



THIRSTY

Give drink to the thirsty

In Ireland we are never more than a few steps away from clean, safe drinking water; sadly such is not the case in the rest of the world. According to the World Health Organization, **2.6 billion** people do not have access to safe drinking water. As a result, they have all kinds of health problems. Access to food alone won't stop malnutrition when people can't digest the food because of waterborne parasites.

Ideas: Research charities such as Trocaire that work to provide the poor with access to clean drinking water. Be mindful of your own water usage at home - *not just because of the water rates!* Some Catholics choose to show spiritual solidarity by fasting from a favourite beverage and donating to charity.



HUNGRY

Give food to the hungry

According to a report published in September this year one in five Irish Children go to school or bed hungry. FOOD POVERTY is on the rise in Ireland with over **600,000 people** in the country being affected by it. Children and the elderly are particularly vulnerable. At the opening of a new central food bank in Dublin in March, CrossCare stated there is a *growing demand for food assistance* as more desperate families struggle.

Ideas: Have your parish organize a food drive, especially during the summer months when food needs go up and giving goes down. Many parishes help at local soup kitchens. Serving can also be a great way to encounter Christ by directly meeting people in need. Avoid wasting food.



IMPRISONED

Visit the imprisoned

In the Republic of Ireland the prison system is overcrowded with a prison population **increase of 400%** since 1970. In 2013 there were over 6,000 imprisoned in Ireland (NI & ROI) and 10 million across the world. Chaplains are responsible for the pastoral and spiritual care of the entire prison community, regardless of denomination.

Ideas: Besides researching the Irish Prison Chaplaincy Service, Catholics interested in getting involved in prison ministry can check with their parish to find out what prison ministry opportunities are available in their area, or contact the Social Support Agency of the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin, CrossCare. Also help to care for the families of the imprisoned. Pray for those in prison.



SICK

Care for the sick

One of the most profound hardships is loneliness. When Adam was by himself, God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone" (Gn 2:18). The **impact of loneliness** is magnified by sickness, infirmity or old age. It is a great mercy to support someone when they are ill. As Christians, we encounter the suffering Christ. We are like Simon of Cyrene, helping Christ carry his cross when we visit someone in the hospital or at the nursing home.

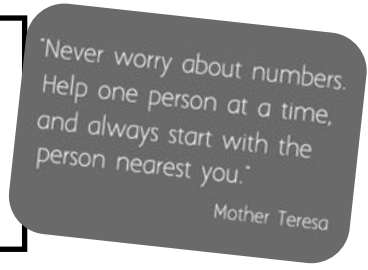
Ideas: Find out how you and your family can volunteer to help at a nursing home. Reach out to neighbours, to the people in the parish who are sick by offering to make meals or help family members care for their sick or elderly relative. Volunteer with a local Hospice.



CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

What they are and how you can live them

The Corporal Works of Mercy are kind acts by which we help our neighbours with their material and physical needs.

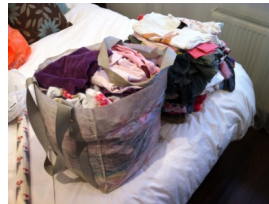


HOMELESS

Shelter the homeless

The number of homeless families has **risen by 76%** since the start of the year, according to figures from the Department of the Environment. Jesus himself experienced many episodes of homelessness, starting at birth and even ending with him buried in another's tomb. In the face of the homeless, he challenges us when he says, "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Mt 25:35). In our own day, it may not always be prudent to welcome strangers into our home, but helping charities that help the homeless and prevent homelessness can be a great way to start.

Ideas: Besides learning more about and supporting your local homeless shelter or charity, carrying around Ziploc bags with things like socks and toiletries in your car or handbag can be a great way to help.



NAKED

Clothe the naked

Everyone needs clothing for warmth, protection, modesty and dignity. **It is an act of love to help others obtain clothing**, especially those who need help. Whether it is St. Francis giving his fine clothes to a shabbily dressed, embarrassed knight or St. Martin of Tours cutting his military cloak to save a freezing beggar, Christian tradition has always celebrated the dignity of the body by clothing the naked. While helping those poor who have no clothes is a first concern, practicing this virtue also entails a reflection on how we dress as well.

Ideas: Give your gently used clothes to charity. One great tip is to hang all your clothes with the hook facing toward you. When you wear and wash them put them back the normal way. At the end of the season give away the clothes you see you haven't worn. Support the St V de P!



DEAD

Bury the dead

While Jesus Christ enumerated the first six corporal works of mercy in the Gospel of Matthew, the church adds a seventh. This merciful act is also drawn from Scripture by the example of Tobit (*in the Old Testament*) who is exiled for his righteous work of burying the dead. The Catechism of the Catholic Church says: "**The bodies of the dead must be treated with respect and charity, in faith and hope of the Resurrection. The burial of the dead is a corporal work of mercy; it honours the children of God, who are temples of the Holy Spirit**" (2300). It is an act of love to show respect for the bodies of the dead, since during life, they were temples of the Holy Spirit and received the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion

Ideas: Help with your parish's funeral or bereavement ministry. Donate to Catholic Cemeteries to pay for the burial of the poor. Treat cemeteries with respect.



Learn the **Corporal Works of Mercy** and look for opportunities to practice them.

“This is essential for salvation: that we may show mercy and love not only those who love us, but also those who cannot repay us, just as the Father had mercy on us and loved us through the gift of his Son Jesus.” **Pope Francis**

Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes with which Christ looks out his compassion to the world. Yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good. Yours are the hands with which he is to bless us now.

— *Saint Teresa of Avila* —



What is mercy?

compassion
 understanding
 love
 kindness
 forgiveness
 mercy
 empathy
 generosity
 inclusivity

"Act in a way that all those who come in contact with you will go away joyful.

Sow happiness about you because you have received much from God."

Diary of St. Faustina



Memorize the corporal works of **MERCY** the easy way

You are encouraged to memorize and do your best to practice the corporal works of mercy. The mnemonic device

"**THIS HaND,**" can help.

T is for thirsty, H is for hungry, and so on. Only the "A" in hand is silent.

Thirsty: Give drink to the thirsty

Hungry: Give food to the hungry

Imprisoned: Visit the imprisoned

Sick: Care for the sick

Homeless: Shelter the homeless

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Naked: Clothe the naked

Dead: Bury the dead