

# A Mercy Jubilee!

## A Year of Mercy Parish Faith Festival

The Jubilee Year of Mercy will begin on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015 on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Pope Francis announced the Year of Mercy in a proclamation, called a "bull of indiction," titled "Misericordiae Vultus" ("The Face of Mercy").

In his proclamation, the Holy Father tells us that God's mercy is revealed in the words and actions of Jesus calling mercy "the beating heart of the Gospel". Pope Francis calls for the coming year to be "...a year in which to be touched by the Lord Jesus and to be transformed by his mercy, so that we may become witnesses to mercy."

Living the spirit of the Holy Father's message requires that opportunities must be provided at the parish level which reveals God's mercy at work through and on behalf of every child of God. Sounds like a formidable task but the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops website provides an array of resources in the section titled *The Two Feet of Love in Action*. Other websites can be found that offer crafts and relevant materials for a "A Mercy Jubilee!" was generated. Links to these websites can be found in the Resource section.

The template for "A Mercy Jubilee" is meant to serve as a starting point for a parish's event. Don't be afraid to incorporate your own ideas, to tweak what is presented here and of course, as always, consider the culture of your parish.

**Every parish is unique!**

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### Schedule

This event has been planned based on two options, depending on whether the event begins with Mass or an Opening Prayer Service and whether the Hospitality section of the event is separated from or combined with the Closing Prayer Service.

The event time can easily be adjusted with additions or changes that meet your needs or by deletions to the schedule.

*Option One: 190 minutes*

*Option Two: 135 minutes*

#### *Opening Gathering*

##### Option One

Mass: 1 hour

##### Option Two

Opening Prayer Service: 15 minutes

#### *Service Component—Options 1 and Two*

Time:  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour

*Adult and Children's break-out sessions* (run simultaneously)

Time: 1 hour

#### *Hospitality*

##### Option One

Time 1/2 hour

##### Option Two (combine Hospitality/Closing Prayer)

Time 1/2 hour

#### *Closing Prayer Service*

##### Option One

Time: 10 minutes

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## Planning the Day

### *The Opening Gathering/Closing Send-Off*

Integral to the event the Opening Gathering sets the tone for the day. Whether choosing Option One and beginning with the celebration of the Mass or Option Two, a prayer service in church or a large gathering space, the focus should be all about mercy and forgiveness. Readings and prayers, the Prayer of the Faithful and the music should all reflect this theme.

The Mass For Forgiveness of Sins (The Roman Missal Masses and Prayers for Various Needs and Occasions IV. For Particular Needs) is very appropriate and the readings were used here also as a guide for the opening prayer service.

Additionally, the reading, Matthew 25:31-46, in the Closing Prayer Service were chosen to in order that the attendees leave with message of Christ's call for us to see his face in the face of everyone we encounter.

*"To love God and neighbor is not something abstract, but profoundly concrete:  
it means seeing in every person the face of the Lord to be served,  
to serve him concretely."*

Pope Francis, Address during Visit at the Homeless Shelter  
"Dono Di Maria," 5/21/13

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## Planning the Day

### *The Service Component*

Spreading the word about The Mercy Jubilee should include information about the Service Component in which you invite those attending to participate fully in the event which will have at its core, the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.

*(See Event Announcement/Registration Form )*

The event should include a service or donation opportunity combined with formation. One option would be to construct Mercy Stations in a large space that are designated giving stations for donations labeled for particular goods or entities that are linked to a Corporal Work of Mercy. Not all works have to have a station for giving but every work should be represented. Those that are not set up as donation stations should be stocked with take home materials illustrating the Work of Mercy and what can be done after the event to continue each the family's participation in the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

Each family should be encouraged to bring one item for each station with a family discussion prior to the event about the donations. A trip to the store that includes all the family members with the children participating in locating the items on a list developed at a family meeting helps the children better grasp the concept of compassion for others and the responsibility of all Christians to live the message of the Gospel.

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#### *Suggested Service Component: Corporal Mercy Stations*

A single station covering all of the Spiritual Works of Mercy in pictures can be placed adjacent to the Corporal Mercy Stations. A "looped" video presentation with music and pictures, using a DVD player and flat screen TV about the Spiritual Works of Mercy would be a great way to draw a crowd to this station! Download from YouTube or create your own!

#### **Feed the Hungry**

Donation station for canned goods/non-perishable items

**St. Vincent DePaul Society or other food pantry. \*\***

#### **Give Drink to the Thirsty**

Baby formula

#### **Clothing the Naked**

Diapers

**Our Lady of Good Counsel homes. \*\***

#### **Providing Shelter for the Homeless**

New or clean and gently used blankets

**Local homeless shelter \*\***

#### **Visiting the Sick**

Provide a work station for making home-made get well cards that can be provided to the **parish's visiting ministry**. A child's artwork brightens anyone's day! \*\*

#### **Visiting the Imprisoned**

Construct an "information station" with tri-boards showing ways to "visit" people in different situations who could be considered prisoners. This could include a researched list of nursing homes that encourages visitors, prayer cards to facilitate praying for those in prison, a list of items that can be donated to the **local prison ministry**. Man the station with someone from the Diocese that works in prison ministry or someone who regularly visits the parish shut-ins to facilitate a dialogue about mercy for the incarcerated.

#### **Burying the Dead**

Provide a "Prayer Board" where families can attach the name of a deceased loved-one. The board will be transferred to the Church and will be referred to for the next few weeks in the Prayer of the Faithful during the weekly liturgy.

**\*\* Always have a volunteer at each station to engage the visitors in a dialogue about those who will benefit from the donations and who can show appreciation at the time of the donation—this is particularly important for children who need to know that their work of mercy has an impact on the lives of others.**

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### Planning the Day

*Break-out Sessions* (Adult and Children's sessions run simultaneously)

#### *Adult Session*

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops *The Two Feet of Love in Action* program is provided by the USCCB Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development. The Two Feet of Love in Action is described as "Two distinct but complementary ways we can respond to the call to put love in action."

Download materials for The Two Feet of Love in Action from (copy and paste link in your browser):

[www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/two-feet-of-love-in-action.cfm](http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/two-feet-of-love-in-action.cfm)

Begin the adult session by showing the short video clip explaining *The Two Feet of Love in Action* (3 minutes in duration. This clip is on the "Two Feet" main page but can be downloaded from YouTube if you have no internet access at event site.)

Download the Facilitator's Guide— The Session Outline for this Breakout Session consists of ten segments totaling 90 minutes. However, this time can be reduced to approximately 60 minutes by eliminating the Pre-Session Quiz (5 minutes), the Opening Prayer (8 minutes), the Self-Assessment (5 minutes), the Closing Prayer (5 minutes) and the Post-Session Quiz (5 minutes).

You've already celebrated Mass or gathered for Opening Prayer, The Pre-Session and Post-Session Quizzes can be used along with the Self-Assessment as take-home pieces along with the other items on the USCCB site, and your event will close with all attendees reunited after the Break-out sessions for Closing Prayer.

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### Planning the Day

*Break-out Sessions* (Adult and Children's sessions run simultaneously)

#### *Children's Sessions*

##### **Story Time and Discussion/Activity Levels K through 5**

*The Two Feet of Love in Action* page on the USCCB's site also provides a link to two books published by Loyola Press that are perfect for a portion of the Children's Break-out Session, Story Time.

From the USCCB website:

[“Two Feet of Love in Action Elementary Storybooks](#) - Created in collaboration with Loyola Press, *Green Street Park* and *Drop by Drop* offer parents, teachers and children in grades K-5, examples of how to participate in solutions to important problems that affect the lives and dignity of others.”

*Green Street Park*— Levels K, 1 and 2

*Drop By Drop*—Levels

A link is provided to the publisher's site to purchase the books.

Downloadable black line masters to be used as worksheets are also available in addition to a “Pray Me a Story” reflection guide, which can be used as an activity and to facilitate discussion about the stories the children have just heard.

It's noted that schools and parishes can call the Loyola Press for special pricing.

Additional activities for the children can include:

Levels K, 1, 2 and 3:

Works of Mercy Tree

Loyola Press [www.loyolapress.com/assets/family/craft-february.pdf](http://www.loyolapress.com/assets/family/craft-february.pdf)

Levels 3, 4 and 5:

Works of Mercy Tableau—Loyola Press [loyolapress.com/works-of-mercy-tableau.htm](http://loyolapress.com/works-of-mercy-tableau.htm)

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## Planning the Day

### *Children's Sessions*

#### **Story Time and Discussion/Activity Teens (Level 6 through 12)**

*The Two Feet of Love in Action* also provides a complete session for Teens.  
From the USCCB website:

Download the Facilitator's Guide— The Session Outline for this Breakout Session consists of eight segments totaling 90 minutes. However, just as with the 90 minute adult session, this time can be reduced to approximately 60 minutes by eliminating or reducing the time allotment for some of the segments.

The Opening and Closing Prayer (totaling 10 minutes) can be eliminated and the Icebreaker Game, Stack of the Deck game and Discussion segment can be shortened from 15 to 10 minutes each., Combine the Walking the Path of Love and Sending into one 15 minute segment.



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## Opening Prayer Service

opening prayer service

*(Stand)*

**Leader:** We begin, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**All:** Amen.

**Leader:** Lord, you are merciful to all, and hate nothing you have created. You overlook the sins of men to bring them to repentance. You are the Lord our God.

**All:** Lord, hear the prayers of those who call upon you, forgive the sins of those who confess to you, and in your merciful love give us your pardon and your peace. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.

*(Sit)*

**Reader:** A Reading from the Book of Isaiah

"Yet even now, says the LORD,  
return to me with your whole heart,  
with fasting, and weeping, and mourning;  
rend your hearts, not your garments,  
and return to the LORD, your God.  
For gracious and merciful is he,  
slow to anger, rich in kindness."

The word of the Lord.

**All:** Thanks be to God.

*(Stand)*

**All:** Our Father, who art in heaven...

**Song:** "Loving and Forgiving"

**\*\*Music is suggested as a option. Observe all copyrights. Obtain permissions when applicable.**

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## Closing Prayer Service

(Stand)

**Leader:** We begin, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**All:** Amen.

**Leader:** Christ came to serve. As Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, "Jesus Christ was rich but he became poor, to make you rich out of his poverty."

**All:** And so we are called to serve one another.

**Reader:** A Reading from the Gospel of Matthew (Matthew 25:31-46)

The word of the Lord.

**All:** Thanks be to God.

**Leader:** And now we pray the special prayer Pope Francis has composed for the Jubilee Year of Mercy. Lord Jesus Christ, you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father, and have told us that whoever sees you sees Him.

**All:** **Show us your face and we will be saved.**

**Leader:** Your loving gaze freed Zacchaeus and Matthew from being enslaved by money; the Adulteress and Magdalene from seeking happiness only in created things; made Peter weep after his betrayal, and assured Paradise to the repentant thief. Let us hear, as if addressed to each one of us, the words that you spoke to the Samaritan woman:

**All:** **"If you knew the gift of God!"**

**Leader:** You are the visible face of the invisible Father, of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy: let the Church be your visible face in the world, its Lord risen and glorified. You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness in order that they may feel compassion for those in ignorance and error:

**All:** **let everyone who approaches them feel sought after, loved, and forgiven by God.**

**Leader:** Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its anointing, so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord, and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed, and restore sight to the blind.

**All:** **We ask this through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy, you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever.**

**Amen.**

**Song:** "We Are the Light of the World"

**\*\*Music is suggested as a option. Observe all copyrights. Obtain permissions when applicable.**

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# Event Announcement and Registration

Pope Francis has announced the Jubilee Year of Mercy beginning December 8th, 2015!

The Holy Father has called this to be "...a year in which to be touched by the Lord Jesus and to be transformed by his mercy, so that we may become witnesses to mercy."

In that spirit, \_\_\_\_\_ Parish will present **A Mercy Jubilee**

on \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

From \_\_\_\_\_ (a.m./p.m.) until \_\_\_\_\_ (a.m./p.m.)

The day will begin with (Mass/Prayer Service) in (Church/Gathering Space)  
And will include Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy Exhibits and Donation Stations,  
Adult and Children's Break-Out Sessions and a Snack

## ***Donation Stations***

**Feed the Hungry** Donation station for canned goods/non-perishable items

**St. Vincent DePaul Society or other food pantry. \*\***

**Give Drink to the Thirsty** Baby formula

**Clothing the Naked** Diapers

**Our Lady of Good Counsel homes. \*\***

**Providing Shelter for the Homeless** New or clean and gently used blankets

**Local homeless shelter \*\***

(Families are encouraged to plan/make a trip to the store together and to make a donation to each station.)

Walk-ins are welcome but to aide us in the planning process, we encourage you to complete the registration form which can be (dropped into the collection basket at Mass/off at the parish office/emailed/mailed) by \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.



**A Mercy Jubilee!**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PRINT

(First)

(Last)

For confirmation of your reservation e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Adults: \_\_\_\_\_ Children Levels K, 1, 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Children Levels 3, 4, 5 \_\_\_\_\_ Children Levels 6 + \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any special needs/requirements/food allergies \_\_\_\_\_

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Take-Home!

## The Corporal Works of Mercy

Feed the Hungry  
Give Drink to the Thirsty  
Clothe the Naked  
Shelter the Homeless  
Visit the Sick  
Visit the Imprisoned  
Bury the Dead

## The Spiritual Works of Mercy

Counsel the Doubtful  
Instruct the Ignorant  
Admonish Sinners  
Comfort the Afflicted  
Forgive Offenses  
Bear Wrongs Patiently  
Pray for the Living and the Dead

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## Take Home Materials

There are numerous take home pieces available on The Two Feet in Action page of the USCCB website:

The handout Living in the *Jubilee Year of Mercy* contains *Pope Francis' Prayer for the Jubilee Year of Mercy*, which has been used in this event as part of the closing prayer service.

[www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/new-evangelization/year-of-mercy/upload/year-of-mercy-handout.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/new-evangelization/year-of-mercy/upload/year-of-mercy-handout.pdf)

Other materials available on the site include:

The Two Feet of Love in Action brochure

The Two Feet of Love in Action Facilitators Guide (Adult Session)

The Two Feet of Love in Action Facilitators Guide (Teens Session)