

Living the corporal + spiritual works of mercy as a family

The Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy have long been a part of the Christian tradition, appearing in the works of theologians and spiritual writers throughout history. Just as Jesus attended to the spiritual well-being of those He ministered to, these Works of Mercy guide us to help our neighbors in their physical and spiritual needs. *The Works of Mercy are listed below, with a few suggestions for each.*

Spiritual: Counsel the doubtful

- Accompany a friend to a faith formation service or Mass.
- Share a book you've found useful in your own prayer life.
- Pray outside of an abortion clinic.
- Listen to a friend when they share their concerns or troubles.
- Pray that people would have faith.

Spiritual: Instruct the ignorant.

- Volunteer to help with religious education programs at your church parish.
- Text your RCIA candidate or godchild.
- Help a sibling read a book, play a game, or learn a prayer.

Spiritual: Admonish the sinner.

- Set a good example.
- Help someone understand why something is wrong.
- Offer to bring a friend or family member to confession.

Spiritual: Forgive injuries.

- Go to confession.
- Forgive a grudge you've been holding.
- Accept other's apologies with kindness.

Spiritual: Comfort the sorrowful.

- Make a home cooked meal for a friend who is facing a difficult time.
- Remember the anniversary of a friend's miscarriage or loss of a child or spouse, and send them a card or flowers.
- Read a story or sing a song to a sibling who is sad.

Spiritual: Pray for the living and the dead.

- Request a mass intention for a friend or family who is going through a rough time, or who has passed away.
- Choose a family in your community, a student in your class, or a co-worker, and dedicate an entire week to praying for them.
- Pray the "Eternal Rest" prayer for those who have died.

Spiritual: Bear wrongs patiently.

- Frustrated with someone? Step away from the situation, take a few deep breaths, and pray the Our Father.
- Give up a toy that a friend or sibling wants to play with, even though you had it first.
- Don't help people expecting a thank you in return.

Corporal: Feed the hungry.

- Volunteer at Manna House.
- Bring a meal to a family with a new baby.
- Set the table and do the dishes for your family.
- Pay for the person behind you in the drive through.

Corporal: Give drink to the thirsty.

- Donate bottled water to shelters or in an emergency.
- Offer to get drinks for your friends or family members.
- Take extra water with you to a sporting event and share.

Corporal: Clothe the naked.

- Do the laundry for your family, without complaining.
- Help a younger sibling get dressed.
- Have a garage sale and donate the money.

Corporal: Shelter the homeless.

- Invite people you know to stay with you when they need (when traveling, buying a new house, in an emergency, or a foreign exchange student).
- Help a neighbor clean their yard.
- Donate old furniture, pillows, or blankets.

Corporal: Visit the imprisoned.

- Visit a nursing home.
- Offer to babysit for a mother of all young children.
- Visit, send cards to, or call a homebound person.

Corporal: Visit the sick.

- Visit a friend or family member in the hospital.
- Help an elderly or sick person, or a new mom with errands.
- Be extra nice to family members when they are sick.

Corporal: Bury the dead.

- Go to a funeral or visitation.
- Visit a cemetery and put flowers on graves.
- Learn about your ancestors.
- Send cards and flowers to a grieving family, or on the anniversary of the loss of a loved one.