

# God's Gracious Mercy January, 2016



**Introduction:** Pope Francis has invited us to celebrate a Year of Mercy. In his degree announcing this, he wrote: *"I desire that the year ... be steeped in mercy, so that we go out to every man and woman, bringing the goodness and tenderness of God ... as a sign that the Kingdom of God is already present in our midst!"*

Misericordiae Vultus, Bull of Indiction, Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, 11 April 2015  
[w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_letters/documents/papa-francesco\\_bolla\\_20150411\\_misericordiae-vultus.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco_bolla_20150411_misericordiae-vultus.html)

**Call to Prayer:** *"True mercy, the mercy God gives to us and teaches us, demands justice, it demands that the poor find the way to be poor no longer."*

Pope Francis, address to Jesuit Refugee Service, 9/10/13  
[HTTPS://W2.VATICAN.VA/CONTENT/FRANCESCO/EN/SPEECHES/2013/SEPTEMBER/DOCUMENTS/PAPA-FRANCESCO\\_20130910\\_CENTRO-ASTALLI.HTML](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2013/september/documents/papa-francesco_20130910_centro-astalli.html), page 3

**ALL:** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Hymn:** "Lift Up Your Hearts" Roc O'Connor, SJ (refrain)



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**Antiphon: ALL:** "What a good means it would be, Ladies, if you were convinced of the great benefits there are for souls who practice works of mercy, as you are doing!"

Vincent de Paul vol. 13b, #198. Report on the State of the Works, July 11, 1657, p. 439

**Canticle: 1 Samuel 2: 1-10** (Pray alternating sides, please.)

- I. God has filled my heart with joy; how happy I am because of what he has done!  
I laugh at my enemies; how joyful I am because God has helped me!
- II. No one is holy like our God; there is none like him, no protector like our God.  
For the Lord is a God who knows and judges all that people do.
- I. The bows of strong persons are broken, but those who are weak grow strong.  
The people who once were well fed now hire themselves out to get food,  
but those who were hungry are hungry no more.
- II. The childless couple has borne seven children; the parent of many is left with none.  
God makes some people poor and others rich; he humbles some and makes others great.
- I. God lifts poor persons from the dust and raises those who are needy from their misery.  
The foundations of the earth belong to our God; on them he has built the world.
- II. God protects the lives of the faithful people, but those wicked disappear in darkness.  
Our God will judge the whole world and will make his chosen one victorious.
- I. Glory be ... II. As it was ...

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[HTTPS://WWW.BIBLEGATEWAY.COM/PASSAGE/?SEARCH=1+SAMUEL+2%3A1-10&VERSION=GNT](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+2%3A1-10&version=GNT)

**ALL:** pray **Antiphon.** (above)

**Reading:** What Does Mercy Mean? The Latin word for mercy is *miser cordia* derived from the two words *miserere* ("pity" or "misery") and *cor* ("heart.") When we ask for God's mercy, we are essentially asking God to relieve us of a heart that is in misery. Our hearts can be in a state of misery from the deep hurt caused by a broken relationship with a family member, from the suffering of infertility, from the pain of a physical or mental illness, from losing a job, from being betrayed or abandoned, from spiritual or physical poverty, from sin. Think about mercy as "relieving someone from a heart of misery" and realize each of us have experienced God's mercy more than we could ever count. We have also given mercy to others in more ways than just by forgiving someone who has wronged us. The seven spiritual works of mercy show that mercy is more than just forgiving offenses willingly. For example, it also includes instructing the ignorant and counseling the doubtful. In so many situations, we practice a spiritual work of mercy by "relieving a heart of misery." And this comes not from us, but from God.

adapted from *Beautiful Mercy* by Pope Francis and Matthew Kelly, excerpt by Jackie Francois-Angel;  
found also on Day 7, 12/5/2015, *Best Advent Ever*

**Response ALL:** The Church teaches us that mercy belongs to God. Let us implore Him to bestow on us the spirit of mercy and compassion, so that we are filled with it ..."

St. Vincent de Paul, famvin picture-quote

**Hymn:** "Lift Up Your Hearts" refrain (page 1)

## Reflection and Sharing:

What does mercy mean for me?

Am I merciful? When, how?

**Response ALL:** Lord, have mercy!  
Christ, have mercy!  
Lord, have mercy!



**Prayer ALL:** Jesus, you taught us to be merciful like the Heavenly Father. You are the visible face of the invisible Father, of the God who manifests power above all by forgiveness and mercy, let the Church and each of us be your visible face in the world. You willed that your ministers would be clothed in weakness in order that we may feel compassion for others. Let everyone who approaches us feel loved and know the mercy of God.

Send Your Spirit so this Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace and Your Church and all of us may be filled with renewed enthusiasm and willingly bring good news to all we meet especially persons living in poverty. We ask this through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy, You who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.

adapted from Pope Francis' Prayer for the Year of Mercy

<http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/vatican-unveils-new-prayer-logo-for-jubilee-year>



**Blessing:** (Please, respond **Amen** to each request.)

May God bless you and keep you.

May God's face shine on you and be gracious to you.

May God turn toward you and give you peace.

Numbers 6: 24-26

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## Prayer Texts:

Psalm 147: 1 "God delights in those ... who wait for his merciful love."

Luke 6: 36 "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."

prepared for the Ladies of Charity by Sr. Carol Schumer, D.C., January, 2016