

Living God's Mercy

INTRODUCTION

Good morning/afternoon, and welcome to our prayer service.

OPTIONAL: It is the Easter season – a time for us to celebrate the great mercy God has shown us in sending Jesus to die and rise so that we could share in His gift of eternal life. Our theme today is, “Living God’s Mercy.” Jesus shows us the great mercy of the Father, and calls us to share this mercy with one another. Let us take this time together to pray about how God is calling us to live Jesus’ message of mercy in our homes, our communities and in our Catholic school.

OPENING PRAYER

Let us begin with the sign of our faith: In the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Let us pray. God our Father, you sent Jesus to bring us your mercy. He shared your message of mercy with his words, his miracles, his dying and rising again. He opened his arms wide on the cross and with great love, offered you his life for our sins. You raised him from the dead, and gave all who believe in him your merciful gift of eternal life. Open our minds to understand your mercy as we listen to your word, and open our hearts to grow in your merciful love. We ask you this in Jesus’ name. Amen.

And now, let us listen to God’s word.

READING

A reading from the Gospel of Matthew (Mt 5, 1-7)

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

‘Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

‘Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

‘Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

‘Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.’

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

RESPONSE (based on corporal and spiritual works of mercy)

Jesus is the merciful face of the Father, and we are Jesus’ merciful hands and feet that reach out to others in love.

Let us think about the times when we are the merciful hands and face of Jesus.

The response is, “We are your merciful hands and feet.”

When we share food with the hungry,
- *We are your merciful hands and feet.*

When we help others who don't have clean water,
- *We are your merciful hands and feet.*

When we share our clothing with those who are in need,
- *We are your merciful hands and feet.*

When we are inclusive, so others feel at home,
- *We are your merciful hands and feet.*

When we visit the sick and elderly,
- *We are your merciful hands and feet.*

When we comfort someone whose family member has died,
- *We are your merciful hands and feet.*

When we stand up for what is right,
- *We are your merciful hands and feet.*

When we set a good example for others,
- *We are your merciful hands and feet.*

When we help others trust in Your goodness, O God,
- *We are your merciful hands and feet.*

When we show friendship to someone who is sad,
- *We are your merciful hands and feet.*

When we are patient with others,
- *We are your merciful hands and feet.*

When we forgive,
- *We are your merciful hands and feet.*

When we pray for those who have died,
- *We are your merciful hands and feet.*

PRAYER RESPONSE

The response to each invocation is, *We give you thanks.*

For calling us to live your message of mercy,
We give you thanks.

For the gifts that you give us to help one another, as signs of your mercy,
We give you thanks.

For the love of parents, grandparents and caregivers who are living examples of Your mercy.
We give you thanks.

For our pastors, teachers, principals, EAs and support staff who help us walk the path of Your mercy.
We give you thanks.

For the gift of our faith and the chance to share it with others in acts of mercy,
We give you thanks.

And now, let us gather the praise of our hearts, together with our needs, those of our loved ones and neighbours and bring them before the merciful Father, using the words that Jesus taught us: *Our Father...*

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, we thank you for the mercy you have shown us in Jesus, your Son. Make our hearts merciful like His, so that all who meet us will come to believe in your goodness and love. We make this prayer to you in the name of Jesus Christ, your merciful Son and our Lord. Amen.

And may Almighty God bless us: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.