

Service Commission Report

Barbara K. Seamandel, Service Commission Chair

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More Ideas for Year of Mercy

I am going to focus on a different approach to the subject of service. All of the parishes have done a wonderful job of financially supporting many groups. In this year of mercy, I will give you some choices on how to serve your parishes with their needs. Hope you will find this helpful in your efforts. First is a short article by Chris Heiderscheidt, NCCW Service Commission Chair, on the RESPITE program.

Begin Respite in Your Parish

Part of our focus this year has been to revive and update the Respite Program NCCW began in 1982. Some members of the Service Commission Committee have been busy updating the Respite Brochure (FREE) and the Respite Manual available for \$10. These resources are now available for you on the [NCCW website](#) and through the NCCW store.

Did you know that only 5 percent of those over age 65 are cared for in nursing homes? While it is a rewarding act of love to care for a family member, one can become exhausted, not only physically but emotionally and mentally. NCCW Respite Program makes it possible for families to continue this act of love by offering the caregiver some time off.

I encourage ALL of you to prayerfully consider implementing the RESPITE program in your parishes. NCCW chose the acronym: RESPITE to stand for Renewal: Spiritual/Temporal. Another way to think of it is that we are caring for those who care for others. What a wonderful opportunity to live out the Gospel as Jesus asks us to love one another.

Wondering how to begin?

Simply follow these steps:

- 1.) Identify the need in your area.
- 2.) Read the Respite Manual.

- 3.) Select a Respite Project Coordinator.
- 4.) Recruit volunteers.
- 5.) All volunteers must go through their Arch/Diocesan required clearing and background checks and go through training.
- 6.) Yearly, Liability/Volunteer Insurance is paid to NCCW for volunteers to be protected through an insurance policy as low as \$3 a person.

Respite is really a double act of mercy as you take time to sit and visit the elderly while giving the caregiver some time for themselves. What could be more fitting during this Year of Mercy than starting a Respite program in your parish?

And the king will say to them in reply, "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these, least brothers of mine, you did for me." —Matthew 25:40.

Mercy in Motion

Our actions need to authentically reflect God's Mercy. As the Jubilee Year of Mercy continues, here are some resources and reminders on how to show others the mercy of God. Visit the USCCB website of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) at

<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/new-evangelization/jubilee-of-mercy/index.cfm> to explore the different ways that you can live out that mercy every day!!!

Corporal Works of Mercy are found in the teaching of Jesus and give us a model for how we should treat all others, as if they were Christ in disguise.

Spiritual Works of Mercy guide us to "help our neighbor in their spiritual needs." (USCCA)

Mercy with Francis enables us to explore the "Jubilee" signs of mercy that Pope Francis has done do throughout the year.

Meditations on Mercy help us reflect more deeply on God's call to mercy through these monthly scripture reflections.

Moments of Mercy give short monthly suggestions for working mercy in your everyday life.

Looking for a book selection to help with reflecting on mercy? Pope Francis: A Guide to God's Time offers an introduction to the biblical themes Pope Francis sees as being more important and show the Pope living what he preaches, bringing God's love and mercy to those in need (also available in Spanish).

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