



# JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY



December 8, 2015 - November 20, 2016

## Fifth Sunday Ordinary Time — February 7, 2016

### Lent and Mercy

Lent is a privileged time when the Church is called to give even greater witness to the merciful face of the Father, especially in penitential liturgies and in the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. For this reason, on Friday, March 4, and Saturday, March 5, local communities, and particularly parishes, shrines, and churches more centrally located and/or hosting a larger number of regular visitors, are encouraged to participate in an initiative called “24 hours for the Lord.” ... In this regard, the Holy Father recommends “the season of Lent during this Jubilee Year should also be lived more intensely as a privileged moment to celebrate and experience God’s mercy. “How many pages of Sacred Scripture are appropriate for meditation during the weeks of Lent to help us rediscover the merciful face of the Father!” (Misericordiae Vultus, 17).

...

The scriptural readings that occur during the Lenten cycle are there for very specific reasons in that they emphasize the particular themes of this privileged season — namely, baptism and penance. More specifically, the Holy Year of Mercy coincides with Year C of the cycle of readings in the Lectionary: a cycle particularly rich with the theme of penance.

...

In particular, with the reading of Jesus’s temptations in the

desert on the First Sunday of Lent (Lk 4:1-13), the People of God will be called to live the Lenten season as a journey of “ecclesial conversion” by listening to the Word of God, praying, and fasting. On the Second Sunday of Lent, with the reading of the Transfiguration (Lk 9:28-36), Christians will be invited to root their faith in the mystery of Christ’s death and resurrection so that they may adhere, in full fidelity to the Covenant, to God’s will and become true disciples of Christ. The parable of the withered fig tree (Lk 13:1-9), read on the Third Sunday of Lent, will encourage the faithful to overcome their hardness of mind and heart so that, welcoming the Word of God and making room for the Spirit, they may bear the fruit of genuine and ongoing conversion. The parable of the merciful father on the Fourth Sunday of Lent (Lk 15:1-3,11-32) will be the culmination of the Lenten journey in this Jubilee Year as the faithful are called to recognize God as the good Father, abundant in mercy, who embraces in love all his children who return to him with a repentant heart, wrapping them in the mantle of salvation and making them partakers of the joy of the eternal Paschal banquet, restoring them to the royal dignity of the children of God. The passage about the adulterous woman (Jn 8:1-11), read on the Fifth Sunday of Lent, calls all the baptized to open themselves completely to the unconditional mercy of God who renews all things in Christ.

*Celebrating Mercy: Pastoral Resources for Living the Jubilee*, Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, 2014



### Saint Jerome Emiliani

Jerome was born in Venice in the year 1481. After the death of his father, he ran away from home at 15 years of age to join the army. He steadily rose through the ranks so that, by 1508, he was appointed governor of a fortress in Treviso. The League of Cambrai, Venice’s enemies, captured the fortress and imprisoned Jerome. In his time in prison, he decided to reform his life and embrace God. When he escaped from prison, which he attributed to the intercession of Our Lady, he made pilgrimage to her shrine in Treviso and left his chains there as an offering.

For a short while, he was appointed Mayor of Castelnuovo, but soon returned to Venice to supervise his nephews’ education. At this time, he began studying for the priesthood and



was ordained in 1518. The plague and famine of 1528 especially moved him to action. His primary concern was for the orphans whose numbers increased dramatically. He first rented a home, and with the assistance of some devout laymen, attended to their needs. He provided not just for their material needs (food and clothing) but also expended his energies on providing them with an education.

Following the success of his works, Jerome was entrusted with the running of a hospital for the dying in Venice. In 1531, he visited Verona and encouraged the locals to build a

hospital. He travelled widely and organised the building of orphanages, for boys and for girls, in Brescia, Bergamo, and Milan amongst other places. At Bergamo, he also founded a house for reformed prostitutes. In 1532, he was joined in his work by two other priests and the Congregation of Regular Clerics was founded. In the founding Rule, the principal works of the Congregation were described as care of the orphans, the poor and the sick.

Whilst assisting patients stricken by another plague epidemic, he himself contracted the plague. He died in 1537.

**His feast day is February 8.**

**Works of mercy: to feed the hungry; to clothe the naked; to house the homeless; to care for the sick; to instruct the ignorant.**

# Feed THE HUNGRY

In his compassionate mercy, God has fed us and sustained us. Every day, we pray: *Give us this day our daily bread.* We are grateful, and we want to share food with those who do not have enough. Jesus said, *“I have compassion for the crowd, because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat; and I do not want to send them away hungry, for they may faint on the way.”* (Matthew 15:32)

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## Visit the Imprisoned

To view those imprisoned as a throwaway society is to forget the fact that we are all members of Christ, whether we are locked up or free. Inmates should not be forgotten or regarded as beyond hope. If we call ourselves disciples of Jesus we are asked to look at ways to be the presence of Jesus to them.

- ✂ Become a volunteer for visiting someone incarcerated.
- ✂ Correspond with someone that is incarcerated.
- ✂ Mentor someone coming out of incarceration.
- ✂ Assist those coming out of Jail to find housing or employment.
- ✂ Be a companion for families of someone incarcerated.



## Living the Year of Mercy



### Four Ways to Live Mercy

- 6) Plan a mini pilgrimage to a local shrine; make an effort along the way to live the corporal work of mercy of “welcoming the stranger” as Christ.
- 7) Do something kind and helpful for someone who you don’t get along with, or who has wronged you.
- 8) Be mindful of your behaviour online. Is that post designed to improve your image ... and leave others feeling bad? Are you hammering people in order to serve your anger and humiliate others?
- 9) Have masses said for the living: friends and family members, even strangers you read/hear about, who are having a hard time.

Source: 56 Ways to Be Merciful During the Jubilee Year of Mercy: [aleteia.org](http://aleteia.org)

Let us not forget that the Lord always watches over us with mercy; he always watches over us with mercy. Let us not be afraid of approaching him! He has a merciful heart! If we show him our inner wounds, our inner sins, he will always forgive us. It is pure mercy. Let us go to Jesus!

Pope Francis on Mercy

Hope everything from the mercy of God. It is as boundless as His power.

—  
Saint Frances of Rome

