



FAMILIES LIVING THE GOSPEL REFLECTION



As a family, complete the following reflection after participating in a Spiritual or Corporal Work of Mercy charity or justice experience together. This experience can either be at St. Jude, in the larger community, or at home! You can find suggestions for experiences on the Families Living The Gospel “Feet Sheet”, the Sunday bulletin, & the St. Jude website. Also check community events pages, local media, & your child’s school.

Family Name: _____

First Names & Grades of Children:

Describe the type of experience you had. What did your family do? Where did your family have this experience?

Circle which type of experience this was.
JUSTICE Removes root causes and improves structures.
CHARITY Meets basic needs and aids individuals.

Circle which Spiritual Work of Mercy your family experience addressed.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Forgive Willingly | Counsel the Doubtful |
| Bear Wrongs Patiently | Instruct the Ignorant |
| Comfort the Sorrowful | Admonish the Sinner |
| Pray for the Living and the Dead | |

How did your family make an impact on those you served?

Where did your family see God in this experience? How did those you served make an impact on your family?

How can your family take what was gained & learned from this experience and apply it to your everyday life?

**See the back of this page for descriptions and ideas for each Spiritual Work of Mercy!*

Spiritual Works of Mercy

The Spiritual Works of Mercy are kind acts by which we help our neighbors with their everyday spiritual and emotional needs.

The Spiritual Works of Mercy recognize sin, ignorance, doubt, sorrow and other human conditions where we need to reach out in faith and love to others. How many times did Jesus rebuke with love, counsel, teach and help those who did not know Him? As Pope Francis said, "That is the purpose of our mission: to identify the material and immaterial needs of the people and try to meet them as we can. Do you know what agape is? It is love of others, as our Lord preached. It is not proselytizing, it is love. Love for one's neighbor, that leavening that serves the common good."

Forgive Willingly

Forgive people who hurt you – in big ways and small. This isn't easy. Sometimes we can only forgive with God's help. Pray for those who have wronged you. If you are not yet ready to forgive, but you want to and know you need to, pray for the courage to forgive. Ask forgiveness from others. Let go of grudges.

Bear Wrongs Patiently

Respond to negative and prejudicial comments with positive statements. Go out of your way to be positive with someone you are having a difficult time with. Work at being less critical of others. Overlook minor flaws and mistakes. Give people the benefit of the doubt. Assume that people who may have hurt you did so because they are enduring pain of their own. Pray for those who have wronged you. Frustrated with someone? Step away from the situation, take a few deep breaths, pray the Our Father, asking God for patience.



Comfort the Sorrowful

Attend wakes and/or funerals of those you knew. Volunteer with a hospice program. Supply a dish for a funeral luncheon. Help a widow or widower in need with yard work or errands. Donate to ministries that offer free Catholic burials to those who are unable to afford one. Pray for the people listed in the Church bulletin. If you hear about something tragic or sad on the news, pray for the people involved. Visit a cemetery and clean up any trash you see. Make homemade sympathy cards. Give comfort and care to those with sick loved ones. Offer words of encouragement to those who seem discouraged.

Counsel the Doubtful

When someone comes to you for advice or just to talk about a problem, be a good listener and say a silent prayer to Jesus asking for his help in telling them the right things to do. Work at being optimistic and avoiding cynicism. Respond to cynicism, skepticism, and doubt with hope. Be articulate about your own hopes. Ask people about their hopes and support them in trying to attain them. Be willing to talk to someone who is struggling with doubt. If you don't know the answer to a question, find out and get back to your friend soon.

Instruct the Ignorant

If you have a special gift or talent, share it with someone else. Help someone learn to play a musical instrument, sport, or craft. Peer tutor at school in a subject that you are good at. Help someone with homework in your best subject. Share your gifts with someone you don't know as well. Teach your sibling or parent how to use something you like to do, like a game on your iPad. Commit yourself to learning about the Catholic faith and share your understanding of the faith with others and with those who welcome it. Share your insights, knowledge, and skills with others, especially friends, fellow students, coworkers. Read good literature and encourage others to do the same. Be courageous yet compassionate in calling people and institutions to be faithful to Gospel values. Volunteer to help with faith formation programs at your parish. Invite someone to go to mass with you this weekend. Direct your friend to Catholic websites and apps.

Admonish the Sinner

Don't judge, but guide others towards the path of salvation. When you correct someone, don't be arrogant. We are all in need of God's loving correction. If you know someone is going to do something that is risky or wrong, warn them not to do it. If they have already done it, tell them nicely that it was not a good thing to do so they will choose not to do it again. Remind someone who is hurting because of their sin to receive grace and forgiveness in the sacrament of reconciliation. Intervene in situations in which people are clearly doing harm to themselves or others. Put an end to gossip by walking away; set a good example for others.

Pray for the Living and the Dead

Attend wakes and/or funerals of those you knew. Visit the cemetery and pray for the dead. Pray for the people listed in the Church bulletin. If you hear about something tragic or sad on the news, pray for the people involved. Pray at an abortion clinic for the lives lost to abortion and their parents. Pray for persecuted Christians. Request a mass intention for a friend or family member who is going through a tough time. Request a mass intention for a friend or family member who has passed away. Keep your own book of prayer intentions, writing down the names of those who you are keeping in your prayers. Ask a friend or family member if there is anything you can pray for them about. Through prayer, entrust your cares and concerns for those around you to God. Pray for those who no longer practice their Catholic faith.

"Stewardship is a way of life. For Christians who follow in the way of the Lord Jesus, stewardship is an expression of discipleship. Stewardship is a way of life based upon conversion of heart."

-Bishop Robert Morneau, Green Bay, WI