

FAITH CHAT

with James & John

Why Live The Corporal & Spiritual Works Of Mercy?

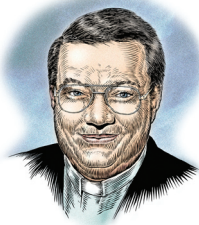
Know This...

The Catechism says that 'works of mercy' are "charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbors in their bodily and spiritual needs." God gives us the grace to perform human acts of charity. We either respond positively to it or reject it. In the parable of the sheep and goats in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus ties our salvation to our love for God and neighbor: Those who care for others will enter heaven; while those who do not will enter hell. If we live the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy, we do God's will and experience joy in this life.



John: The Corporal Works of Mercy are directed to the body. They call us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick and those in prison, and bury the dead.

James: The Spiritual Works of Mercy are directed to the soul. They call us to warn sinners, instruct the ignorant, counsel the doubtful, comfort the sorrowful, patiently bear wrongs, and pray for the living and the dead.



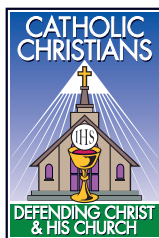
John: When we live the Works of Mercy, we come to the aid of our neighbors; but more importantly we serve God, experience joy, and grow in holiness.

James: If we love Jesus, we will imitate His compassion for those in need, detach ourselves from possessions that distract us, and see our enemies as neighbors.

John: When we live the Works of Mercy, we bear witness to Christ.

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"Jesus said to those on His right [the sheep], 'Come, you who 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 drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.' Then He said to those on His left [the goats], 'Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.'" Mt 25:34-36, 41-43

"Give to everyone that asks thee, and do not refuse for the Father's will is that we give to all from the gifts we have received."

The Didache, 75 A.D. "Mercy is a good thing, for it makes men perfect, in that it imitates the perfect Father." St. Ambrose "The bread you store up belongs to the hungry; the cloak that lies in your chest belongs to the naked; the gold that you have hidden in the ground belongs to the poor." St. Basil the Great



PAPA SAYS

"When we attend to the needs of those in want, we give them what is theirs, not ours. More than performing works of mercy, we are paying a debt of justice." Pope St. Gregory the Great, 6th century



BE ATTITUDES

"Man should not consider his material possession his own, but as common to all, so as to share them without hesitation when others are in need." St. Thomas Aquinas "When we serve the poor and the sick, we serve Jesus. We must not fail to help our neighbors, because in them we serve Jesus." St. Rose of Lima



"You shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, but you shall open your hand to him, and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be... You shall give to him freely, and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him; because for this the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake." Deut 15:7b-8, 10

Loving Father, Your Son Jesus took on human nature. His experience of human misery and suffering elicited within Him a deep compassion. It led Him to associate with the poor, the sick, the lost, and the dying. In Jesus' name, I ask for the grace to imitate His compassion. Amen.

