

## MAKING SENSE OF CATHOLICISM

**They will know we are Christians by our love.**

What have you done today for Christ?

*'For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'* Matthew 25:35-41 (NASB)

Throughout the years we have heard the above Bible passage. But what exactly is it referring to in our everyday lives? The answer is the Corporal Works of Mercy. These following "directions of mercy" illustrate the ways to show charity toward others:

Feed the hungry  
Clothe the naked  
Visit the sick  
Bury the dead

Give drink to the thirsty  
Shelter the homeless  
Visit the imprisoned

The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us that "The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities." First and foremost, these actions recognize the sacredness of human life. As we strive to fulfill these works of mercy, we are reminded that we are indeed our brother's keeper. Therefore it is our duty as well as our obligation to love our neighbor through acts of charity, love, kindness, patience and mercy. Performing these works of mercy may be easier than you realize. Here are some examples that your entire family can participate in:

### **Feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty:**

- \*Ensure that your family and loved ones are getting the proper nutrition
- \*Support your local food pantry
- \*Do not waste food

### **Clothe the naked:**

- \*Go through your drawers and closets and donate clothes that you no longer wear
- \*Have a rummage sale and give all or a portion of your proceeds to St. Vincent de Paul Society
- \*Donate to a charity that ensures children have coats, hats and boots for the winter

### **Shelter the homeless:**

- \*Help neighbors take care of their home and assist in repairs
- \*Support and/or volunteer at a homeless shelter or Safe Harbor
- \*Support and/or volunteer for charitable agencies who care for the homeless and build homes

### **Visit the sick:**

- \*Spend quality time with family who are sick or homebound
- \*Take time to call or send a card to someone who is sick
- \*Cook and deliver meals

### **Visit the imprisoned:**

- \*Pray for families of inmates
- \*Support and/or participate in ministries to those who are incarcerated
- \*Support programs that provide holiday gifts for prisoners and their families

### **Bury the dead:**

- \*Be faithful about attending wakes/visitation
- \*Support and/or volunteer at a hospice
- \*Spend time with widows and widowers
- \*Pray for those family and friends that have passed away

- Sherrie Clutts – Director of Religious Education