

Cycle C

Fifteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Lectionary #105

Reading I: Deuteronomy 30: 10-14

In this beautiful passage from Deuteronomy, the virtue of God's **mercy** is evident. The Lord is saying to the people that they are worthy of this great **mercy** and that the law of the Lord is not beyond their understanding. The law is given to the people because of God's enduring love and **mercy** for them. The other truth that is revealed in this passage is God's great confidence that the people can grasp and live by the laws given to them. The laws are indeed a reflection of God's **mercy**.

Reading 2: Colossians 1: 15-20

This very early Christian hymn reveals and proclaims the reconciliation, **mercy**, and peace that is available to all creation through Jesus Christ. Each and every line of the hymn speaks of the enduring **mercy** that Christ extends to all people and to all of creation. The final passage of this selection from Saint Paul's letter to the Colossians speaks eloquently of this limitless **mercy** of God: *For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of the cross.* The very purpose of the *blood of the cross* is to reveal God's **mercy** extended to people through the blood of Christ on that cross.

Gospel: Luke 10: 25-37

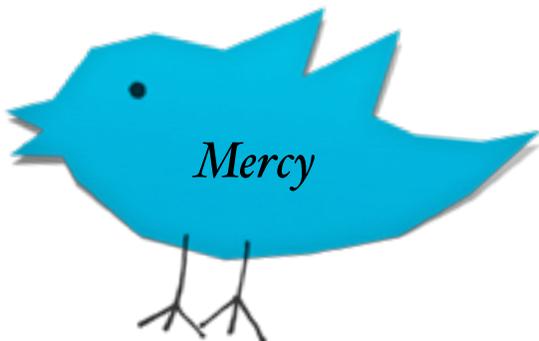
In answer to the question *Who is my neighbor?* Jesus responds with one of the most well known stories in the New Testament: the parable of the Good Samaritan. This story illustrates the virtue of **mercy** as we see that no barriers of race, social standing, or wealth can block the love, **mercy**, compassion, and care that we owe to our neighbor. The message is clear: every human being is our neighbor! We are called to be actors of God's **mercy** despite the social pressures we might experience.



build. plant. grow.
the word this week



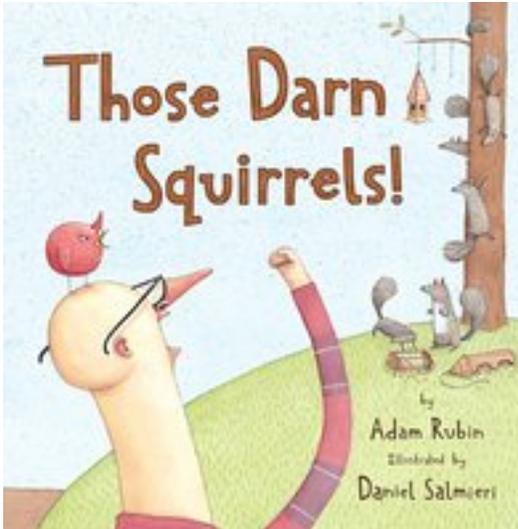
ordinary
time



lectionary
reading



children's
story



Those Darn Squirrels!

Written by Adam Rubin

Illustrated by Daniel Salmieri

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character
education
activity

**A bit of mercy makes the
world less cold and more just.
-Pope Francis**

Those Darn Squirrels!

Mercy eventually becomes a reality in this story about an avid bird watcher named Old Man Fookwire and a gang of squirrels who are constantly eating the bird food that he puts out. The crime caper comes to a head when the squirrels realize how lonely Old Man Fookwire is after his birds fly south for the winter. Instead of continuing their hijinks, the squirrels become the heroes and surprise Old Man Fookwire with a creative act of kindness and **mercy**. This story is an excellent illustration of the need for movement and action in order for **mercy** to become a reality.

Constructing a Door of Mercy

Step One: Provide the students with the components that make up the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.

Corporal Works include: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, bury the dead, shelter the traveler, comfort the sick, and free the imprisoned

Spiritual Works include: counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish the sinner, comfort the sorrowful, forgive injuries, bear wrongs patiently, and pray for the dead.

Step Two: Provide the students with materials to work on 14 panels (7 for the corporal and 7 for the spiritual works of **mercy**) that will line the inside or outside of the classroom door.

Step Three: Since there are 14 panels, students may work in groups of 2 or more depending on the size of the class.

Step Four: Find quotes from Pope Francis on the Year of **Mercy** that can also surround the panels of **mercy** that the students will make.

Once a person has truly experienced the mercy of God in their life they will henceforth aspire only to serve.
-Dietrich Bonhoeffer



case study

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

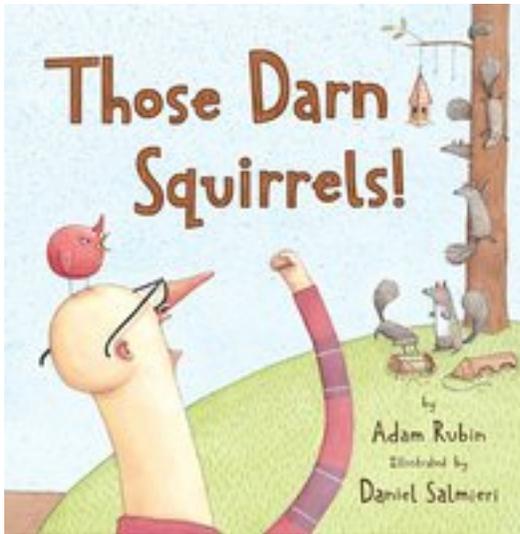
What could you do today?

With your family, choose some things that you can do week by week to understand the practice of the 7 corporal works of **mercy**. For example, for feed the hungry, you might support a food pantry or soup kitchen. For clothing the naked, you might clean out your closets and donate the clothes to a shelter. For giving to the poor, you might gather change from members of the family and contribute it to Saint Vincent de Paul or the Salvation Army. For burying the dead, you might go with your family to visit the grave of a relative or friend.

Look Feel Know Act

Take some time to look at all the different works of **mercy** and determine how you might be able to be of assistance to those who are struggling. Try and place yourself in their shoes to feel what they feel. This is called empathy and to act with empathy is a wonderful way to be in touch with the needs of your brothers and sisters.

Trying to do all the works of **mercy** would be an overwhelming task, so try to focus on which ones are most meaningful to you and ask yourself how you might enter into the lives of these people. Remember that you can always practice empathy by keeping those in need in your prayers.



Mercy is a virtue that is essential to living a Christian life. Time and again, the virtue of **mercy** enters into our lives through the Scriptures and we see that this is at the very heart of who our God is. We see Jesus extending **mercy** to everyone he encounters throughout the Gospels. In the children's story selected for this week, we see how characters who were formerly enemies can soften and become friends when they begin to understand what is going on in the other's life.

The Morning Consecration of the Sisters of Mercy:



**closing
tool**

**O compassionate Jesus,
look on me today with tenderness
and give me the grace to walk the
path of mercy
marked out for those who follow
You.**

**May all I do today reflect Your
merciful love.**

Amen.



**Santa Clara
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