

THE 7 SPIRITUAL & 7 CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

The [Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph 2447](#) reads:

The *works of mercy* are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities.²⁴² Instructing, advising, consoling, comforting are spiritual works of mercy, as are forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently. The corporal works of mercy consist especially in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and burying the dead.²⁴³ Among all these, giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God:²⁴⁴

He who has two coats, let him share with him who has none and he who has food must do likewise.²⁴⁵ But give for alms those things which are within; and behold, everything is clean for you.²⁴⁶ If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit?²⁴⁷

242 cf. [Isaiah 58:6-7](#); [Hebrews 13:3](#).

243 cf. [Matthew 25:31-46](#).

244 cf. [Tobit 4:5-11](#); [Sirach 17:22](#); [Matthew 6:2-4](#).

245 [Luke 3:11](#).

246 [Luke 11:41](#).

247 [James 2:15-16](#); cf. [1 John 3:17](#).

See page 2 of this document for the 7 Spiritual Works of Mercy.

See page 3 of this document for the 7 Corporal Works of Mercy.

THE 7 SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY

The Spiritual Works of Mercy are oriented *toward the soul*. Though ideally applicable for all faithful, not everyone is considered capable or obligated to perform the first three Spiritual Works of Mercy before they possess the proper tact, knowledge or canonical training to do so. The remaining four Spiritual Works of Mercy are considered to be an obligation of all faithful to practice unconditionally. The Seven Spiritual Works of Mercy and their Holy Scripture references are:

Admonish the Sinner	Proverbs 27:17 Luke 15:7; 17:3 2 Timothy 4:2
Instruct the Ignorant	Matthew 28:19-20 Mark 16:14-18 Luke 24:47-49 John 20:21 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 4:1-5
Counsel the Doubtful	Matthew 13:18-23 Mark 4:13-20; 9:14-29 Luke 8:11-15 John 14:27
Bear Wrongs Patiently	Matthew 5:38-48 Luke 6:27-36 1 Peter 2:18-19
Forgive Offenses Willingly	Matthew 6:14-15; 18:15-35 Mark 11:25 Luke 11:1-4; 17:1-4
Comfort the Afflicted	Psalms 9:8-11; 22:23-27, Psalms 27:4-5; 30:2-4, Psalms 46:2; 55:22, Psalms 56; 71:20-22, Psalms 116; 119:49-50 Jeremiah 29:11-14 Lamentations 3:21-24, 31-33 Nahum 1:7-8 Matthew 11:28-30 John 14:15-18, 27; 16:22-23 2 Corinthians 5:17 1 Peter 5:5-11 Revelation 21:4
Pray for the Living and the Dead	2 Maccabees 38-46

THE 7 CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

The Corporal Works of Mercy are oriented *toward the body*. Six of the seven are mentioned in [Matthew 25:31-40](#) - although not *precisely* - as the reason for the salvation of the saved, while [Matthew 25:41-46](#) exhorts the omission of them as the reason for damnation. As deprivation of burial was viewed with horror by the Jews, the seventh Corporal Work of Mercy ([Tobit 1:17-19](#)) was later added.

The Seven Corporal Works of Mercy and their Holy Scripture references are:

Feed the Hungry	Proverbs 22:9 Isaiah 58:10 2 Kings 4:42-44 Matthew 14:15-21; 25:35 Luke 3:11; 9:12-17 John 6:35
Give Drink to the Thirsty	Isaiah 55:1 Matthew 25:35 John 6:35 John 7:37-39 Revelation 21:6; 22:17
Clothe the Naked	Matthew 25:36
Shelter the Homeless	Matthew 25:35
Visit the Sick	Matthew 25:36
Visit the Imprisoned	Matthew 25:36
Bury the Dead	Tobit 1:17-19