



St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Parish 2016 Lenten Penance Service “Receiving God’s Beautiful Mercy”

Examination of Conscience — Corporal Works of Mercy

Jesus tells us to feed the hungry . . .

- Have I given food to anyone who is suffering from hunger?
- Have I wasted any food in this last while?
- Have I invited anyone to my home for food or donated to a food bank?
- What about the kinds of conversations I have with others?
- Do my words nourish those who hunger for guidance?
- Do I starve those who crave the food of gossip?
- Am I so caught in my own wants or addictions that I neglect the needs of others... in my family and those close to me?
- Do I overeat and abuse these gifts from God?

Jesus tells us to give drink to the thirsty . . .

- What have I done to assist or am I even aware of peoples and places in the world that are suffering drought?
- Do I consciously turn off taps or ensure there is a plug in the sink to keep from wasting water?
- What about those who thirst for recognition from me?
- Has my tap of compliments and support for others dried up?
- Do I refresh others with words of acceptance and understanding?
- Am I generous to the poor, to those who are in need of food and water?
- Do I respect the earth, the source of our food and water, or do I waste and pollute her resources?
- Do I indulge in drink and disrespect others while under the influence of alcohol ?

Jesus calls us to shelter the homeless . . .

- To attend to the needs of those who are homeless What contribution have I ever made to those who have no home?
- Have I ever given hospitality to someone who has no place left in life that they can call 'home'?
- Have I ever shut the door physically or metaphorically on another?
- Have I ever made anyone feel 'not at home' with me because of my opinions and attitude?
- Has anyone felt excluded by my words or actions?
- Do I realize that as a follower of Jesus I am responsible for the needs of the poor?
- Do I give of my time to help those who are homeless – in the local shelters/food pantries?
- Have I welcomed those seeking a new life in our country? Do I speak up or vote in favor of fair and just immigration policies?

Jesus calls us to clothe the naked . . .

- Do I judge others by their dress?
- Can I look with the eyes of Christ and see the person in the street beggar, see the dignity of someone even though their clothes are shabby?
- Does my wardrobe have clothes that I never wear that could clothe the naked?
- What about those who are stripped of dignity?
- Do I give others the clothes of respect?
- Am I caught up in consumerism, constantly needing to possess the latest and the newest?
- Do I share my excess with those who are in need?

Jesus invites us to visit those who are sick . . .

- How faithful am I to visiting the sick and those who are elderly in my own family?
- How do I help shut-ins and those in my own neighborhood who are in need of assistance?

Jesus invites us to visit those who are imprisoned . . .

- Have I ever visited a prisoner or written a letter to anyone in prison?
- Have I ever given a break to someone who cannot get out of their house because they are a full-time care-giver?
- Have I ever visited someone imprisoned by dementia?
- What support have I been to someone who is locked into a difficult situation?
- Do I advocate for the humane treatment of prisoners and the abolishment of capital punishment?

Jesus charges us to bury the dead . . .

- How do I honor those among my family and friends who have died?
- To attend to the needs of those who have died, have I been respectful of those who have died?
- Do I ever visit the grave of a departed loved one?
- Am I able to bury respectfully relationships with the living that, for whatever reason, have died?



Spiritual Works of Mercy

Jesus summons us to instruct the ignorant . . .

How do I treat others who I think are ignorant?

Does the way I live my life proclaim to those around me that I am a follower of Jesus?

Am I willing to learn about my faith and help others learn about Jesus?

Do I speak down to people who are below my "faith formation level?"

When God opens a door to share our faith, do I walk in the other direction and avoid these types of conversation?

Do I judge the ignorant and hold them to my same standard?

Jesus summons us to counsel the doubtful . . .

Do I speak more than I listen when counseling others?

Do I speak down to others and only speak from a superior point of view?

Am I willing to take time from my busy life to counsel someone from a difficult time?

Do I share with others the hope that I have come to know through Jesus?

Do I take the time to explain to others God's love and mercy?

Am I capable of being a true friend?

Am I prideful when it comes to who I am and my blessings from God?

Jesus summons us to correct sinners . . .

Do I stand up for what I know is right and just even when those around me do not?

Do I judge others who sin and do nothing to help them?

Do I brush off others who need help, and only stay close to those who "love God?"

Jesus bids us to bear wrongs patiently . . .

Do I have the capacity to accept an apology?

Do I harbor resentment and a sense of self-justification?

Does my life reflect the gentle patience of God to others?

Do I complain about my crosses?

Do I overly focus on the wrongs done to me? Do I give it too much time and attention?

Am I patient with God, my family, and others?

Do I slow down enough to see God working in my life, or do I only see the things that aren't going right?

Jesus bids us to forgive offenses willingly . . .

Do I allow others to change? Can I free myself to make apology/to accept the good points of people I have had difficulty with?

How am I about holding grudges? Do I forgive others when they ask forgiveness?

Do I forgive others or at least pray for the grace of forgiveness for those who don't ask to be forgiven, but have hurt me?

Do I keep a laundry list of offenses that others have committed against me and my family?

Does God's mercy show through my life and my actions?

Jesus charges us to comfort the afflicted . . .

How do I comfort others? Do I show them sympathy and support?

Do I pray for and listen to those who are sorrowing and in pain?

Am I too busy for other people's losses? Is my schedule so full that I forget to think of others?

Do I comfort or pity others for their suffering?

Jesus charges us to pray for the living and the dead . . .

Do I remember to offer a prayer from time to time for those who have passed away from this life?

Do I sustain my support for someone who is coping with grief?

Do I pray for my family, my friends and my enemies?

Do I remember to pray for those who ask for prayers?

Do I believe that my prayers have value?

