

Sixth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Lectionary # 77

Reading I: Leviticus 13: 1-2, 44-46

The Book of Leviticus deals primarily with legal matters, and this passage deals specifically with legal matters related to purity. The issue spoken of here is the disease leprosy. This reading serves as a backdrop for the leprosy spoken of in today's gospel. While the separation of those with leprosy from those unaffected by the disease may seem cruel by today's standards, it was an absolute necessity at the time to prevent the spread of the disease. The disease of leprosy, or any contagious disease, often involved far more than a lack of physical health, but also affected the person emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually because of the isolation from family, friends, the Temple or synagogue, the market place, and public life in general. Fear of contagion often prevented any expression of **compassion**.

Reading 2: 1 Corinthians 9: 16-19, 22-23

This particular segment of Saint Paul's letter to the church at Corinth is a final summary of all the questions he addressed at an earlier part of the letter. Ultimately, he offers succinct advice in living as a Christian. He says first, *Do everything for the glory of God*. Second, *Avoid offending anyone*, and lastly, *imitate the person of Christ as best you can*. To imitate Christ means clearly to be a person of **compassion** and **mercy**.

Gospel: Mark 1: 29-39

Jesus, in today's gospel passage, demonstrates great **compassion** for the leper who comes to him for healing. Jesus is not controlled by fear, but rather by the **compassionate** love that is the essence of who he is. The leper shows immense faith in making his request for healing. He says, with absolute certainty, *I know you can make me clean*. In other words, he was saying to Jesus, *I know you can give me back my life*. Jesus responds to the man and says, *I do will that you be made clean*. And it was made so. Jesus then gives him two instructions: to go and follow the prescriptions for the cleansing and to be silent regarding what had occurred between them. We see that the man cannot remain silent regarding his being healed by Jesus. The Church has long held from this particular gospel passage that it is impossible to be silent when touched by the Christ, that one is indeed compelled to proclaim the Good News!!!



build. plant. grow.
the word this week



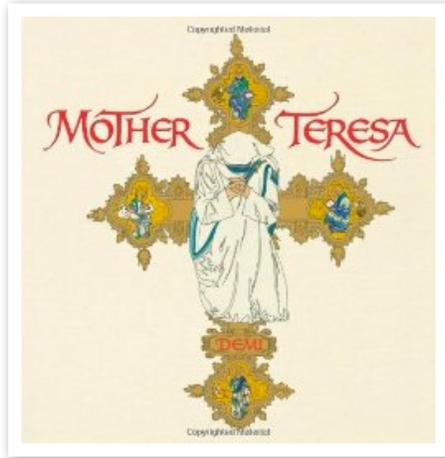
ordinary
time



lectionary
reading



children's story



Mother Teresa

Written by Demi

Illustrated by Demi

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character
education
activity

Mother Teresa

This beautiful book offers a glimpse of a beloved woman of great love, **mercy**, and **compassion**. The book outlines the journey of Teresa of Calcutta from her beginning and allows the reader to experience what Mother Teresa referred to as “the call within the call.” Throughout the story, one experiences the blossoming of a vocation that is a radical response to the love of God by living a life of **mercy** and **compassion**. Throughout the story, time and again, one is able to experience many events that are encapsulated in one of her most famous quotes:

*It is not how much we do
but how much love
we put in the doing
that makes our offering
something beautiful for God!*

Activity: Discussing Compassion

Step One: Provide the students with the following words and invite them to use a dictionary or online service to learn the definitions of each.

- condolence
- empathy
- sensitivity
- understanding
- kindness
- benevolence
- generosity
- philanthropy

Step Two: After the students have written the definitions, studied them, and discussed them, invite them to work in small groups to construct sentences using the words and have them discuss how the words are an expression of **compassion** and **mercy**.

Compassion is that form of love that is aroused and wells up within a person when confronted with the suffering or vulnerability of another.

Compassion is shown in the Acts of Mercy. Some of the Acts of Mercy include feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and visiting the sick or homebound.



case study

**Look.
Feel.
Know.
Act.**

What could you do today?

This could be an individual or a family project. Look through your belongings, such as clothes, toys, household items, tools, or other things that are no longer being used. Once these items have been identified (remember, it is not good to give away things that do not personally belong to you), assemble and deliver them to Goodwill, Saint Vincent dePaul Society, or HOPE Rehabilitation Services. These items would then provide for the needs of others, which is an act of **mercy** and **compassion**.

Look Feel Know Act

News programs, investigative reporting, and articles abound regarding the needs of people both locally and in distant places. Make a list of the needs you recognize and determine which of them you feel most compelled to respond to. Pray for all those needs and then determine, with the help of your parents, a way in which you can respond. We have learned from Mother Teresa that *it is not in the doing but the amount of love with which we do something that provides something beautiful for God*.

The corporeal Works of **Mercy** include simple things such as providing canned food for the hungry, visiting someone in a nursing home or making and sending a card to someone who lives there, praying for people who are having a difficult time, and providing soap or toothpaste to a shelter.

What are some things you can think of to be of help?

Mother Teresa and many holy people throughout history have dedicated themselves to being as much like Jesus as they possibly could given their particular gifts, talents, and abilities. This weekend's readings illustrate the great importance of living a life committed to **mercy** and **compassion**. In the story of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, we clearly see a person so moved by the love of God that she was compelled to share that love with those most in need of love, **mercy**, and **compassion**. One of the greatest ways to honor and worship God is to use the gifts God has given us to help other people.



**closing
tool**

Pray that you will always strive to do the simplest things for others with the greatest possible love. Often the greatest prayer we can offer is loving action. Amen.



**Santa Clara
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