“Mercy, the Heartbeat of the Gospel”

“Now one of the criminals hanging there reviled Jesus, saying, ‘Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us.’ The other, however, rebuking him, said in reply, ‘Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal.’ Then he said, ‘Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.’ He replied to him, ‘Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”’ -Luke 23:39-43

Mercy is the Heartbeat of the Gospel, according to Pope Francis. Most of the quotes found in this newsletter are from him, in announcing the Holy Year of Mercy, to begin December 8 of this year.

LAMP recently reflected on the “Good Thief”, St. Dismas, who showed mercy to Jesus, and indirectly to His mother Mary, who entered so deeply and fully into His sufferings. As Jesus was dying in agony on the Cross, humanly so in need of an act of mercy Himself (“My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?”), Dismas reached out with mercy. Jesus responded to him with unlimited mercy: “This day you will be with Me in Paradise.” One act of sincere mercy toward our suffering Lord wiped out who knows how many offenses.

As we show the face of mercy to our poor brothers and sisters, we can be expectant that Jesus will not hold back His great mercy from us. -Marybeth Greene Pastoral Co-Director

Dear Friends,

LAMP benefits greatly from the multiple reminders of Pope Francis emphasizing the primary attribute of God – His mercy as a manifestation of His love, especially to the poor. To the extent that we allow ourselves to be affected by that reality, everything changes. Hearts are softened, words are kinder, we come together, we reach out to our neighbor in need. May we all be carriers, witnesses, ambassadors of God’s mercy. One with you in His service,

Tom & Lyn Scheuring, Ph.D.s Directors

“A Catholic canonical missionary service consecrated to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary”
“Jesus affirms that mercy is not only an action of the Father, it becomes a criterion for ascertaining who his true children are.” - Pope Francis

“Teach us your own preferential love for the little and the poor, for the excluded and the suffering, for sinners and the downhearted: bring everyone under your protection and entrust everyone to your beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus. Amen.”
- from a Prayer of Consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary offered by Pope Francis on October 13, 2013

A mother and her child, who recently had very unexpectedly become homeless and were living in a shelter, welcomed two LAMP Missionaries into their room. By visiting and praying together, the mother rediscovered her faith and trust in God. As the Missionaries were leaving, the mother firmly said to them: “Keep doing what you are doing!”

The church’s “very credibility is seen in how she shows merciful and compassionate love.” - Pope Francis

Nellie Estrada (on left), a new LAMP Missionary, reaches out to a woman with a Scripture card and some attentive listening.
(Above) A line of people waiting for a sandwich and cool drink at the LAMP café. LAMP Missionary Steve Patterson and others will serve them with a smile and offer a rosary with directions and/or a New Testament, and will pray with them if they share a need. Four days a week, the LAMP café canteen truck is in front of two Catholic Churches in the S. Bronx, serving those in need with physical and spiritual food.

Recently, after finishing the opening prayer and brief sharing about the Scripture passage when Jesus said: “whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you” (John 16:23), Cecilia Alcocer, a LAMP Missionary, asked each person in line to think of one need/burden they have, then she and the other LAMP Missionary would come to each one and pray with them, in Jesus’ name, for that need. Examples of what they asked prayers for: bring my children back to the faith; thank God for my blessings (this was from a woman who appeared in great material need); a new set of teeth; a successful pregnancy for my friend’s child; more than one prayed for a job; a man expressed a desire to be baptized (this person was then connected with the local parish priest).

We are all in need of God’s mercy. Lord, please hear our prayers!

One of the youngest guests at the LAMP café is given an image of the Divine Mercy to ponder along with a lunch. A woman from the LAMP Center neighborhood sometimes provides homemade cookies, which this little boy is enjoying. Mercy can be expressed in many ways!
Announcements

The Lord has sent two of His own dear people to serve as new LAMP Missionaries: **Bruce Monaco**, a gentleman from New York City whom the Lord has called from Wall Street to serve His blessed poor. **Nellie Estrada**, a young woman from Salt Lake City whose joy is helping children and teens know the love of Jesus.

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We have recently seen the need to offer to homeless families that are hungry for more of Jesus and His love small wall crucifixes to hang in a central place in their room. If you would like to cover the cost of some of these powerful sacramentals, we would be very grateful. We are purchasing 100 crucifixes, and the cost for each crucifix is $6. Thank you for your merciful response to the spiritual needs of our homeless brothers and sisters.

(Above) Young people from Nigeria received the cards that LAMP has become known for in the New York City area and other places. “You are precious in God’s eyes” (cf. Is. 43) say the cards, given by LAMP Missionary Blake Sweet to these youth when he visited their country over Christmas.

LAMP Catholic Ministries is possible only by the grace of God and your prayers and financial assistance. Donations can be made using the enclosed envelope or through Paypal. **Thank you!**