



A JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY

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- ⦿ **The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me;**
- ⦿ **He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly, to heal the brokenhearted,**
- ⦿ **To proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners,**
- ⦿ **To announce a year of favor from the Lord**

- **Isaiah (61: 1-2)**

POPE FRANCIS HAS DECLARED A YEAR OF MERCY

DEC 8, 2015 - NOV 20, 2016

- ⦿ This presentation will follow some of the sermons by Pope Francis,
- ⦿ Reflections on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy,
- ⦿ Reflections on parables of mercy
- ⦿ Gospel passages during the Jubilee year relevant to social work.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- ◉ 1. To understand the concept of a Jubilee Year of Mercy and ponder the corporal and spiritual works of mercy in light of social work
- ◉ 2. To see in every person the face of the Jesus and ponder the words of the gospel “Be Merciful just as your Father is merciful”
- ◉ 3. To understand and ponder the tension of love, mercy, and justice
- ◉ 4. To explore one method of integration of mercy into the BSW and MSW classroom using Matthew 25 and parables from scripture

POPE FRANCIS HAS DECLARED A YEAR OF MERCY

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◎ MERCY

- The Latin word for mercy is misericordia
- It means - to let ones heart be touched by the suffering of another

WHAT DOES POPE FRANCIS MEAN BY A JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY ?

- ◉ To live this year in the light of the Lord's words:
 - “Be Merciful, Just as your Father is Merciful”
 - (Luke 6:36)
- ◉ A Jubilee Year is an opportunity
 - To renew one's relationship with God and neighbor,
 - To deepen one's faith and renew one's commitment to live a life of Christian witness

◎ How has God been merciful in your life, as a social worker, as a professor - or in the lives of your clients and students?

Pope Francis Declared a Year of Mercy

He was ask why humanity is in need of a year of Mercy?

- Pope Francis replied - in part it is due to:
 - "We lack the actual concrete experience of mercy. The fragility of our era is this, too: we don't believe that there is a chance for redemption; for a hand to raise you up; for an embrace to save you, forgive you, pick you up, flood you with infinite, patient, indulgent love; to put you back on your feet. We need mercy."
 - Pope Francis (2016). *The name of God is mercy*.
 - **When have you, or clients, or students doubted mercy? What brings on doubt?**
 - **What do we mean by a concrete experience? Example?**

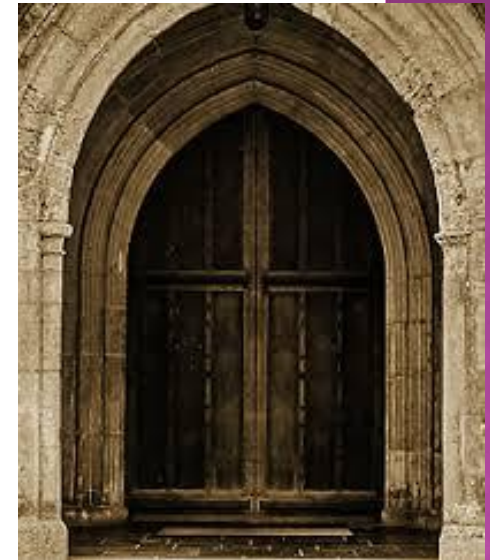
Pope Francis Declared a Year of Mercy

He was ask why humanity is in need of a year of Mercy?

- “It is not easy to entrust oneself to God’s mercy because it is an abyss beyond our comprehension”
 - Pope Francis (2013).Homily March 17, 2013
- We need an **experience** to trust ourselves to God’s mercy
 - “Thy will be done”
 - “Become like little children”

PILGRIMAGE / JOURNEY

- The Pope describes a vision of each of us on a pilgrimage / journey; traveling along the road of life - to the Holy Door
 - Where . . . We will find the strength to embrace God's mercy and to dedicate ourselves to being merciful with others as the Father has been with us
 - (Pope Francis, 2015. *Misericordiae Vultus*)
- Symbolically
 - Pope Francis opened the
 - Holy Door at St. Peters Basilica
 - And Encouraged the rite of opening the
 - Door of mercy in other churches





Every Christian is called to pass through the door from sin to grace.

Every believer is responsible to cross its threshold. We are free to choose it. It requires the courage to leave something behind, in order to gain divine life.

- ◎ Prayer - Pilgrimage - Reconciliation - Eucharist
- ◎ Christ Jesus is the ultimate portal, the door that opens to faith and life

Prayer - Pilgrimage - Reconciliation - Eucharist

- ⊙ “Every Christian is Responsible . . .”
- ⊙ “We are free to choose”
 - Free will
- ⊙ “It requires the courage to leave something behind . . . ”
 - Why courage?
 - What do we leave behind?
 - “Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies it remains just a grain of wheat. But, if it dies it produces much fruit.” (John 12: 24).

**“Be Merciful, Just as your Father is Merciful”
(Luke 6:36)**

⦿ **“Mercy is the force that
reawakens us to new life and
instills in us the courage to
look to the future with hope”**

- (Pope Francis, 2015. *Misericordiae Vultus*)

- An example

“Be Merciful, Just as your Father is Merciful” (Luke 6:36)

- ◉ On 8/5/ 2010 33 miners were trapped underground in Chile
- ◉ They had limited resources
- ◉ No one above ground knew if they were dead or alive
- ◉ Rescuers did all they could to connect with the miners
- ◉ On 8/22 a probe was sent down to the affected area.
- ◉ The miners sent back a note - “We are fine in the shelter, 33 of us.”
- ◉ The work began to reach them.
- ◉ Food and water was sent down.
- ◉ The miners had organized themselves in to a small community - and a place to pray.
- ◉ On October 13, 2010, they were rescued.

“Be Merciful, Just as your Father is Merciful” (Luke 6:36)

- They could not free themselves
- They lived in darkness.
- Survival depended on others
- To show them the way out
- To show them they were not alone.
- In the beginning they did not know if anyone was looking for them
- They needed trust, hope, courage, prayer
 - Prayer to believe in a future of hope
- Jesus is always seeking us;
 - in our darkness, when we are alone, and lonely

“Be Merciful, Just as your Father is Merciful” (Luke 6:36)

- ⦿ We all want to be found - we don't want to be alone - we want to journey in life together
- ⦿ We want to see a caring face - the face of mercy
- ⦿ The face of Christ that embraces and becomes “merciful like the Father”

“BE MERCIFUL . . .

- ◉ **When have you experienced**
 - A force that reawakens new life
 - Instills courage to look to the future
 - Hope
 - “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts.” --Zechariah 4:6

GOD MEETS US IN THE MIDST OF OUR STORY

- The Samaritan Woman - tell the story
- We hear in this story that God meets us where we are
 - The Samaritan Women realizes God knows her, knows her story, and accepts her
 - She receives the gift of living water and goes out to evangelize
 - In this presence of being known we believe, love in return, give back

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE IGNORE THE LIVING WATER WITHIN?

- Richard Rohr (2016)

- Tells the story of his father's dedicated life to work - and his dying days

- “You have to do it wrong before you know what right might be.”

- (June 16, 2016, Richard Rohr Daily Meditation)
- Center for Action and Contemplation
- <https://cac.org/living-school/living-school-welcome/>

- ◉ **Richard Rhor (2016) begins . . .**

- ◉ “There's a somewhat overlooked passage in the middle of Romans where Paul says,
 - "The only thing that counts is not what human beings want or try to do [that's the first half of life], but the mercy of God [that's the second half of life]" (9:16).

- ◉ But you only realize this is true in the second half of life.
 - You had to do the wanting and the trying and the achieving and the self-promoting and the accomplishing. The first half of life is all about some kind of performance principle. And it seems that it must be this way.

- ◉ “In the second half of life, you start to understand that **life is not only about doing; it's about being.**”

◉ **Richard Rhor (2016) continues . . .**

- ◉ I remember going home to Kansas after my father had just retired at age sixty-five. For thirty-six years he had painted trains for the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad. Daddy grew up very poor during the Depression and the dust storms of western Kansas. In his generation, of course, a job was something you valued deeply; and once you got it, you weren't going to lose it. He never missed a day of work in all those years. He turned on the lights every morning, they told us.
- ◉ After he retired my father cried in my arms. He said “I don't know who I am now. Pray for me.” Here I am a grown up man, a Priest, suppose to be strong for my father. I guess I said the appropriate priestly words but I did not know how to guide him in the second half of life. And he was begging for a guide.”
- ◉ Wisdom only comes later when you have learned to listen to the different voices that guide you in the second half of life.”

- ⦿ **Be patient in all things -
Especially be patient with ourselves**
- ⦿ “Above all, trust in the slow work of God. We are quite naturally impatient in everything to reach the end without delay”
 - ⦿ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

“LIFE IS NOT ONLY ABOUT DOING; IT'S ABOUT BEING.”

- ◎ **“Mercy is the force that reawakens us to new life and instills in us the courage to look to the future with hope”**
 - (Pope Francis, 2015. *Misericordiae Vultus*)
 - **How might this statement / and the 2 stories be important to us as social workers as we work with the clients who come to see us and are facing difficulties of life - poverty, homelessness, pain, loss, illness, mental illness, unemployment, addictions, abuse, crises, trauma, loneliness, emptiness, spiritual poverty ?**

**“A WORLD WITHOUT MERCY IS NOT A HUMAN WORLD”
(WALTER KASPER)**

- ◉ A world without merciful human beings is a world without God
- ◉ God needs human beings to be God’s redeeming action in the world
- ◉ Jesus commands us to love one another; and to love our enemies - and He presumes
 - A graced capacity to do so
- ◉ Is Christ’s trust in us misplaced?
 - Pramuk, Christopher (2016).

Integrating a Year of Mercy Into the classroom

- Two books and 10 minutes each week
- 1. The Dynamic Catholic Institute (2015). Beautiful mercy: Experiencing God's unconditional love so we can share it with others. Beacon Press.
- 2. Pontifical Council For the Promotion of the New Evangelization (2015). The parables of mercy. Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division.

CONNECTING TO THE GOSPEL

⦿ Matthew 25

- “What ever you do to the least of my brothers this you do unto me”

⦿ Gospel of Luke - Parables of Mercy

- The Two Debtors and Their Creditor
- The Good Samaritan
- Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin
- Merciful Father
- The Rich Man and the Beggar Lazarus
- The Judge and the Widow
- The Pharisee and the Publican in the Temple

INTRODUCTION TO OUR FIRST GROUP PROJECT - MATTHEW 25 INTEGRATING SOCIAL WORK AND FAITH: SERVICE AND MERCY

- “Giving and receiving Mercy is central to living the life God calls us too. We all need mercy at different times in our lives and we all have an obligation to give mercy to others at different times in our lives. If you think about it, God’s mercy is overwhelmingly generous. He calls us to respond with the same spirit of generosity”
 - Pope Francis (2015). Beautiful Mercy: experiencing God’s unconditional love so we can share it with others.
 - We will work in groups of 2. Each week, one group will present one chapter reading (about 3 pages). About 3- 5 minutes. The book will be passed around the class for this purpose.

WHAT EVER YOU DID TO THE LEAST OF MY BROTHERS THIS YOU DID UNTO ME (MATTHEW 25)

○ The Corporal Works of Mercy

- 1. Harbor the homeless
- 2. Feed the hungry
- 3. Give drink to the thirsty
- 4. Clothe the naked
- 5. Visit the sick
- 6. Ransom the captive
- 7. Bury the dead

- Integrating faith and Social Work aligns with the corporal and spiritual works of mercy

○ The Spiritual Works of Mercy

- 8. Comfort the afflicted
- 9. Instruct the ignorant
- 10. Counsel the doubtful
- 11. Admonish the sinner
- 12. Bear wrongs patiently
- 13. Forgive offenses willingly
- 14. Pray for the living and the dead

WHAT TO PRESENT

STUDENTS WILL WORK IN GROUPS OF 2 - EACH GROUP WILL SELECT ONE TOPIC IN THE BOOK AND BRIEFLY PRESENT ON THE WEEK ASSIGNED.

- ⦿ What specifically does your chapter say? (be brief).
- ⦿ How does this apply to social work?
- ⦿ How does it fit with the code of ethics or the values of social work?
- ⦿ How would you see faith / religion integrated with social work in this topic?
- ⦿ When have you experienced mercy?

- ⦿ **You don't have to answer all these questions. Just think about what may apply and how you would like to present. You only need 5 minutes and discussion time**

WHAT EVER YOU DID TO THE LEAST OF MY BROTHERS THIS YOU DID UNTO ME (MATTHEW 25)

- When we provide service to the poor, weak, the suffering, those in need
 - We provide the grace that has been given to us to others
 - Father in Heaven we pray in the name of Jesus: may I see your face in the sick, the poor, and imprisoned. May my heart be filled with willingness to act on their behalf in honor of you. Amen

INTRODUCTION TO OUR SECOND GROUP PROJECT

PROVIDING SERVICE AND MERCY BY REFLECTING ON PARABLES

- ◉ Why use parables to talk about service and mercy?
- ◉ Why not instead just define mercy?

- ◉ Parables tell stories - about mercy.
- ◉ Parables are linked to real life situations
- ◉ Parables interpret people's lives and challenge them
- ◉ Parables mirror a disarming truth and cause us to rethink relationships
- ◉ Parables of mercy are resolved in a reversal of what would be expected
- ◉ Parables are filled with compassion, and touch the listener
- ◉ Parables have the potential to inform the heart of a social worker

PROVIDING SERVICE AND MERCY BY REFLECTING ON PARABLES

- ◉ The Sources we will use for this project include:
- ◉ The Parables of Mercy (2015). Our Sunday Visitors Publishing
- ◉ Passages from the Bible
 - ◉ Luke 7:36-50 - The Two Debtors and the Creditor
 - ◉ Luke 10: 25-37 - The Good Samaritan
 - ◉ Luke 15: 1-10 - Finding the Lost Sheep and Lost Coin
 - ◉ Luke 15: 11-32 - The Merciful Father
 - ◉ Luke 16: 19-31 - The Rich Man and The Beggar
 - ◉ Luke 18: 1-8 - The Judge and the Widow
 - ◉ Luke 18: 9-14 - The Pharisee and the Publican

WHAT TO PRESENT

STUDENTS WILL WORK IN GROUPS OF 1 OR 2 - EACH GROUP WILL SELECT ONE PARABLE AND BRIEFLY PRESENT ON THE WEEK ASSIGNED.

- ⦿ What specifically does your Parable say?
 - Summarize it for the class (be brief).
- ⦿ What is the story?
- ⦿ How does it link to real life situations ?
- ⦿ How does it challenge our thinking?
- ⦿ How can it inform the heart of a social worker?

- ⦿ **You don't have to answer all these questions. Just think about what may apply and how you would like to present. You only 5 minutes and discussion.**

THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

EVERY ONE HAS GOD GIVEN TALENTS -

- ◉ Summarized:
- ◉ “For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted them his property. To one he gave 5 talents, to another 2 and to another 1 talent - to each according to his ability . . . He who had 5 talents went at once and traded and made 5 talents more. So also, he who had 2 talents made 2 more. But he who had one talent went and dug in the ground and hid the money” Matthew 25: 14-30

THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

EVERY ONE HAS GOD GIVEN TALENTS -

- This parable is expressing the importance of each of us recognizing and using our talents
- Each of us is gifted
- Commit our self to explore our talents diligently
- **Talents grow with use and wither when buried**
- **Social Workers have certain talents to be shared:**
 - Talents to encourage others, provide support, helping others explore and use their talents, bridging divisions, building community
 - Talents of listening, empathy, presence, detachment (not getting rattled by another's story), perseverance, diligence, honest / tactful reflection, holding one accountable,
- Social Workers make a difference with their talents

THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

EVERY ONE HAS GOD GIVEN TALENTS -

- ⊙ List your talents:
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- ⊙ List your dreams:
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- ⊙ How might your dreams be leading you to your talents?

○ “God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy”

- Pope Francis (2013). The joy of the gospel.

- “It is not what you do for God, it is what God has done for you. You switch from trying to love God to just letting God love you. And it is at that point you fall in love with God. Up until now . . . You have been trying to prove yourself to God.”

- Richard Rohr

WHAT DOES POPE FRANCIS MEAN BY A JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY ?

◎ Psalm 136

- Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
 - for his mercy endures forever

- Who alone does great wonders,
 - for his mercy endures forever
- Who made the heavens in wisdom,
 - for his mercy endures forever
- Who spread out the earth upon the waters,
 - for his mercy endures forever

- Who remembered us in our abjection,
 - for his mercy endures forever
- And freed us from our foes,
 - for his mercy endures forever
- Who gives food to all flesh,
 - for his mercy endures forever
- Give thanks to the God of heaven,
 - for his mercy endures forever.

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