

# CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

## **Feed the Hungry. Give Drink to the Thirsty.**

These two Works of Mercy start out in the home, from the hot meal on the table or the cup of water for a child, and extend to the community. The unemployed, the elderly, and the sick benefit from care programs, but these programs are ineffective without food donations, cash contributions, and volunteered time.

## **Clothe the Naked.**

Our Savior tells us that if a person has two coats he should give one away. Perhaps the need isn't apparent in the immediate neighborhood but it does exist. Excess clothing can be donated.

## **Ransom the Captive.**

Helping captives or the imprisoned is not limited to joining prison volunteer organization. Some people are imprisoned within the walls of their own homes—the handicapped, the sick, the elderly, the new mother. For them, the ransom may be a visit, a shopping trip, a helping hand once a week, or merely a short chat on the telephone.

## **Shelter the Homeless.**

The unemployed living in cars or abandoned tunnels and caves are in desperate straits and those who help them need both material and spiritual support. The refugees transplanted to a strange country, the building tenants forced out of their apartment by fire or eviction, the battered wife or unwed mother on her own are all homeless in need of shelter, companionship, help in resettlement.

## **Visit the Sick.**

Hospital visits or the semi-weekly trudges to the nursing home are often viewed with chagrin. But put yourself in their shoes. A short visit to a hospital room, a neighbor's bedside, or the local nursing home is time consuming, but for the person being visited, that time which is given is very precious.

## **Bury the Dead.**

Plague-ridden bodies no longer litter the streets. Modern funeral practices have taken the details of caring for the dead off our hands. But the personal expression of sympathy, the hug of handshake at the vigil or funeral service, the donation of food, are important to the grieving.