

# ***Corporal Works of Mercy***

## ***A Traveling Retreat***

*The Corporal Works of Mercy are kind acts by which we help our neighbors with their material and physical needs. Our Catholic faith calls us to respect life and promote the dignity of all people. We are to be the hands and feet of Christ for others. This traveling retreat has been compiled and offered to you by the staff of Stark North Region Parishes.*

*We hope that in this time, you:*

***REFLECT on Scripture***  
***PRAY Intercessions***  
***PRAY at Stops***

***UNDERSTAND Facts***  
***DISCERN Action***  
***LISTEN through Music***

*We pray you share this with your family and friends and begin a journey together. The great part of this retreat is you can use it as is or personalize it to fit the needs of you and those you with whom you journey. You can participate and complete in one day or break it up in sections through a week or month. It's up to you. If you're not able to physically travel, feel free to stay home and make it a "virtual retreat". You can add your favorite song or make up your own heartfelt intercessions. You can change the locations of the prayer stops. This traveling retreat is only a resource for you. It's the tip of the iceberg.*

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches: "[Human] misery elicited the compassion of Christ the Savior ... Hence, those who are oppressed by poverty are the object of a *preferential love* on the part of the Church" (2448).

"If you want peace, work for justice. If you want justice, defend life." Pope John Paul II

"It is not necessary to relive the greatest needs, but to go to their roots proposing measures that will give social, political, and economic structures a more equitable and solidaristic configuration." Pope Benedict XVI

"To live charitably means not looking out for our own interests, but carrying the burdens of the weak and poorest among us." Pope Francis

"Prayer in action is love, and love in action is service." St. Teresa of Calcutta

## **Feed the Hungry**

### **REFLECTION**

**“For I was hungry and you gave me food.”** (Matthew 25:35)

At one time or another, just about everyone has been hungry, but the reasons vary from dieting to dire poverty. Too many of the world’s people have neither the resources to grow their own food, nor the money to buy food; more than one billion people live on one dollar or less per day. Most of the world’s developing nations are unable to buy adequate food for their people because their money goes to repay debts owed to world banking institutions. Further compounding the problem of feeding the world’s hungry are mass devastations caused by man-made and natural disasters. But today’s Catholics face these challenges because “our faith demands that we be creatively engaged in sharing the food that sustains life. There is no more basic human need.” (U.S. Bishops 1986 Pastoral Letter: “Economic Justice for All”)

### **FACTS**

Hunger is a symptom of poverty and inequality, and not of food scarcity, because the world produces enough food to feed each person between 3,000 to 4,000 calories per day. (See video: The Global Banquet: Politics of Food: [www.maryknollmall.org](http://www.maryknollmall.org)). The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates 10.8%, of people in the world, were suffering from chronic undernourishment in 2018. ([www.worldhunger.org](http://www.worldhunger.org)). In 2018, 35.3 percent of households with incomes below the Federal poverty line were food insecure. One in seven households with children were affected by food insecurity in 2018 ([www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)). Food insecurity is higher among households with children. About 1 in 5 children in Ohio (19.6 percent) live in families that can’t always afford enough food on their own. In several rural counties (Monroe, Meigs, Adams, Vinton, Scioto and Guernsey), that rate is 1 in 4 or higher. ([www.advocatesforohio.org](http://www.advocatesforohio.org)) The food insecurity rate in Stark County is 14.2 percent of total population, and child food insecurity rate is 20.5 percent. (<https://www.akroncantonfoodbank.org/hunger-stark-county>)

### **INTERCESSIONS**

For the Church, that Christians may never dismiss the hungry, but feed them. We pray. **Hear us, Lord.**

For the governments of the world, that they enact laws and provide services to see that everyone has adequate nutrition. We pray. **Hear us, Lord.**

For the hungry, that they may feel God’s love through the generosity of neighbors. We pray. **Hear us, Lord.**

### **ACTION**

Donate to food drive or volunteer at a pantry. Research, identify and contribute financially to organizations that serve the hungry. Help the homeless by donating to-go food containers, paper lunch bags or decorating and writing inspirational messages on index cards to be included in sacked meals.

### **PRAYER STOP**

Stark County Hunger Task Force - 408 9th St SW #1637, Canton, OH 44707

Meals on Wheels - 7707 Market Ave N, Canton, OH 44721

St. John’s Samaritans Table - 627 McKinley Avenue NW CAn-ton, Oh 44703

**MUSIC** “Open My Eyes” By Jesse Manibusan

## **Give Drink to the Thirsty**

### **REFLECTION**

**“For I was thirsty and you gave me drink.”** (Matthew 25:35)

Water is vital to sustaining all life and the proper functioning of Earth’s ecosystems. Even though access to safe drinking water is a basic human right, not everyone knows what it is like to quench their thirst with a drink of cool, clear, clean water. Many water sources in areas of the United States have become polluted; fortunately, we have environmental legislation to enforce cleanups. In some of the world’s most impoverished regions, the majority of water sources are polluted and pose a high risk of disease.

Addressing environmental and ecological issues from a faith-based perspective, the U.S. bishops launched an Environmental Justice Program in 1993. It calls for a greater awareness and relief of “disproportionate environmental burdens borne by the poor, and children’s environmental health issues.” (U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Social Development and World Peace: [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org))

### **FACTS**

2.1 billion people globally lack safe water at home. 263 million spend 30 minutes per round trip collecting water. (2015 - World Health Organization)

In least developed countries, 22% of health care facilities have no water service, 21% no sanitation service, and 22% no waste management service. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/drinking-water>

Diseases from unsafe water and lack of basic sanitation kill more people every year than all forms of violence, including war. (<https://www.oxfamamerica.org/explore/stories/water/>)

### **INTERCESSIONS**

For the people of the world who thirst for justice, that God will bless us with peace so we may live in true freedom. We pray. **Hear us, Lord.**

That God’s flowing waters of life may sustain us and bring us closer to him. We pray. **Hear us, Lord.**

For all who are deprived of clean drinking water because of pollution, that those responsible will amend their practices immediately. We pray. **Hear us, Lord.**

### **ACTION**

Donate to help build wells for water for those in need. Organize a group of children involved on a sports team, drama or dance troupe. Invite them to collect bottled water to distribute at a shelter for families. If parents can be involved, ask them to accompany their children in delivering the water to the families. Make an effort not to waste water. Remember to turn off the water faucet when brushing teeth or washing dishes.

### **PRAYER STOP**

Hartville Migrant Center - 3980 Swamp St NE, Hartville, OH 44632

John Barker Spring House - 1633 Monument Rd NW, Canton, OH 44709

**MUSIC** “Whatever You Do” By John Angotti

## **Clothe the Naked** (Alms to the Poor)

### **REFLECTION**

**“For I was naked and you clothed me.”** (Matthew 25:35)

Younger siblings know the “blessings” of hand-me-downs. Even if not exact fits, at least they have clothes and shoes. Countless children and adults in the world would walk barefooted and have little to wear, except for donations of usable clothing. Nor would they have household items such as towels, blankets and bed linens. To them, the “pre-owned” goods are true blessings. Catholic social teaching also considers the naked as “those stripped of human dignity and power . . . and necessary tools for work.” (The HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism.) The rights of human beings to dignity, the power to control their own lives, and even to work, are God given.

### **FACTS**

Due to unemployment, mental illness, situational poverty (poor health of family members, loss of job, traumatic experience) and generational poverty can all be reasons for lack of financial resources for a person or family. At present, 3 billion people live on less than \$2 per day while 1.3 billion get by on less than \$1 per day. Seventy percent of those living on less than \$1 per day are women. With global population expanding 80 million per year, World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn cautions that, unless we address “the challenge of inclusion,” 30 years hence we will have 5 billion people living on less than \$2 per day. (<https://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/218/46377.html>)

### **INTERCESSIONS**

That all governments provide the basic necessities of life to the most vulnerable people among their constituents. We pray - **Hear us, Lord.**

That the Church will always make service to the poor a primary means of manifesting its love for God and neighbor. We pray. - **Hear us, Lord.**

That those who are without adequate clothing, either for living or for employment, will be given what they require for a dignified life, we pray to the Lord. **Hear us, Lord.**

### **ACTION**

Support and donate to drives run by schools, parishes and other charitable organizations that collect clothes and bedding for the local needy. Organize programs to provide towels and bed linens for shelters that lack these essentials. Act in solidarity to aid sister parishes in areas devastated by tornadoes, floods, earthquakes and hurricanes, leaving residents with virtually nothing. Reach out to neighbors who have lost their possessions in fires, floods or in other ways. Encourage someone whose dignity may have become fragile due to loss of a job. Be charitable, but always remember that in giving it is most important to maintain a person’s sense of dignity.

### **PRAYER STOP**

Matthew 8:20 - 2040 Diamond ST NE, Canton Ohio - The DROP BOX for donations is located at the back of the parish grounds (beside the pavilion). The Fete Center (Youth House) is where the items are sorted and outreach is planned.

Catholic Charities - 800 Market Ave N, Canton, OH 44702

Salvation Army - 420 Market Avenue South, Canton, Ohio 44702

**MUSIC** “Pencil in Your Hand” By Ceili Rein

## **Shelter the Homeless**

### **REFLECTION**

**“For I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”** (Matthew 25:35)

Familiar sights in many cities worldwide are growing numbers of homeless men, women and even children sleeping in doorways, train stations and under bridges. Causes of homelessness are many and varied: the lack of permanent, affordable housing; overcrowded, temporary shelters; unemployment and underemployment; breaking up of families; mental and physical disabilities; and, on a major scale, wars and natural disasters that displace families and whole communities. Despite our abundant resources to aid the homeless, we still have an estimated two million “street people” in the United States. In addition to helping our own locally, we have a moral responsibility to reach out with aid to people made homeless by disasters and conflicts in poverty-stricken countries. Bear in mind that counted among the homeless are not only “street people,” but also “migrants, refugees, orphans, and foster children . . . . Providing shelter entails fostering a sense of belonging.” (The HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism)

### **FACTS**

Facts on who experiences homelessness-

<https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/who-experiences-homelessness/>

Facts for Homelessness in Stark county

<https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness-dashboards/?State=Ohio>

### **INTERCESSIONS**

That we work to provide food, clothing and housing to all who are in need. We pray. **Hear us, Lord.**

That local communities support policies and actions to end homelessness. We pray. **Hear us, Lord.**

That we are good stewards using and preserving our common home, the earth. We pray. **Hear us, Lord**

### **ACTION**

Understand the need for group homes for homeless and disabled people in your community. Donate to religious and nonprofit secular charities that care for displaced persons. Support national and international disaster relief programs. Volunteer your services to organizations that build affordable homes for the poor. Advocate for legislation to provide housing for poverty-stricken and disabled persons. Offer your love and home to an orphan, or consider becoming a foster parent. Provide a temporary home for migrant workers or refugees who are fleeing oppression. Welcome newcomers to your school or community; help them to feel at home. Organize a parish undertaking to provide shelter and support for a needy local family. Remember, to provide someone with a sense of belonging is to fulfill a basic human need.

### **PRAYER STOP**

Refuge of Hope 715 2nd St NE, Canton, OH 44704

YWCA 231 Sixth St. NE Canton, OH 44702

Stark County Children Services 402 2nd St SE #1174, Canton, OH 44702

**MUSIC** “Whatsoever You Do” By Willard F. Jabusch

## **Visit the Sick**

### **REFLECTION**

**“For I was ill and you cared for me.”** (Matthew 25:36)

“When we serve the poor and sick, we serve Jesus.” Saint Rose of Lima Most of us have had our share of illnesses and injuries. Fortunately, we recovered fully with support from family, friends and neighbors. But within almost every community, there are less fortunate people who are isolated by illness, injury or old age. Think of how much it would mean to them if we reached out and offered them our helping hands. In fact, “supplying companionship and housekeeping for the sick, elderly, and homebound, and accommodating the needs of the physically and mentally disabled are principal avenues of serving the sick.” (The HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism) Wealthy nations have all manner of medical facilities and medicines to treat all sorts of ailments, as well as advanced research facilities devoted to conquering dreaded diseases. But imagine living in remote, impoverished areas in developing countries with severely limited health-care facilities. Reaching out across the globe to helpless people devastated by poverty and sickness exemplifies Catholic social justice at its best.

### **FACTS**

<https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/index.htm>

Six in ten Americans live with at least one chronic disease, like heart disease and stroke, cancer, or diabetes. These and other chronic diseases are the leading causes of death and disability in America

<https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/healthequity/index.htm>

World Health Org <https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/themes/topics/noncommunicable-diseases>

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes, are the leading cause of mortality in the world. This invisible epidemic is an under-appreciated cause of poverty and hinders the economic development of many countries. The burden is growing - the number of people, families and communities afflicted is increasing.

### **INTERCESSIONS**

For the sick, that they may receive the healing that they need. We pray. **Hear us, Lord**

That all nations will make adequate health care available for all their constituents, particularly those who cannot afford medical insurance. We pray. **Hear us, Lord**

That each of us may serve with compassion our friends and neighbors who are sick, as opportunities arise. We pray. **Hear us, Lord**

That all who have passed through the gates of death may find their hope fulfilled in the life of heaven. We pray. **Hear us, Lord**

### **ACTION**

Donate blood or plasma. Volunteer at a hospice center. Spend time volunteering at a nursing home. Get creative and make use of your talents (e.g. sing, read, paint, call Bingo, etc.). Take time on a Saturday to stop and visit with an elderly neighbor. Offer to assist caregivers of chronically sick family members on a one-time or periodic basis. Give caregivers time off from their caregiving responsibilities so they can rest, complete personal chores, or enjoy a relaxing break. Next time you make a meal that can be easily frozen, make a double batch and give it to a family in your parish who has a sick loved one.

### **PRAYER STOP**

Mercy Medical - 1320 Mercy Drive Northwest, Canton, OH 44708

Aultman Hospital - 2600 6th St SW, Canton, OH 4471

**MUSIC** “Many and One” By Steve Angrisano/Sarah Hart/Dwight Liles

## **Visit the Imprisoned**

### **REFLECTION**

**“For I was hungry and you gave me food ... in prison and you visited me.”** Matt. 25:35-36

People in prison are still people, made in the image and likeness of God. No matter what someone has done, they deserve the opportunity to hear the Word of God and find the Truth of the message of Christ.

### **FACTS**

The United States, per capita, has the world's largest prison population. About 2.3 million people are housed in various detention facilities, with another 5 million on probation or parole. Americans make up around 5 percent of the world's population, yet house nearly 25 percent of the world's prisoners. According to a 2012 Pew Forum Survey of U.S. prison chaplains, prisons are a “bustle of religious activity.” Seventy-four percent say attempts by inmates to convert or proselytize other inmates are very or somewhat common. The inmate evangelist/proselytizers are most often Protestant, but an increasing number are Muslim, say the chaplains.( [www.ncr.org](http://www.ncr.org) Jim Graves, April 2019) In 2011, Ohio's prisons were operating at 33 percent over capacity, with about 51,000 people in its facilities, a population that was projected to grow by 3,000 by 2015. US average cost per youth for one year of incarceration \$148,767. Of the 43,000 youth in juvenile facilities, more than two-thirds (69%) are 16 or older. Troublingly, more than 500 confined children are no more than 12 years old.

### **INTERCESSIONS**

For all who have influence and authority over criminal justice systems, that they use their power to establish effective rehabilitation programs for inmates. We pray: **Hear us, Lord.**

For the families of incarcerated people, especially children, that they receive the assistance they need to maintain a healthy and dignified life. We pray: **Hear us, Lord.**

For all those guilty of crime, that they may be given the grace to admit every wrongdoing and the strength to follow the path of conversion. We pray: **Hear us, Lord.**

For all who have been victims of crime, that they are able to forgive like Jesus and to labor for a world of justice and mercy. We pray: **Hear us, Lord.**

### **ACTION**

Volunteer in a prison ministry. Volunteer to help out or donate to charities that give Christmas presents or birthday gifts to children whose parents are in prison. Donate books for youth facilities. Pray for the inmates' families, because they are suffering too. Learn more about the plight of those unjustly imprisoned for political and religious beliefs, as well as how to advocate for their release. Be mindful that we are all members of the human race and equal in God's eyes.

### **PRAYER STOP**

Indian River Detention (youth facility) 2775 Indian River Rd, Massillon, OH 44646

Stark County Jail 4500 Atlantic Blvd NE Canton, OH 44705

Canton Police Dept 218 Cleveland Ave SW, Canton, OH 44702

**MUSIC** “Face of Christ” By Chris Rice

## **Bury the Dead**

### **REFLECTION**

**"I was dead, and you buried me."** Matthew 25:35

Funerals give us the opportunity to grieve and show others support during difficult times. Through our prayers and actions during these times we show our respect for life, which is always a gift from God, and comfort to those who mourn. "The significance of burying the dead is then rooted in the profound respect that Christians have for the human body. The human body created and redeemed by God is to be raised up by God in glory." (Jesuit Father James Keenan, In The Works of Mercy) For Catholics, burial of the deceased is not only a sign of respect but connected to our belief in the resurrection of the body. Burial is still preferred to cremation, which is now allowed by the church, "unless it has been chosen for reasons which are contrary to Christian teaching" (Canon 1176).

### **FACTS**

Stark County opened Hillcrest Cemetery in 1927 as a burial ground for the indigent -- among them the homeless, welfare recipients, the poor who died penniless. Some had no families; at least no family or friends that cared. Sometimes relatives couldn't be located or couldn't afford a more traditional burial. Other than the family, there are veteran, union, and charitable organizations that pay for funerals. However, funeral directors often absorb costs above and beyond what is provided by agencies to insure the deceased a respectable burial. When we bury the dead, we honor and pray for those who have passed away. We also offer comfort and support to those who are grieving. 2019 about \$1 million was made available statewide by the Ohio Legislature last year to reimburse municipalities and others for some of the costs of indigent burials (about \$1,000 for an adult and \$750 for a child).

### **INTERCESSIONS**

For all who have died, that they may share the lasting peace of Jesus, who is our resurrection and life.

We pray: **Hear us, Lord.**

For vision to see God's love in the world, in spite of pain and suffering, separation and loss.

We pray: **Hear us, Lord.**

That all of us will enjoy a happy life on this earth, a peaceful death, and union with the Lord in heaven.

We pray: **Hear us, Lord.**

### **ACTION**

Send a card to someone who has recently lost a loved one. Visit the cemetery and pray for those you've lost. Pray for those who have passed and have no one to pray for them. Volunteer to be a Pallbearer at funeral Masses to help those who have no or little family.

### **PRAYER STOP**

Calvary Cemetery (local Catholic cemetery) 3469 Lincoln Way E, Massillon, OH 44646

Coroner's Office 4500 Atlantic Blvd NE Canton, OH 44705

**Hillcrest Cemetery** 589-699 Faircrest Street SW, Canton, OH 44706

**MUSIC** "Come To Jesus" By Chris Rice



## **Other Stops**

### **- Church and Religious Communities**

\*Holy Spirit - 2952 Edison St NW, Uniontown, OH 44685

\*St. Paul - 241 S Main St, North Canton, OH 44720

\*Little Flower - 2040 Diamond St NE, Canton, OH 44721

\*Sancta Clara Monastery- pray for Pope, Bishops, all clergy, religious vowed men & women, increase to vocations, those discerning religious life.

4200 Market Ave N, Canton, OH 44714

\*Emmaus House (priests retirement home and a Religious Sister who cares for them)

1515 California Ave, Louisville, OH 44641

### **- Animal Shelters/ Human Society**

\*Humane Society 5100 Peach St NE, Louisville, OH 44641

\*Stark County Dog Warden 1801 Mahoning Rd NE, Canton, OH 44705

### **- Fire Stations**

\*411 E Maple St, Hartville, OH 44632

\*1742 Schneider St NE, Canton, OH 44721

\*300 N Main St, North Canton, OH 44720

\*2502 Cleveland Ave NW, Canton, OH 44709

### **- Police Stations**

\*Uniontown Police Department -1635 Edison St NW, Uniontown, OH 44685

\*Hartville Police Department - 202 W Maple St, Hartville, OH 44632

\*North Canton City Police Dept. - 145 N Main St, North Canton, OH 44720

\*218 Cleveland Ave SW, Canton, OH 44702

\*Stark County Sheriff's Department - 4500 Atlantic Blvd NE, Canton, OH 44705

Feel free to add your own spots. Example- disabled Veterans, civic offices and courthouses, children's service agencies, board of developmental disabilities, schools, church cemeteries, etc .