



Living Mercy in the Year of Mercy

Feed the Hungry

“Jesus taught his disciples to pray by asking the Heavenly Father not for “my” but for “our” daily bread. Thus, he desired every person to feel co-responsible for his brothers so that no one would want for what he needs in order to live. The earth’s produce forms a gift which God has destined ‘for the entire human family’.”
Benedict XVI, Angelus, Saint Peter’s Square, November 12, 2006

Pray

For governments and leaders worldwide, that they may protect and establish well-being for all, especially the nearly 1 billion people who suffer from chronic hunger,
we pray to the Lord.

That all people of the world may experience freedom from hunger,
we pray to the Lord.

— Excerpt from helpinghands.crs.org

Learn

In 2014, the USDA estimated that 14% (or 17 million) of US households were food insecure—meaning that they had difficulty at some time during the year providing enough food for all their members due to a lack of resources. — Povertyusa.org

A consistent theme of Catholic social teaching is the option or love of preference for the poor. Today, this preference has to be expressed in worldwide dimensions, embracing the immense numbers of the hungry, the needy, the homeless, those without medical care, and those without hope.

— Pope John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987), paragraph 42

Act

LOCAL

Send a message to the Governor and legislative leadership supporting nutrition programs, especially the school breakfast program.

— Learn more through EndHungerCT.org

WORLDWIDE

Bread for the World’s Offering of Letters focuses on ending preventable maternal and child death through nutrition. Information on how to write a letter or organize a parish offering of letters can be found at bread.org

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Archdiocese of Hartford



Living Mercy in the Year of Mercy Give Drink to the Thirsty

"The right to food, like the right to water, has an important place within the pursuit of other rights, beginning with the fundamental right to life. It is therefore necessary to cultivate a public conscience that considers food and access to water as universal rights of all human beings, without distinction or discrimination."

Caritas in Veritate, §. 27

Pray

Almighty God, we are in need of rain. We realize now, looking up into the clear, blue sky, what a marvel even the least drop of rain really is. To think that so much water can really fall out of the sky, which now is empty and clear! We place our trust in You. We are sure that You know our needs. But You want us to ask you anyway, to show You that we know we are dependent on you. Look to our dry hills and fields, dear God, and bless them with the living blessing of soft rain. Then the land will rejoice and rivers will sing Your praises, and the hearts of all will be made glad. Amen. (Prayer for Rain from the National Catholic Rural Life Conference-Rural Life Prayer Book)

Learn

Nestle Waters—the largest bottler of water in the world—is drawing millions of gallons of water a year from the San Bernardino National Forest. Nestle's permit to remove this precious resource expired in 1988, at which point the Forest Service should have turned off the spigot. Watch a four-minute documentary explaining the impact Nestle's operation is having on the forest and demand that the company and our government ensure this shared public resource is protected for future generations.

— Visit storyofstuff.org/movies/nestle/ for more information

Act

LOCAL

Work with your parish to reduce the number water bottle usage during church events.

WORLDWIDE

Read *Drop by Drop*. It is an engaging story that helps children understand important lessons of how to work for justice and peace and to help those in need. The story is about a girl named Sylvie and how her village needed water. After reading *Drop by Drop*, see how you and your parish can donate to Catholic Relief Services.

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Living Mercy in the Year of Mercy Clothe the Naked

“There is a growing awareness of the sublime dignity of human persons, who stand above all things and whose rights and duties are universal and inviolable. They ought, therefore, to have ready access to all that is necessary for living a genuinely human life: for example, food, clothing, housing, ... the right to education, and work.”
Gaudium et Spes (“The Church in the Modern World”), Vatican II, 1965, #26

Pray

Jesus, help us recognize the people who labor to make the things we purchase. Help us remember that we are on this journey together. Thank you for the joy that living in true community brings. May these gifts bring joy and peace to those who made them and to all those who enjoy them. Prepare our hearts to recognize your face in every person with whom we share the journey of life. In your name we pray. Amen
— CRS Fair Trade Prayer

Learn

Green America has a Responsible Shopper Guide where you can search hundreds of company profiles by name or by industry and compare the corporate responsibility records of companies within industries.

— Greenamerica.org/programs/responsibleshopper

“Every perspective on economic life that is human, moral, and Christian must be shaped by three questions: What does the economy do for people? What does it do to people? And how do people participate in it?”

— *Economic Justice for All* from the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops

Act

LOCAL

Provide baby clothing to Carolyn’s Place in Waterbury, LifeHaven in New Haven, or St. Gerard’s Center for Life in Hartford.

When donating clothes, be sure it goes to an agency that will give away or resell in the US, like Goodwill. Find the closest to you at weardonaterecycle.org

WORLDWIDE

Support organizations that train people to sew:

You can help CRS purchase a sewing machine through gifts.crs.org

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Visit the Sick

“Poverty calls us to sow hope.... Poverty is the flesh of the poor Jesus, in that child who is hungry, in the one who is sick, in those unjust social structures.”
(Pope Francis, Meeting with Students of Jesuit Schools—Q&A, 6/7/13)

Pray

Psalm 41: A Prayer in Sickness

Happy are those who are concerned for the poor;
the Lord will help them when they are in trouble.
The Lord will protect them and preserve their lives;
he will make them happy in the land;
he will not abandon them to the power of their enemies.

Learn

In 2015, Governor Dannel Malloy proposed a 2016-2017 biennial budget that includes reduced eligibility for parents in HUSKY A, the state’s Medicaid program. These cuts would affect 34,000 working parents, potentially leaving many thousands with no health insurance, increased financial vulnerability, and limited access to care. Lower-income children are less likely to have health insurance coverage if their parents are uninsured, even when children remain eligible.

Source: cthealth.org/publication/proposed-husky-cuts-low-income-families-2015/

Act

LOCAL

Volunteer with the Malta House of Care Mobile Clinic, an organization that provides medical services to underserved communities in Hartford and Waterbury.

malthouseofcare.org/our-volunteers/become-a-volunteer/

Advocate with UCAN Caring Families Coalition as they organize residents around health care reform.

Ucanct.org

WORLDWIDE

Support the CRS faithACTS program for pregnant women in India.

faithacts.crs.org/projects/mobile-motherhood

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Living Mercy in the Year of Mercy Shelter the Homeless

"As Pope John Paul II said in introducing the recent Vatican document, "A house is much more than a roof over one's head." It is "a place where a person creates and lives out his or her life." The right to housing is a consistent theme in our teaching and is found in the Church's Charter of the Rights of the Family.⁽³⁾ We believe society has the responsibility to protect these rights, and the denial of housing to so many constitutes a terrible injustice.

- "A Statement Issued by the Administrative Board of the USCCB" 3/24/1988

Pray

Shelter us, O Lord, and give us the compassion and knowledge to help others in their search for shelter. Protect us, O Lord, from darkness, and give us the wisdom and skills to protect others who live in unsafe and unhealthy housing and long for the light. Bless us, O Lord, with homes that make comfort and joy realities for our families, and give us the grace to ensure this for all families. Amen.

-Education for Justice

Learn

The hourly pay necessary to afford a two-bedroom apartment rose from \$23.02 in 2014 to \$24.29. It is the eighth highest in the U.S.

- Housing in CT 2015, study published by Partnership for Strong Communities

Act

The CT Coalition to End Homelessness supports programs that help end homelessness. To become a member of the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, or to intern or volunteer contact CCEH at (860) 721-7876 cceh.org

Feb. 8 is Feast Day of St. Josephine Bakhitia, and national Day of Prayer for victims and survivors of human trafficking, as designated by the USCCB Committee on Migration. Become a mentor to at-risk youth (homeless/runaways likely to be trafficked) through The Underground CT: theundergroundct.org

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Living Mercy in the Year of Mercy Visit the Prisoners

“For all to play their part in building the common good they must work, in the measure of their competence, to ensure that prisoners have the means to redeem themselves, both as individuals and in their relations to society.” • Pope John Paul II: Message for the Jubilee on Prisons, July 2000

Pray

O God, your love is unconditional and not based on performance. It is patient, kind, forgiving, and unchanging, even when we behave unacceptably. Real love must give and serve Agape. Help us respond to this higher calling by serving one another despite conflicts or bad behavior and remain open to the hope of peaceful co-existence. The great German poet, Rainer Maria Rilke, said it best: “I want to unfold. Let no place in me hold itself closed. For where I am closed I am false. I want to stay clear in your sight, O God. Amen.
— Adapted from Compassion Newsletter, .January 2013

Learn

The US incarcerates proportionally more of its citizens than any other country in the world. Despite crime rates going down in our country, life sentences have been going up. More than 10,000 of all lifers were convicted of crimes committed before the age of 18.

Though far more whites than blacks use drugs, blacks are 10 times more likely to be sent to prison for drug possession. (Sentencing Project)

Read: [The New Jim Crow](#) by Michelle Alexander; [Tattoos on the Heart](#), by Fr. Gregory Boyle; [I'll Fly Away](#), Wally Lamb; [The Justice Imperative](#) by Brian Moran

Act

The Malta Justice Initiative offers education and advocacy for criminal justice reform. It also can help you hire a formerly incarcerated person through their Prodigal Project. maltajusticeinitiative.org

Families in Crisis, Hartford, provides support to families who have an incarcerated family member. Volunteers can play an active role in programs that help adults and children who have been impacted by the criminal justice system. familiesin crisis.org

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Living Mercy in the Year of Mercy Bury the Dead

Even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick, the old, the unborn and the poor, are masterpieces of God's creation, made in his own image, destined to live for ever, and deserving of the utmost reverence and respect. (7/17/13) Pope Francis

Pray

Ecclesiastes 3: A Time for Everything

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance,

Learn

The admonition to bury the dead comes from the Old Testament Book of Tobit, whose namesake is exiled for his righteous work of burying the dead, especially criminals. Like Tobit, we should help bury not only our own deceased friends and family members, but others as well.

Act

The archdiocesan Office of Religious Education and Evangelization offers bereavement ministry training, within its the Lay Ministry program, for people interested in how to start bereavement ministry at their parish.

Attend funerals of those in your community whom you did not know well in life.

Consider starting a Memorial Fundraiser for someone who has passed away or a parish fund to provide financial assistance to assist in funeral expenses.
giveforward.com/fundraisers

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Living Mercy in the Year of Mercy Give Alms to the Poor

In teaching us charity, the Gospel instructs us in the preferential respect due to the poor and the special situation they have in society: the more fortunate should renounce some of their rights so as to place their goods more generously at the service of others. — Pope Paul VI, Octogesima Adveniens (1971), paragraph 23

Pray

Prayer for Generosity (St. Ignatius of Loyola)

Lord, teach me to be generous.
Teach me to serve you as you deserve;
to give and not to count the cost,
to fight and not to heed the wounds,
to toil and not to seek for rest,
to labor and not to ask for reward,
save that of knowing that I do your will.

Learn

The Cooperative Parish Sharing program of the Archdiocese is to promote solidarity among parishes of the Archdiocese of Hartford. CPS does this by providing funding to foster development of sustainable social ministry projects, which allow low income parishes to address the needs of their parish communities. Parishes from across the Archdiocese voluntarily pledge an annual amount to CPS.

For more information: catholicsocialjustice.org/cooperative-parish-sharing.html

Act

Urge our nation to act on behalf of the poor through legislative advocacy. Catholics Confront Global Poverty represents the official voice of the Catholic Church in the United States on policy issues that improve the lives of poor and vulnerable people overseas. Text CCGP to 30644 or visit confrontglobalpoverty.org to learn more.

Support the Archbishop's Annual Appeal's Vicariate Outreach Program, which assists agencies that provide services to the poor and vulnerable.

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