



Monday, January 14, 2019

Dear Confirmation Catechists,

This year as candidates prepare for the sacrament of Confirmation, it is my hope that they know and understand and can articulate and live out the works of mercy.

I share with you the reflection of Pope Francis, himself such a witness of the mercy and compassion of God:

"It is my burning desire that, during this Jubilee, the Christian people may reflect on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. It will be a way to reawaken our conscience, too often grown dull in the face of poverty. And let us enter more deeply into the heart of the Gospel where the poor have a special experience of God's mercy. Jesus introduces us to these works of mercy in his preaching so that we can know whether or not we are living as his disciples.

We cannot escape the Lord's words to us, and they will serve as the criteria upon which we will be judged: whether we have fed the hungry and given drink to the thirsty, welcomed the stranger and clothed the naked, or spent time with the sick and those in prison (cf. Mt 25:31-45).

Moreover, we will be asked if we have helped others to escape the doubt that causes them to fall into despair and which is often a source of loneliness; if we have helped to overcome the ignorance in which millions of people live, especially children deprived of the necessary means to free them from the bonds of poverty; if we have been close to the lonely and afflicted; if we have forgiven those who have offended us and have rejected all forms of anger and hate that lead to violence; if we have had the kind of patience God shows, who is so patient with us; and if we have commended our brothers and sisters to the Lord in prayer.

In each of these 'little ones,' Christ himself is present. His flesh becomes visible in the flesh of the tortured, the crushed, the scourged, the malnourished, and the exiled ... to be



acknowledged, touched, and cared for by us. Let us not forget the words of Saint John of the Cross: 'as we prepare to leave this life, we will be judged on the basis of love.'"

(Misericordiae Vultus, § 15)

The Service of Catechetics has materials to assist you with short lesson plans, videos, and more for a variety of age groups. I encourage you to contact Koreen Hrizai, coordinator, directly for materials or to share ideas and lessons.

Sincerely in Christ,

+ Albert LeGatt

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Archbishop of St. Boniface