

Step Out in Love!

by Julie Mickler

Catholic social teaching makes it clear that acts of charity are crucial steps in alleviating immediate suffering for the world's poor. **The Corporal Works of Mercy challenge every person of faith to help provide desperately needed food, drink, and shelter to those in need.** For many who are poor and vulnerable, these resources are necessary for survival.

Catholic schools and parishes sponsor awesome programs that help meet these immediate needs. Food pantries, home-building efforts, clothing drives, donations to global hunger-relief organizations, disaster relief, and canned food drives are just a few examples of the Works of Mercy alive and well in our Catholic communities.



Local and global Catholic organizations also work on our behalf to feed, clothe, and shelter the world's poor. Catholic Charities and Catholic Relief Services have fought tirelessly to alleviate much of the suffering inherent in a life of poverty.

These actions are good and pleasing to God.

But . . . they are not enough.

To truly live out our Christian mandate to serve the poor, we must not only make charitable contributions but also participate in actions for justice.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops calls charity and justice the Two Feet of Love in Action. When we step forward in charity, we offer short-term relief through donations of food, shelter, and clothing. It is that next important step, however, that promotes social change and ultimately provides a long-term solution to the problems of poverty, racism, sexism, environmental destruction, and so on. Actions for justice address the root causes that create injustice.

In the end, it is never enough to simply feed a hungry person. We must ask, "Why are they are naked, hungry, homeless, or oppressed?"

Becoming a person committed to creating a just world can feel overwhelming.

For today, it is enough to grow in awareness and open yourself to being part of the solution—one loving step at a time.



Corporal Works of Mercy

1

Feed the hungry.



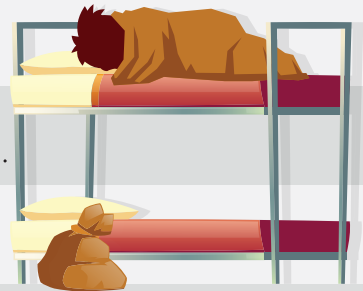
2

Give drink to the thirsty.



3

Shelter the homeless.



4

Visit the sick.



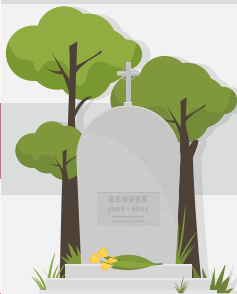
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Visit the prisoners.



6

Bury the dead.



7

Give alms to the poor.



DONATE