

Pope Francis writes: "It is absolutely essential for the Church and for the credibility of her message that she herself live and testify to mercy." He says, "Mercy is the beating heart of the Gospel. To live mercy, we must rediscover the SPIRITUAL WORKS of mercy (Counsel the doubtful, Instruct the ignorant, Admonish sinners, Comfort the afflicted, Forgive offenses, Bear patiently those who do us ill, and Pray for the living and the dead) and the CORPORAL WORKS of mercy (Feed the hungry, Give drink to the thirsty, Clothe the naked, Welcome the stranger, Heal the sick, Visit the imprisoned and Bury the dead).

"True mercy, the mercy God gives to us and teaches us, demands justice; it demands that the poor find the way to be poor no longer." Pope Francis notes: "It asks us, the Church, us, the City of Rome, it asks the institutions - to ensure that no one ever again stands in need of a soup kitchen, or make-shift lodgings, of a service of legal assistance in order to have legitimate rights recognized to live and to work, to be fully a person."

Ideas for Living Mercy during the Jubilee will forthcoming from the Diocese and local parish communities.

As we approach Advent and the Christmas seasons, we take a look at St. Luke's Gospel: the Gospel of Mercy. It is a theme that runs through the whole Gospel

In its opening chapter, St. Luke's Gospel begins with 2 great canticles in praise of Divine Mercy: the "MAGNIFICAT" and the "BENEDICTUS." The Magnificat is essentially a hymn of thanksgiving to the God of Mercy, the God of steadfast love and faithfulness. In verses 46-50, Mary praises God for showering His mercy upon her.

"My soul magnifies the Lord,
And my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
For he has regarded the low estate of his handmaid.
For behold, henceforth all generations will call
me blessed,
For he who is mighty has done great things for me.
And holy is his name;
And his mercy is on those who fear him
From generation to generation."

Mary then praises God in verses 51-55 for His mercy upon the faithful poor of Israel, who trusted Him to keep His promises to send the Messiah.

"He has shown strength with his arm
He has scattered the proud in the imagination of
their hearts.