
PARTNERS NEWSLETTER

A Newsletter for the Ann Arbor Catholic Men's Movement

May 2016



Men of Faith, linked as brothers, growing as husbands, fathers and disciples of Jesus Christ

Sharing God's Mercy with Our Children

*By Jessica Archuleta
from Catholic Exchange*

In this Year of Mercy I believe it is important for parents to think about how we can reveal God's mercy to our children and teach them to be merciful to others. Compassionate and merciful children will not happen by accident. For us parents, showing God's tender mercy to our children is especially important, being that the fruit of our work as parents will be more a result of our actions and not our words. Showing our children what mercy is will be more important than a lesson on mercy without the actions to reveal to them the love of a merciful parent.

Recently, one of my daughters was put on restriction for the night and was going to spend the evening in bed while the rest of the family watched a movie. Her punishment was just and needed in order to convey the seriousness of her bad behavior. She accepted it without arguing (unusual for her) and went out of her way to help me with some extra things I hadn't asked her to do—I could tell she felt remorse for her behavior. I could also sense that my other children were feeling bad for their sister. They didn't say anything, but I observed their interactions with their sister as we were all getting things ready to watch a movie and she was heading up to bed.

One thing that always makes my husband and I pleased is seeing compassion being displayed between our children. The younger ones will often come and plea their siblings case and ask for a pardon. When this happens, if we can, we will usually grant the pardon because it reinforces their compassion and also teaches them the power of intercession. In this instance no one pleaded for mercy (I think they all knew how upset I was), but I definitely picked up on the vibe of sadness in the air.

Seeing my daughter feeling sorry for her actions and knowing the kids hoped she would be able to enjoy the family time together, I looked at her and said, "Since you are being so helpful and you are sorry for your behavior, I'll let you off of your restriction." Her sweet face lit up

and she said thank you while her siblings perked up and cheered for her. I then said, "After all, it is a Year of Mercy so I'll be merciful." Let me tell you, a bunch of little ears perked up at this, sly grins ran across their faces, and you could see a glint in my dear children's eyes. I could see the wheels turning.

One of the older kids said, "Really, a year of mercy?" To which I quickly explained did not mean what they hoped it meant! We had a good laugh and I told them about Pope Francis declaring this a Year of Mercy and made it clear that mercy sometimes means following through with justice because spoiling children isn't mercy or love. The whole situation was a good opportunity to discuss mercy and show mercy at an appropriate time.

Being a parent is hard. Trying to raise Christian children is even harder. Knowing when to be lenient and merciful or when to instill obedience and discipline in any given situation is not always an easy call. On the one hand we must show; love, mercy, patience, and forgiveness to our

Get Inspired! Bring a Friend!

Thursday, May 5, 2016

Speaker: Ralph Martin

Founder and President of Renewal Ministries, Host of: *The Choices We Face* a weekly TV & Radio program, Doctorate in Sacred Theology from Pontifical University in Rome, Director of Graduate Theology Program in New Evangelization, Author of many books including, *The Fulfillment of All Desire*, He and his wife Ann have 6 children and 15 grandchildren

Topic: "The Truth About Mercy"

Meeting Location:

Christ the King Catholic Church

For more information call (734) 930-4524 or visit our web site at www.catholic-men.org

Our Next Meeting: Thursday, May 5th at

Christ the King Catholic Church 7:30 - 9:30 PM

US 23 to Exit 41 at Plymouth Road, go **East** 1/3 mile to first traffic light at Earhart Rd and turn **left**. Go to next intersection and turn **left**. Turn left at the second driveway. The meeting is in the Church.

Sharing God's Mercy with Our Children (continued)

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children and on the other; obedience, discipline, self control, consequences for one's actions, justice. Without a balance of all of those things a child could end up in a bad way.

Regarding this year, Pope Francis has written:

As we can see in Sacred Scripture, mercy is a key word that indicates God's action towards us. He does not limit himself merely to affirming his love, but makes it visible and tangible. Love, after all, can never be just an abstraction. By its very nature, it indicates something concrete: intentions, attitudes, and behaviors that are shown in daily living. The mercy of God is his loving concern for each one of us. He feels responsible; that is, he desires our wellbeing and he wants to see us happy, full of joy, and peaceful. This is the path which the merciful love of Christians must also travel. As the Father loves, so do his children. Just as he is merciful, so we are called to be merciful to each other.

We can live this Year of Mercy as a family by taking some concrete actions and sharing them with our children. A good place to start is by explaining what exactly the word mercy mean and why it is so important. The definition for mercy, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, is:

- kind or forgiving treatment of someone who could be treated harshly
- kindness or help given to people who are in a very bad or desperate situation

We are all in need of not only God's mercy but the mercy of others; everyone we know will at one time or another be in need of our mercy as well. Let's take this year as an opportunity to grow in mercy and gratitude for the gift of mercy. Here are a few ideas to begin with at home:

- Show them mercy when possible. You know your own children—when the lesson of mercy would be greater than the discipline, show mercy. Reminding them you are being merciful in the hope that they will learn and try to behave better in the future.
- Point out the times they can show mercy to others, especially their siblings—forgiveness is an act of mercy.
- Teach them to look out for others needs and if possible do something about it, reminding them that sometimes prayer may be the only thing they can do but it is an important thing to do.
- As a family go to confession regularly. God's mercy

given through the sacrament of reconciliation is indispensable.

- Explain how they can be merciful to their parents and other adults. We need forgiveness and kindness shown to us too, like allowing us to have a few minutes quiet to finish our coffee!
- Spend the year teaching them the corporal and spiritual works of mercy while looking for opportunities to practice them together as a family. Encourage them to look for opportunities on their own as well.

Corporal works of mercy:

- Feed the hungry
- Give drink to the thirsty
- Clothe the naked
- Shelter the homeless
- Visit the sick
- Visit the imprisoned
- Bury the dead

Spiritual works of mercy:

- Admonish the sinner
- Instruct the ignorant
- Counsel the doubtful
- Comfort the sorrowful
- Bear wrongs patiently
- Forgive all injuries
- Pray for the living and the dead

Do not feel overwhelmed or panicked to do everything at once. Start with talking about mercy and as a family, trying to be merciful to one another. Imagine what a difference a little effort here and there throughout the year could make for your family.

Mark Your Calendars Now for June 2016!

The next Catholic Men's Night is scheduled for Thursday evening, June 2, 2016 in Christ the King Catholic Church. After Mass and some fellowship and refreshments, the speaker for the evening will be **Peter Herbeck** who is the vice president and director of missions for Renewal Ministries. He is also the co-host of the weekly TV programs, "*The Choices We Face*" and "*Crossing the Goal*". Peter and his wife Debbie have four children.

We plan to have a priest available for Confessions from 7:00 to 7:25 pm and the Mass will begin at 7:30 pm. Refreshments and fellowship will follow and our speaker will begin at about 8:15.

Christ the King is located at 4000 Ave Maria Drive in Ann Arbor Township at the south end of the Domino Farms office park. All men and their older sons are welcome at the men's night. Call [734-930-4524](tel:734-930-4524) or go to our website at: www.catholic-men.org for more information.

We gladly stand with Promise Keepers and St. Joseph Covenant Keepers.

To get on our mailing list e-mail cmmdesk@gmail.com
or write to the Ann Arbor Catholic Men's Movement, P.O. Box 466, Ann Arbor, MI 48106