“Jesus is the reason for the season.”

As we enter into the season of Advent and then into Christmas I have become more and more aware of this statement. A true statement yes, but I think there is so much more. Jesus is the reason for all seasons. Advent is a time for us to stop and reflect upon the three coming of Christ. First we look back just over 2000 years ago when the word was made flesh and dwelt among us. Then we look forward to when He will come again. And finally we look at where Christ is in our lives today. Is Christ the reason for the season every day of our lives? If he is not, we need to take heed to the reading for the first Sunday in Advent. Where Christ warns us, Stay awake! “So too, you must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come.” My wife and I were in the prison for the first Sunday of advent and we were discussing these readings and I was telling the inmates that these reading scare me, am I awake and ready. Some time I am not so sure.

This is what you do each day in your ministry when you interact with patients, inmates and college students. You are helping them to stay awake, helping them to be ready and you do it with such love and compassion.

Karen, Karen and I would like to wish all of you and your families a warm and blessed Advent and Christmas season, as together we remember that:

“Jesus is the reason for all seasons!”

Jim
1. Mental prayer (meditation) every day.
2. Pray with Scripture daily.
3. Frequent The Sacraments – Mass as often as possible + monthly Confession.
4. Quickly forgive others when they mess up.
5. Forgive yourself when you mess up.
6. Go on a retreat.
7. Take several days off of work / your normal schedule.
8. Socialize with friends more often. Schedule if necessary.
9. Go on dates with your spouse.
10. Pray with your family.
11. Eat dinner with your family.
12. Practice not worrying about things you can’t control.
13. Don’t work to please other people. Please God.
14. Remember that you are wonderful and lovable, even if imperfect.
15. Smile more.
16. Do nice things for other people, just because.
17. Play with kids.
18. Spend less time around negative people.
19. Have difficult conversations, in a loving way. Don’t avoid them.
20. Work on your character flaws and poor communication skills.
21. Ask for help more often.
22. Practice being content with what you currently have.
23. Exercise regularly.
24. Sleep more.
25. Laugh.
26. Talk to a spiritual director/mentor regularly.
27. Learn from your mistakes.
28. Be OK with not controlling others.
29. Reduce your to-do list by distinguishing ‘must’ and ‘should’.
30. Spend time with a pet.
31. Read more good books.
32. Listen to more good music.
33. Turn off the TV and do #32 and #32.
34. Spend time doing something you like to do.
35. Volunteer to help others.
36. Eat healthier.
37. Stop an unhealthy habit (overeating, smoking, drinking too much, etc.)
38. Temper the tone in your voice and the words you use when frustrated.
39. Go dancing, bowling, or play mini golf.
40. Realize what upsets you and create a plan on how to deal with it in the future.

To see more ways to reduce stress visit:
On Sunday Pope Francis held a special Mass held for prisoners inside St. Peter’s Basilica, telling them that while paying the price for their crimes is necessary, they must never lose hope for the future or the desire for true freedom.

In his Nov. 6 homily, the Pope pointed to how in his letter to the Romans St. Paul refers to God as “the God of hope.”

By saying this, “Paul almost seems to tell us that God too hopes. While this may seem paradoxical, it is true: God hopes! His mercy gives him no rest,” just like the father waiting for the return of the Prodigal son, or the shepherd looking for his lost sheep.

“So if God hopes, then no one should lose hope. For hope is the strength to keep moving forward,” he said. “It is the power to press on toward the future and a changed life. It is the incentive to look to tomorrow, so that the love we have known, for all our failings, can show us a new path.”

Hope is ultimately proof of the power of God’s mercy, Francis said, adding that mercy “invites us to keep looking ahead and to overcome our attachment to evil and sin through faith and abandonment in him.”

The Jubilee of Prisoners, celebrated for prisoners and their families, penitentiary employees, prison chaplains and various associations that assist both inside and outside of the prison system, took place Nov. 5-6 in Rome as part of Pope Francis’ wider Jubilee of Mercy.

Roughly 4,000 people attended, of which 1,000 were prisoners from 12 countries around the world. Though the majority of the prisoners were from Italy, a Lutheran delegation was present from Sweden. Around 50 prisoners and ex-prisoners were also present from the U.S., including a group of 22 from Cincinnati.
Inmates of all types were included among the participants, including minors, people on house arrest, and those with varying sentences. Though Pope Francis has taken a special interest in individual cases of death row inmates, none were present during the Jubilee event.

Ahead of Sunday’s Mass St. Peter’s Basilica opened at 7:30 a.m. for the jubilee event, which included singing, testimonies given by 4 participants and a rosary ahead of Pope Francis’ arrival.

All tickets for the Mass, as usual for Jubilee events, were completely free of cost. After Mass, attendees made their way to the “Reception Celebrating Mercy” in the Vatican’s Paul VI Hall, for which no ticket was required.

During Mass, it was the prisoners themselves who carried out various roles in the liturgy, such as lectoring. The hosts used during Communion were also made by prisoners of the Opera maximum security prison in Milan as part of “The Meaning of Bread” project organized for the Jubilee of Mercy.

In his homily, Pope Francis said the day’s readings offered a strong message of a hope “that doesn't delude.”

Hope, he said, “is a gift of God” and as such “is placed deep within each human heart in order to shed light on this life, so often troubled and clouded by so many situations that bring sadness and pain.”

The roots of this hope must be nourished so as to bear fruit in the certainty “of God's closeness and compassion, despite whatever evil we have done,” he said, adding that “there is no corner of our heart that cannot be touched by God’s love.”

Mercy, the Pope continued, is something that must be thought about “more deeply.” While breaking the law certainly involves “paying the price,” particularly when it comes to losing one’s freedom, at the same time “hope must not falter.”
“Paying for the wrong we have done is one thing, but another thing entirely is the breath of hope, which cannot be stifled by anyone or anything.”

Francis noted that at times “a certain hypocrisy” leads people to view prisoners as merely “wrongdoers, for whom prison is the sole answer.”

“We don’t think about the possibility that people can change their lives; we put little trust in rehabilitation,” he said, explaining that in doing this we forget “that we are all sinners and often, without being aware of it, we too are prisoners.”

Often times we are “locked up within our own prejudices or enslaved to the idols of a false sense of well-being,” he said. “We get stuck in our own ideologies or absolutize the laws of the market even as they crush other people.”

In these moments, we imprison ourselves behind walls of “individualism and self-sufficiency” and are deprived “of the truth that sets us free,” Pope Francis said, stressing that “pointing the finger against someone who has made mistakes cannot become an alibi for concealing our own contradictions.”

While no one can consider themselves just before God, no one can live “without the certainty of finding forgiveness,” he said, and prayed that none of the prisoners present would allow themselves to “held captive by the past!”

“By learning from past mistakes, you can open a new chapter of your lives. Let us never yield to the temptation of thinking that we cannot be forgiven,” Francis said.

He noted that while there are some wounds that only God can heal, when violence is met with forgiveness “even the hearts of those who have done wrong can be conquered by the love that triumphs over every form of evil.”

Pope Francis closed his homily by turning to Mary, praying that she would look upon each of them “with a mother’s love” and intercede so that their hearts “can experience the power of hope for a new life, one worthy of being lived in complete freedom and in service to your neighbor.”

http://www.pilotcatholicnews.com/articleprint.asp?id=177852
St. John the Baptist features prominently in the Season of Advent. After Mary, John is the Advent figure *par excellence*. When Mary arrived at the home of her cousin Elizabeth, having conceived the child Jesus by the Holy Spirit, John leaped for joy in Elizabeth’s womb at being so near to his Savior. As is the case with every child before birth, grace was already at work in John’s life. And his life was to be a special showing of grace. The words of the Lord God to the prophet Jeremiah are words that fully applied to John: “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you” (Jer 1:5).

John’s life, right up to his martyrdom by Herod, was completely dedicated to announcing the arrival of the Messiah. His own name, given to him by the angel Gabriel, defined both John’s message and his vital place in salvation history. The name “John” means, “God has shown favor.” John preached faithfully the message God had given him: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Mt 3:2). His teaching gave birth to promise and hope for a people walking in darkness. And his message was spoken in so many ways. “Jesus, the Messiah, is here.” “Let go of your sins and turn to Christ who is in our midst.” “If you live with Christ, you will know what it means to live.” “Life with Christ is full of grace and favor; life without Christ is empty.” “Christ is God and our way to God.” “God has shown you favor.”

What makes John the Baptist such an extraordinary figure is the fact that he allowed the grace of God to penetrate his life completely. Like Mary, he lived completely for God and not for himself. Mary’s word became his word: “*Fiat mihi* – *Let it be done to me as you say.*” When he spoke of Christ he said, “I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandal” (Jn 1:27).

Taken by the presence of sin in the world, John preached the need for repentance. In his humility, he was the first to embrace a life of penance for his own sins. John lived what he preached; he preached what he lived. And he lived very near to God. He died because of his faith in God and in his Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus himself says of John, “Amen, I say to you, among those born of women, there has been none greater than John the Baptist” (Mt 11:11).
John’s witness is an important icon for us to have before us in the Season of Advent. He reminds us of the deep need we have to repent. He calls each of us to embrace humility before God, and to choose to live for the Lord and not for ourselves.

Confession in the Sacrament of Penance is an essential part of our life in Christ. There we embrace the humility of the sinner as we face our sins – both grave and small – and find mercy and forgiveness in Christ. The Season of Advent is a perfect opportunity for us to embrace this blessed Sacrament as a refuge and a strength for our life in Christ. God has shown favor and he continues to offer his grace and favor abundantly to us. Let us welcome that grace fully into our lives. With contrite hearts, let us welcome anew the Christ who has come to save us. With our sins forgiven, may the Father give us the grace that we prayed for in the collect at Mass on the First Sunday of Advent:

*Grant your faithful, we pray, almighty God, the resolve to run forth
  to meet your Christ with righteous deeds at his coming,
  so that, gathered at his right hand, they may be
  worthy to possess the heavenly kingdom.*

*Through Christ our Lord. Amen*
The theme of this newsletter is HOPE, and my assignment was to focus on family, relationships and hope. I figured I’d sit back on Thanksgiving, which would be celebrated at my uncle’s house, and take in the interactions between my family members. The post-election Trump vs Hillary fireworks (aka ‘discussions’) should have provided ample material for this newsletter article.

But as He so often does, God had other plans.

In addition to my role as Faith Community Nurse Educator for the Archdiocese, I am also a school nurse at a 500 student Catholic middle-high school in our neighboring diocese. One of our students, a beautiful (inside and out) 14 year old girl, recently had surgery to help manage a chronic illness which has plagued her for years. Two nights ago, about a week after her surgery, she unexpectedly died, presumably from complications of the surgery.

As is typical when tragedy strikes a school, there were counselors available for anyone who needed to talk. Students were provided with prayer space in the chapel, quiet space in the theater, community space in the library, or the routine of their scheduled classrooms, and they were permitted to choose where they needed to be. It was not a day for formal teaching or learning.

Last night at home, I was beginning my Thanksgiving baking and cooking, and reflecting on the day. It had been a truly awful day, a day that is one timeless blur. From this blur, a few snapshots emerged:

- The girls’ basketball team sitting in a circle on the gym floor, talking quietly
- Adults (staff and faculty) wandering around the building, checking on each other, offering a kind word, a hug, or a break from whatever duty they were performing
- Adolescent girls physically supporting each other walking through the halls
- Adolescent boys, near tears, trying so hard not to shed them; their friends, trying not to notice
- Silence. Absolute, eerie silence. For hours.
- A senior student approaching the school president, embracing her, and telling her that our school is a great place
- The soothing smell of incense, wafting from chapel after noon Mass
- Kids embracing each other, talking, consoling, sharing Julia stories, writing letters and drawing pictures for her family

Today the school celebrated our Thanksgiving liturgy and the Thanksgiving rally, and we were all reminded that, despite grief and sorrow, in fact even in times of grief or sorrow, there is cause for celebration.
BRAINTREE -- At the Archdiocese of Boston sponsored Opioid Overdose Prevention Training session, Jeanne, one of the attendees, recounted how she lost her son from addiction related issues last year.

She said her son had struggled with addiction for eight to 10 years before passing away, and said that during that time, it was difficult for her to "find (her) way."

While she had been brought up Catholic, Jeanne said that while her son was struggling, she "had no place for God."

"He had deserted me," she said.

Yet, Jeanne recalled, her faith returned after her son’s death.

"It’s sad to say, but I think I found a faith of understanding that he finally found the peace he was looking for," she said.

Stories like Jeanne's were not unfamiliar with some of the other attendees of the Nov. 18 training session at the archdiocese's Pastoral Center, which was the last of five held during the week at various locations throughout the archdiocese.

Sponsored in particular by the Archdiocesan Addiction Recovery Pastoral Support Services (AARPSS), the sessions were designed to spread awareness of the rising levels of substance abuse, especially opioid abuse, in the state, and to teach attendees how to administer the opioid overdose reversal drug naloxone, also known by its brand name Narcan.

During the sessions, law enforcement officials were invited to speak about the rehabilitation programs for addicts in jails and prisons across the state, as well as the ways substance abuse is being combatted.

Each session also had a speaker demonstrate and discuss how to obtain and properly administer naloxone.

Deacon Jim Greer, director of the archdiocese’s Heath Care Ministry, also spoke during the sessions, and discussed with attendees the different ways people can process grief. He offered tips on dealing with grief, particularly grief related to substance abuse.
Organizers said the sessions were well attended, with around 30 to 50 people participating in each one. Those in attendance included clergy, school staff, parish staff, medical professionals, and people who have been personally affected by substance abuse.

One of the attendees at the Pastoral Center training was Betsy Clifford, a pastoral associate at the St. Albert the Great and St. Frances Xavier collaborative in Weymouth.

She attended the Nov. 18 session, she explained, "because of the extreme seriousness of opioid addiction and the devastation it can cause to families."

In her role as pastoral associate, Clifford said she has come into contact with a number of grieving people who have lost their family members due to addiction.

"Especially with the passage of Question 4 (legalizing recreational marijuana), we need to be all the more vigilant. I'm just one person from my parish given this education, but I certainly hope more will do so in the future," she said.

Another pastoral associate, Sister Roberta Rzeznik, SND of Good Shepherd Parish in Wayland, said she attended the session simply to "see if there were ways that I could be pastorally helpful to anyone who might be affected by this crisis."

While she agreed that naloxone can be helpful in critical situations, she expressed hope that "instead of needing more people to be aware and available to use it, that hopefully we would be able to make an improvement in lessening the crisis rather than it growing."

A relatively new ministry in the archdiocese, the AARPSS is a network of support assistance to priests, clergy, and staff of the parishes and agencies of the archdiocese who are responding to those inflicted or affected by addiction.

In other words, AARPSS director Father Joe White told The Pilot, the goal of AARPSS "is to be pastorally, ministerially supportive" to individuals and families impacted by addiction.

"Addiction is a disease, and in the healing process, there's a spiritual component, and that's the piece AARPSS hopes to assist with," said Father White, who is also pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Boston.

Continued on next page
In addition to helping put together the Opioid Overdose Prevention Training sessions, Father White noted that "there are now several areas throughout the archdiocese, be they at parishes or agencies, that are providing support prayer groups."

AARPSS also makes referrals for education and treatment, and members of the ministry participate in panels and boards concerning addiction across the state, said Father White.

As a new ministry, AARPSS still does not yet have a staff or a permanent office, Father White said. Yet, come 2017 that will likely change.

After a "soft launch" in January, "We anticipate launching (AARPSS officially) for the World Day of Sick in February," Father White said.
Listen

Resources

Archdiocesan Addiction Recovery Pastoral Support Services (AARPSS)
A network of support assistance for Pastors - more information on this ministry will be coming soon.

Broken No More
Online forums, articles, and resources for those grieving substance deaths
http://broken-no-more.org/

GRASP (Grief Recovery After Substance Passing)
Support to those grieving an overdose death
http://grasphelp.org/

Learn to Cope
Support network offering education, resources, peer support and hope for parents and family members coping with a loved one addicted to opiates or other drugs. Tel: (508) 738-5148; http://learn2cope.org/

Manet Community Health Center
Manet is a health center dedicated to providing preventive, primary and non-emergent urgent care to all, regardless of financial circumstance or health insurance coverage status.
http://manetchc.org/

MOAR (Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery)
Recovery resource guide
Tel: 877-423-6627; http://www.moar-recovery.org/

Moms Tell
Substance abuse treatment, recovery, education, and prevention
www.momstell.org/

Recovering Connections (Catholic Charities)
Tel: 617-464-8569; 617-268-9670
Family support services affected by a loved one’s substance use

What’s Your Grief
Bereavement blog with article related to substance related losses
www.whatsyourgrief.com/
Listen

Opioid Overdose Prevention

Overdose Response (Order of Actions)
1. Check for signs of overdose
2. Try to wake the person by calling their name, shaking them or stimulating them by rubbing your knuckles over the sternum (breastbone) or nasal bridge. If this brings the person around, continue to stay with the person. He/she is still at risk for overdose.
3. If there is no response, call 911 and begin rescue breathing.
4. If you have to leave the person, place them in the Recovery Position.
5. Administer Narcan

Rescue Breathing
Rescue breathing means you are breathing for someone unable to breathe on his or her own. If someone is not breathing or only breathing a few times per minute, you must start rescue breathing immediately.
1. Place the person on their back with head tilted back and chin lifted (1 hand on forehead and 1 under their chin).
2. Pinch their nose shut and breathe into their mouth 2 times (normal breaths).
3. Check to make sure their chest is rising. If not, lift chin a little higher and be sure nose is pinched shut.
4. Give 1 full breath every 5 seconds (count: 1-1,000, 2-1,000, 3-1,000, 4-1,000. Take a breath after 4-1,000 and give another breath on 5-1,000). If available, use a sterile barrier during rescue breathing.
5. Continue for 12 breaths (1 minute) and recheck breathing.
6. If still no breathing, give Naloxone (see HOW TO USE NALOXONE). Stay with person. Make sure he/she is positioned safely
7. If still no breathing, continue rescue breathing for 3 minutes (36 breaths). If still no response, give another dose of Naloxone.
8. Continue rescue breathing until the person responds or until EMS arrives.

Recovery Position
The recovery position is used if a person is unconscious, vomiting, or in danger of choking on vomit or saliva. Place the person on their side, with legs bent, and head resting on the arm on the floor. The recovery position lets fluid drain from the person’s mouth so they do not choke. Place the person in the recovery position whenever you are not doing rescue breathing.

Rescue Breathing
Image used with permission of Harm Reduction Coalition
What are Opioids?
Opioids are drugs used to control moderate to severe pain. They include morphine, codeine, OxyContin®, Percocet®, Darvon®, Vicodin®, and many other prescription pain medications, as well as heroin and methadone.

What are the risks with using opioids?
Opioids cause drowsiness and a decrease in breathing rate. Taking too high a dose or mixing opioids with other depressant drugs or alcohol, depresses breathing, which may become very slow or stop all together. Depression of breathing leads to a lack of oxygen. Opioid overdose deaths happen as a result of the lack of oxygen.

Signs of Overdose
1. Unconscious or unresponsive (no response to shouting or shaking)
2. Pale, blue or grayish lips, face, and nail beds (from lack of oxygen)
3. Slow, shallow, or raspy or gurgling breath, snoring or no detectable breathing
4. Pinpoint pupils

OVERDOSE IS AN EMERGENCY!
CALL 911! IT MAY BE THE ONLY WAY TO SAVE THE PERSON’S LIFE!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Potency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methadone</td>
<td>24-32 hours</td>
<td>****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heroin</td>
<td>6-8 hours</td>
<td>*****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxycontin</td>
<td>3-6 hours</td>
<td>*****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>3-4 hours</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demerol</td>
<td>2-4 hours</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morphine</td>
<td>3-6 hours</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fentanyl</td>
<td>2-4 hours</td>
<td>*****</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remember: Nalxone life in the body is only 30-90 MINUTES
Sometimes it is important to refresh oneself on what the Church teaches about Her Sacraments. Please find the text below concerning the gift and responsibility of being a Extraordinary Minister to the Sick and Homebound. For additional content please visit the websites listed.

**Holy Communion for the Sick and Homebound**

The Eucharist is “strength for those who journey in hope through this life and who desire to dwell with God in the life to come.” Therefore, pastors should make every effort to bring the Sacrament to members of the Body of Christ who are unable to celebrate the Mass in community due to advanced age or infirmity. Extraordinary ministers of Communion may assist pastors in this duty. However, the distribution of Holy Communion to the sick and homebound is a pastorally sensitive ministry with different concerns from those that arise during Mass. Therefore, extraordinary ministers who will exercise this role must receive preparation and training on the rites in *Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rite of Anointing and Viaticum*. They must also fulfill the requirements of the Archdiocese of Boston relative to background checks, for their own safety and protection and that of the people they serve.

It is desirable that visits to the sick and homebound to bring Communion occur after the parish liturgy so that the link between the community’s celebration and the individual is maintained. Extraordinary ministers may come forward following the Prayer after Communion, at which time they will be given their pyx or ciborium with the Body of Christ and dismissed according to the *Rite of Dismissal for Extraordinary Ministers of the Holy Communion Bringing Holy Communion to the Sick*.

Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion who minister to the sick are to take the Blessed Sacrament directly from the church, in a pyx or small ciborium, to the person who is to receive Communion. The Sacrament must never be taken home overnight to be distributed the next day. The extraordinary minister should consume consecrated hosts that cannot be distributed that same day.

**Mishaps with the Blessed Sacrament**

If a piece of consecrated bread falls to the ground during the distribution of Communion, the extraordinary minister should pick it up immediately and consume it, either then or after the distribution of Communion is finished.

If the consecrated wine is spilled, the area should be covered immediately with a purificator and cleaned with damp cloths after Mass. These cloths should be rinsed thoroughly, with the water used being poured in the sacrarium.

If an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion is unsure how to handle a particular situation, it is best to bring the matter to the attention of the priest.

**Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers**


http://www.bostoncatholic.org/uploadedFiles/BostonCatholicorg/Offices_And_Services/Offices/Sub_Pages/Worship_and_Spiritual_Life/guidelines_for_extraordinary_ministers0509.pdf?pid=464
With two works of mercy, both corporal – burying the dead – and spiritual – praying to God for the living and the dead – the Holy Father concluded the cycle of catechesis dedicated to mercy. However, he noted, “the catechesis comes to an end, but mercy must continue”.

“The final work of corporal mercy that invites us to bury the dead may seem a strange request", Francis observed, “and yet, in some areas of the world that live under the scourge of war, with bombings that sow fear and claim innocent victims, this work is sadly relevant. The Bible has as good example of this: that of the elderly Tobias, who, risking his own life, buries the dead despite the King’s prohibition. Today too there are those who risk their lives to bury the poor victims of war. So, this work of corporal mercy is not far from our daily existence. And it makes us think about what happens on Good Friday, when … Joseph of Arimathea comes. He was a rich man and a member of the Sanhedrin, but became a disciple of Jesus and offered for Him his new tomb, excavated in the rock. He went personally to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus: a true work of mercy carried out with great courage. For Christians, burial is an act of pity but also of great faith. We lay in the tomb the body of our loved ones, in the hope of their resurrection. This is a rite that remains very strongly felt and in our people, and which finds special resonance in this month of November, dedicated in particular to the remembrance of and prayer for the departed”.

“To pray for the dead is, first and foremost, a sign of acknowledgement of their witness and of the good they have done. It is a thanksgiving to the Lord for having given them to us, and for their love and friendship. The Church prays for the dead in a special way during the Holy Mass. … A simple and effective remembrance, full of meaning, since it entrusts our loved ones to God’s mercy. Let us pray with Christian hope that they be with Him in paradise, awaiting that we meet again in that mystery of love that we do not understand, but which we know to be true as it is promise that Jesus has made to us”.

However, the remembrance of the departed faithful must not make us forget to pray also for the living, who along with us every day face the trials of life. “The need for this prayer is even more evident if we place it in the light of the profession of faith that says, ‘I believe in the communion of saints’. It is the mystery that expresses the beauty of the mercy that Jesus has revealed to us. Indeed, the communion of saints indicates that we are all immersed in the life of God and live in His love. All of us, living and dead, are in communion, that is, in the community of those who have received Baptism, who have been nourished by the Body of Christ, and form part of the great family of God”.

Continued on next page
“How many different ways there are to pray for our neighbour!” he exclaimed. “They are all valid and accepted by God if they are done with the heart”. He went on to mention mothers and fathers who bless their children in the morning and the evening; the prayer for the sick; and silent intercession in many difficult situations. In this context, he spoke about a businessman who attended Mass at Santa Marta yesterday, who is forced to close down his factory as business is not good. The businessman was troubled as he did not want to leave more than fifty families without an income, even though he could declare the company bankrupt and avert difficulties for himself. “This is a good Christian”, said Francis, “who goes to Mass to pray that the Lord help him find a way out, not only for him, but for the other fifty families. This is a man who knows how to pray with the heart and with works; he knows how to pray for others”.

The Pope also spoke about another form of prayer, of thanksgiving for good news regarding a friend, a relative or a colleague. “This too is praying for others”, he said. “Thanking God when things go well. At times, as St. Paul tells us, ‘we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words’. Let us open, then, our heart, so that the Holy Spirit, seeing the desires that reside in its depths, may purify them and bring them to fruition. However, for us and for others, let us always ask that God’s will be done, as in the Lord’s Prayer, since His will is surely the greatest good, the good of a Father Who never abandons us”.

“Concluding this catechesis on mercy, let us pledge to pray for each other so that the corporal and spiritual works of mercy increasingly become our style of life. The catechesis, as I said at the beginning, ends here. We have looked at all fourteen works of mercy, but mercy continues and we must exercise it in these fourteen ways”.

Listen

“Jesus is the reason for the season.”

http://www.bostoncatholic.org/witnesstolife/

Closing of the Holy Door of St. Peter’s Basilica
20 November 2016

Jubilee of Mercy

Hope

Winter 2016