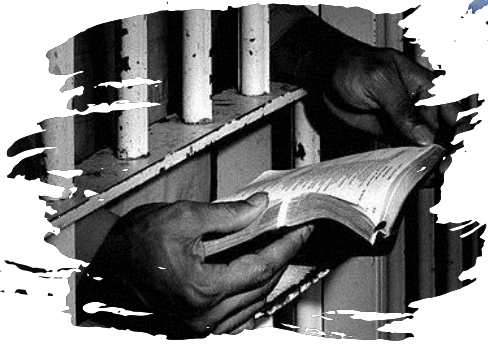


Global Acts of
MERCY



“I desire mercy, not sacrifice”

Hosea 6:6

GATHERING PRAYER (HYMN)

Mercy
My past embraced
My sin forgiven
I'm blameless in your sight
My history rewritten

'Cause You delight in showing mercy,
and mercy triumphs over judgement
You delight in showing mercy,
and mercy triumphs over judgement

Oh, Love, great Love
Fear cannot be found in You
There will never be a day
That you're uncertain of the ones you
choose

You delight in showing mercy,
and mercy triumphs over judgement
(repeat)

So I will awake, and spend my days
Loving the one who has raised me up
From death to life, from wrong to right
You're making all things beautiful
(repeat x 2)

And You delight in showing mercy,
and mercy triumphs over judgement
(repeat)

By Amanda Cook
You Tube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sLLwvJShMV8>

Song available on Apple Music/itunes




(Gwen Meharg <http://www.drawneartogod.com>)

INTRODUCTION

FOR GOD IS AT WORK IN YOU...

(Philippians 2:13)

There are many who live the gospel values every day. They have made love and compassion a vocation, freeing themselves from fear and hate, that drives our modern world. Their work shows us that we have the capacity to do the same, within our limitations: something as simple as a smile can change a life. Each ripple a person makes will roll on into a wave!



“.. SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI TOOK A NOVICE OUT FOR A DAY OF PREACHING THE GOSPEL. AS THEY LEFT ASSISI, THEY HELPED A FARMER MOVE HIS CART; DOWN THE ROAD THEY TALKED WITH A MERCHANT AND LISTENED TO HIS PROBLEMS; AROUND NOON THEY SHARED THEIR MEAL WITH A HUNGRY BEGGAR; SOON AFTER LUNCH THEY PRAYED WITH A SICK WOMAN; ON THEIR WAY BACK, THEY HELPED A WOMAN CARRY HER HEAVY LOAD. WHEN THEY RETURNED TO THE MONASTERY AT DARK, THE NOVICE COMMENTED THAT THE DAY WAS GONE AND THEY HADN'T PREACHED TO ANYONE. 'MY SON,' FRANCIS RESPONDED, 'WE'VE BEEN SHARING THE GOSPEL ALL DAY LONG.' ...”

(Derek Maul: 10 Life-Charged Words)

SCRIPTURE

THE LEAST OF THESE...

Matthew 25:35-40

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, I 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.'

REFLECTION ON THE SCRIPTURE

Speaking to the thousands of pilgrims who crowded St Peter's Square, the Pope reflects on Matthew 25:35 and reminds us that the Church does not teach us about mercy through theoretical lectures but through action.

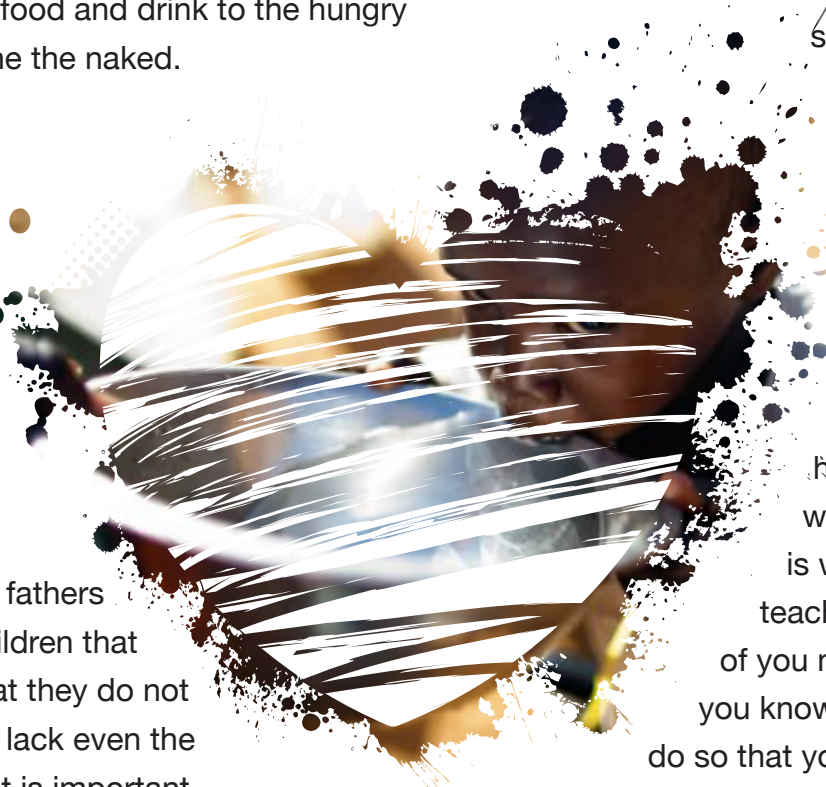
"..The Mother Church, like Jesus, teaches by example, and uses words to illuminate the meaning of her gestures. The Mother Church teaches us to give food and drink to the hungry and thirsty, to clothe the naked.

And how does she do this? With the example of many saints who have done this in an exemplary manner; but she also does so with the example of so many mothers and fathers who teach their children that they must give what they do not need to those who lack even the basic necessities. It is important to know this. Even in the simplest of Christian families rule of hospitality has always been held sacred: may there always be a place at the table and a spare bed for those who need it".

"Once a mother told me, in the other dioceses, that she wanted to teach this to her children and told them to help and give food to the hungry. She had three little ones. And one day at lunch there was a knock on the door and a gentleman was there who asked to eat, and the mother said: 'Wait a minute'.

And she went back in and told her children: 'There is a gentleman out there who is asking for something to eat, what should we do? '- 'Give him some, Mom, give him some! '. Each of the children has a steak and fries on their plate: 'Very well, each of you take half of your dinner and give it to him! - 'Ah, no, Mom, that's not fair! '- 'That's the way it is you have to give him what you have'. And so this mother taught their children to give of their own food. This is a fine example that has helped me so much. 'But, I haven't got any extra - 'No you have to give some of what you have! '. This is what Mother Church teaches us. And you, all of you mothers here today you know what you have to do so that your children learn to share their things with those in need".

"The Mother Church teaches us to be close to those who are sick. How many saints served Jesus in this way! And how many ordinary men and women, every day, put into practice this work of mercy in a hospital room, or in a nursing home, or in their own home, assisting a sick person. The Mother Church teaches us to be close to those who are in prison...Each of us is capable of doing the same thing as the man or woman who is in prison. We all have the capacity to sin and to



do the same, to make mistakes in life. They are no worse than you or I".

"Mercy overcomes every obstacle, knocks down every wall and brings you to always seek the face of the man, the person. And it is mercy that changes hearts and lives, that can regenerate a person and allow them to reintegrate themselves in society."

"The Mother Church teaches us to stay close to those who are abandoned and die alone. This is what Blessed Teresa of Calcutta did on the streets of Calcutta. This is what many Christians are doing and have done when they are not afraid to shake hands with those who are about to leave this world. And even here, mercy gives peace to those who leave and those who remain, making us feel that God is greater than death, and that by abiding in Him even the final farewell is simply 'until we meet again'..."

"Blessed Teresa really understood this. Although they used to say to her, 'Mother, this is wasting time'. She would look for people dying on the street, people whose bodies were being eaten by rats and she would take them home so that they could die clean, in tranquility, with a caress in peace. She bid them farewell, all of these people! And many men and women have done this like her. They are waiting for them there, at the door, to open the gate of Heaven for them. Helping people to die well, in peace. "

"Dear brothers and sisters, this is how the Mother Church teaches her children the works of mercy. She has learned this path from Jesus, she learned that this is essential for salvation. It is not enough to love those who love us. Jesus says that pagans do this. It is not enough to do good to those who do good to us. To change the world for the better we must do good to

those who unable to reciprocate, as the Father did with us, in giving us Jesus. "

"How much have we paid for our redemption? Nothing, it's all free! Doing good without waiting for something in return, doing a good turn. This is what our Father did for us and so we must do the same. So go on and do some good! How nice it is to live in the Church, our Mother Church teaches us that these things that Jesus taught us."

11/09/2014)

(Pope Francis. General Audience, St Peter's Square.

GLOBAL ACTS OF MERCY:

Mother Teresa of Calcutta and The Missionaries of Charity

Mother Teresa began caring for the sick and dying of Calcutta in 1952. It was her love of Jesus and humankind that inspired her work. Since then the Missionaries of Charity (sisters and lay volunteers) have continued to care for the destitute and dying. Mother Teresa is an inspiring example of the works of mercy. She served the sick and dying while giving them the gift of dignity. Mother Teresa was a woman of action. "We are supposed to preach without preaching not by words, but by our example, by our actions." (Mother Teresa).

Mother Teresa shows this through an encounter:

"If you are preoccupied with people who are talking about the poor, you scarcely have time to talk to the poor... I had the most extraordinary experience once in Bombay. There was a big conference about hunger. I was supposed to go to that meeting and I lost the way. Suddenly I came to that place, and right in front of the door to where hundreds of people were talking about food and hunger, I found a dying man. I took him out and I took him home. He died there. He died of hunger. And the people inside were talking about how in 15 years we will have so much food, so much this, so much that, and that man died."

Simple truths from Mother Teresa:

<http://bit.ly/29aLVy2>



IF YOU CAN'T FEED A HUNDRED PEOPLE THEN JUST FEED ONE

- MOTHER TERESA

MERCY SHIPS

In 1964, 19-year-old Don Stephens was visiting the Bahamas as part of a youth group when Hurricane Cleo swept through the region. Don's youth group took shelter in an aircraft hangar, but others were not so fortunate with Cleo claiming lives and destroying hundreds of homes. In the aftermath of the storm, he was struck by the words of suffering local people who

people in the developing world. They have transformed the lives of more than 2.42 million people in the least developed countries for more than 35 years. Surgeons, nurses and other staff volunteer their services and pay for their own expenses so people can be treated.

(Source: <https://www.mercyships.org.au>)



pleaded for a hospital ship to treat their injured and provide urgently needed medicines.

In 1978 Don's goal became reality when he and fellow fundraisers paid \$US1 million for the Victoria, a former cruise liner, and work began to convert her to a hospital ship. In 1982, the vessel, refitted with three operating theatres and a 40-bed ward, sailed as the Anastasis - the first Mercy Ship.

Since then, four ships, including the current vessel, the Africa Mercy, have served in 150 ports throughout developing nations, bringing hope, relief and healing to the most vulnerable people.

Mercy Ships is a unique medical Christian charity that uses hospital ships and ground based teams to deliver free surgeries and health care to the poorest

Some on the Mercy Ships can be viewed on the following links on You Tube:

Overview

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vWL4Mu-jgWRw>

"Sunday Night" Story

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mDHBEI-6WOGw>

LOVE THIS CITY

Love This City is a modern movement inspiring sweeping acts of love. It is profound in its message and attainable to everyone. It began in 2013 in Auckland City, New Zealand and its impact has been global. Today, churches from around the world have seen this simple yet beautiful act of kindness as life giving and are passing on God's love to others. Love this City celebrates God in the stranger we are yet to meet: People are surprised with radical acts of love. This is usually shown with small gifts, tokens of love and appreciation, and conversation.

<http://bit.ly/293OPRF>



LOVE THIS CITY

WHEN THE WORLD SLUMBERS IN COMFORT AND SELFISHNESS, OUR CHRISTIAN MISSION IS TO HELP IT ROUSE FROM SLEEP”.

- POPE FRANCIS ON TWITTER 08/01/2016

This simple act
is being carried out
across the world
and it is also within
our reach,
if we choose.

<http://lovethiscity.org/local/>



REFLECTIONS FROM WATER FROM THE ROCK

16. Today, those of us who follow in the footsteps of Marcellin and his first disciples are seized by the same inner dynamism. We develop a way of being, loving and doing, in the spirit of our origins. Gradually, day by day, we deepen our experience of the loving presence of God within ourselves and in others. This presence of God is a profound experience of being personally loved by God, and the conviction that he is close to us in our daily human experiences.

69. Jesus shows us how deeply God is touched by the needs and pain of people, especially the 'little ones' of life. As our lives become more centred on our relationship with God, we too are filled with God's compassion and are drawn into service of those in need, especially among young people.

70. This stance towards life, our passion for God and compassion for God's people, is our spirituality at work. At each stage in history it calls forth a certain style of presence, a way of being with God and for God in our world.

129. Our compassionate response to the needs of the world wells up from our spirituality. Spirituality draws us into mission and, in living that mission, finds itself nourished and rekindled. It gives meaning to our human experiences and allows us to read life with the eyes and heart of God and to understand it as God's project.

MERCY IS NOT SOMETHING GOD HAS, BUT SOMETHING GOD IS

- A.W. TOZER



(Whatever You Do by Timothy P. Schmalz. <http://www.sculpturebytps.com/press-and-major-projects/>)

CLOSING PRAYER

O Most Holy Trinity! As many times as I breathe,
as many times as my heart beats,
as many times as my blood pulsates through
my body,
so many thousand times do I want to glorify
Your mercy.

I want to be completely transformed into
Your mercy and to be Your living reflection,
O Lord.

May the greatest of all divine attributes,
that of Your unfathomable mercy,
pass through my heart and soul to my neighbor.

Help me, O Lord, that my eyes may be merciful,
so that I may never suspect or judge from
appearances,
but look for what is beautiful in my neighbors'
souls and come to their rescue.

Help me that my ears may be merciful,
so that I may give heed to my neighbors' needs
and not be indifferent to their pains and
moanings.

Help me, O Lord, that my tongue may be
merciful,
so that I should
never speak
negatively of my
neighbor,
but have a word
of comfort and
forgiveness for all.

Help me, O Lord,
that my hands may
be merciful
and filled with good
deeds, so that I may
do only good
to my neighbors and
take upon myself
the more difficult
and toilsome tasks.

Help me, that my feet may be merciful,
so that I may hurry to assist my neighbour,
overcoming my own fatigue and weariness.
My true rest is in the service of my neighbor.

Help me, O Lord, that my heart may be merciful
so that I myself may feel all the sufferings of my
neighbor.

I will refuse my heart to no one. I will be sincere
even with those who,
I know, will abuse my kindness.

And I will lock myself up in the most merciful
Heart of Jesus.

I will bear my own suffering in silence.

May Your mercy, O Lord, rest upon me.

You Yourself command me to exercise the three
degrees of mercy.

The first: the act of mercy, of whatever kind.

The second: the word of mercy — if I cannot
carry out a work of mercy,

I will assist by my words.

The third: prayer — if I cannot show mercy by
deeds or words,

I can always do so by prayer.

My prayer reaches out even there where I cannot
reach out physically.

O my Jesus, transform me into Yourself, for You
can do all things.

Amen



<http://www.thedivinemercy.org/message/spirituality/prayer.php>