

Enrichment: Character

Living the Spiritual Works of Mercy

God's mercy is His love and kindness to us when we sin against Him. The Church has given us seven specific ways to show others mercy. With each of these works of mercy, we grow in virtue and build character.

The *spiritual works of mercy* are concerned with our neighbor's spiritual needs:

- Counseling the doubtful
- Instructing the ignorant
- Admonishing the sinner
- Comforting the sorrowful
- Forgiving injuries
- Bearing wrongs patiently
- Praying for the living and the dead

All the spiritual works of mercy should be practiced within the family.

- To *counsel the doubtful* means that we give advice to those who are doubting their faith. We do this through our words and by listening to what they have to say.
- We *instruct the ignorant* when we teach about the faith. Parents should teach their children the faith. Children should share their faith with their siblings and friends.
- To *admonish the sinner* is to counsel, urge, or remind others charitably when they fall into sin. Parents should give correction to children to guide them and help them develop a virtuous character.
- *Comforting the sorrowful* involves taking time to give comfort to those who are suffering or vulnerable. We comfort others by talking to them and most importantly listening to them. Children can comfort others through an act of kindness toward a sibling or friend who is suffering.
- We *forgive others* by showing mercy when someone offends us. We can forgive others by accepting their apologies and not holding a grudge.
- We *bear our wrongs patiently* by uniting our daily difficulties to Jesus' suffering on the Cross. He lifts us up and strengthens us in virtue.
- Families should spend time *praying for the living and the dead*. Encourage everyone to offer his own intentions and to pray for your deceased family members and those who are living. Always pray for the souls in Purgatory.



Journal Reflection

Write one spiritual work of mercy on the journal page. **How will you live it out?** Write your answer on the journal page. [Journal pages are available on the parent and student portals.](#)