



March With Mercy

Set an altar with an open Bible, a crucifix, candles (unlit), a globe to represent the missions and a World Mission Rosary which can be obtained from the Missionary Childhood Office.

Leader: During this Year of Mercy, called by Pope Francis, we focus on the many facets of that quality. Today we think about compassion and what it means for us as followers of Jesus. How did Jesus show compassion to others? How are we called to follow in His footsteps?

Reader 1: As we listen to God's word today, let us be mindful of His message, asking ourselves, "How can I show compassion to others, just as Jesus did?"

Reader 2: *A Reading from the Gospel of Matthew (MT 15: 32-39):*

Jesus summoned his disciples and said, "My heart is moved with pity for the crowd, for they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, for fear they may collapse on the way." The disciples said to him, "Where could we ever get enough bread in this deserted place to satisfy such a crowd?" Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?" "Seven," they replied, "and a few fish." He ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground. Then he took the seven loaves and the fish, gave thanks, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds. They all ate and were satisfied. They picked up the fragments left over—seven baskets full. Those who ate were four thousand men, not counting women and children. And when he had dismissed the crowds, he got into the boat and came to the district of Magadan. The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Pause for silent reflection

Reader 1: Jesus showed compassion to those who were hungry and had no access to food. In our world, there are places where

children lack many things and depend on the compassion of others for decent food, access to clean water, a safe place to live, or a school to attend. Jesus entrusts these children to the compassionate care of His followers.

Reader 2: Our response is:

Lord, help us to be your compassionate followers.

Reader 1: For children in **Haiti**, who look to us to help their mission schools we pray:

All: Lord, help us to be your compassionate followers.

Reader 2: For children in **Zambia**, who are cared for in mission orphanages after losing their parents to disease, we pray:

All: Lord, help us to be your compassionate followers.

Reader 1: For children in **Nepal**, who depend on missionaries to rebuild their churches after the earthquake, we pray:

All: Lord, help us to be your compassionate followers.

Reader 2: For children in the **Solomon Islands** who need us to support their mission hospitals, we pray:

All: Lord, help us to be your compassionate followers.

Leader: God our Father, you have given us many gifts, asking only that we share them with those who have less than we do. While we may not be able to physically visit children in the missions, help us to remember to pray for and support the missionaries who do so, as Your messengers of mercy and compassion around the world. We ask this in the name of Jesus, Your Son. **All: Amen**