echo Albert Nolan, op). And we are growing into new understandings of contemplative presence in contemplative space – personal contemplation, communal contemplation and global contemplation all interwoven and mutually enriching.

Now on this Mercy Day, let us rejoice that we Sisters of Mercy are living religious life in this time. Let us rejoice that we, with you our partners in Mercy, are enjoying new and energizing ways of walking together on our shared Mercy journey. In two months, the Year of Mercy comes to an end, but our holy doors of Mercy will never be closed. Today, let our promise be that we will open our doors even wider, that we will walk through them with greater confidence and certainty, that we will invite in so many who are still crying out for justice, and that we will truly treasure the holy ground which holds our doors secure.

Option 3: The Good Samaritan

And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?" And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And He said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this and you will live." But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Jesus replied and said, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead. And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him. On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.' Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' hands?" And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same."

Option 4: The Principle of Mercy by Jon Sobrino

Mercy, then, is the first thing and the last. It is more that a categorical practice of the "works of mercy". True, the practice of mercy can and ought to include these works. But mercy itself is something far more radical. Mercy is a basic attitude toward the suffering of another, whereby one reacts to eradicate that suffering for the sole reason that it exists, and in the conviction that, in this reaction to the ought-not-to-be of another's suffering, one's own being, without any possibility of subterfuge, hangs in the balance.

Photo credit:

Srs Caitlin Conneely, Cecilia Cadogan, Liz Murphy, knocking on the door of Mercy International Centre during the opening of the Year of Mercy ritual, 8 December 2015