

8.13.2016

THE SECOND MILE

The Underlying Spirit of the Works of Mercy

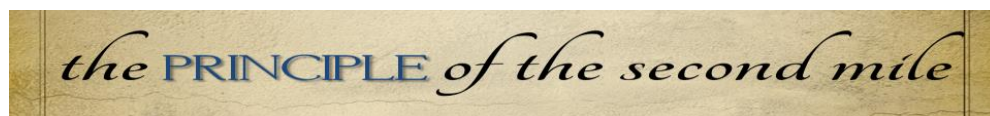
We continue discussing the Works of Mercy as part of the announced Year of Mercy. This meeting will address the underlying principles and tenets of the entire body of the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy.

We often hear the phrase “Going the Second Mile” in our modern conversation, but it actually has its roots in the time of Christ in the Roman Empire. During that time, the Romans had conquered much of the known world and ruled with an iron fist.

By Roman law, a Roman soldier could compel subjects in those conquered lands to carry his backpack for him. This law had an interesting twist when wed with the Hebrew law, culture and rituals in then Israel. Jesus developed it even more as exposed in the Sermon on the Mount.

The concept of “Going the Second Mile” is Core to our Christianity and living a life of excellence. More so, it is central to living a life that is “well lived”. There is an implied principal that we must give our best to make our world and every life we touch Better Than It Was when we first encountered it.

More so, the Second Mile represents a much higher Law – the law of kindness, generosity and love. This is God’s Law.

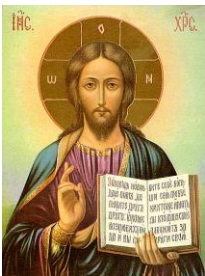


There are 5 key strategies that help us to embrace and live God’s Law and thus fulfill the mission each man has been given. The strategies are based in the everyday hum-drum of life. Most of us take life for granted until there is a crisis. However, we need to start thanking God every day for what you do have right now in your life, with your health, with your job, and with your children. We must then finish the rest of the sentence with thanking God for many additional things that you have personally. We must thank the Lord for all the things that He gives you that you do not even think about.

For example, when you go outside tomorrow, start praising God for all that you see with just your eyes. Once you start doing this, you can then go in your home and start praising God for all that you have inside, like electricity, furniture, food, and clothes that we take for granted every day.

The Attitude of Gratitude is the basis for allowing yourself to grow in excellence.

What happens to our lives when we make a shift in our attitude and admit that Jesus is our Savior and invite Him into our heart of hearts? Let us listen attentively to the wisdom found in Holy Scripture, our Catechism and in Modern Comment.



Matthew 5:41 – Jesus Commands Us

Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go with him for two miles.

Isaiah 55:8-9 – A much higher Law– kindness, generosity and love.

The Lord said, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, my thoughts higher than your thoughts.”

1 Corinthians 15:57-58 – A Promise of Victory

But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be firm, steadfast, always fully devoted to the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

The Word of the Lord



Catechism

2447 – Life in Christ

The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities. 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.



Modern Comment

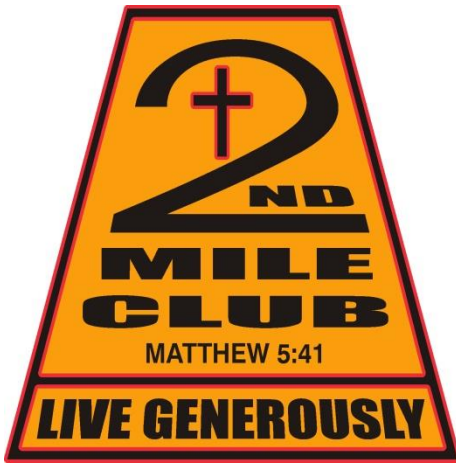
THE SECOND MILE: The underlying spirit of the Works of Mercy

The root of the phrase “Going the Second Mile” is from the time of Christ in the Roman Empire. During that era, the Romans had conquered much of the known world and ruled with an iron fist. By Roman law, a Roman soldier could compel subjects in those conquered lands to carry his backpack, or “load” for him for one mile – JUST one mile. The Israelites resented the oppressive rule of Roman Occupation and would obey the law by going JUST one mile, but not one step more.

The Hebrews followed many rules that were based in the Ten Commandments and other laws that the Lord had given them. The leaders and priests also added their own cultural rules and rituals. Most pious Jews lived according to the full LETTER OF THE LAW and were highly critical of those who did not. They did EXACTLY what was mandated by law...going the First Mile. What they failed to understand was the underlying spirit of the law...the Second Mile.

Jesus spoke on the Sermon of the Mount stating, “Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go with him for two miles”. He was using an illustration that was extremely familiar to his audience. They were aware of the Roman Law requiring them to go one mile, and they deeply resented it.





Jesus told us that not only should we obey the law, but go even further and do it cheerfully. Jesus' message was met with shock and resistance. The Romans certainly did not deserve the Second Mile.

The Second Mile represents a much higher law – The law of Kindness, Generosity and Love. Following the Lord means following His ways which are different than our own.

Going the Second Mile means living above the norm, treating people with kindness and respect regardless of what they deserve. It is not enough to simply do what is required. In order to find joy in our lives, we must give generously of ourselves beyond what is expected of us.

Video Presentation: The Second Mile

Questions to Focus on:

1. What part of this message spoke most clearly to you?

2. In your life today, what would be an example of going the Second Mile?

3. What Work of Mercy speaks to you when asked to go the Second Mile? See list of all 14 Works of Mercy on last page.

“Be humble in this life that God may raise you up in the next. Be truly moderate and do not punish or condemn anyone uncontrollably. Be gentle so that you may never oppose justice. Be honorable so that you may not voluntarily bring disgrace upon anyone.” St. Stephen of Hungary – August 16

BTIW - BETTER THAN IT WAS

We can bring to life Excellence in our lives by making a commitment to adhere to the following Five Strategies for going the Second Mile

1. I will always strive for excellence in everything I do and remember that I may not be able to make it perfect, but I can make it BTIW.
2. When I touch another person's life in anyway, I will try to add value to them and make their day BTIW.
3. Everytime I enter and leave a room, car or other space, I will leave the place and everyone in it BTIW.
4. When I clean, reorganize or change something, I will do my best to make it BTIW.
5. As I respond to problems, needs and circumstances, I will try to make a positive difference and make my world BTIW.



Saints are holy people, just regular human persons who lived extraordinary lives. Saints responded to God's invitation to use their unique gifts. They are teachers and guides for us. God calls each one of us to lead a life of exceptional holiness.

Saint Stephen's devotion to the Blessed Mother was all consuming. In 1038, when Saint Stephen was about to die, he summoned his bishops and nobles, and told them to choose his successor. He urged them to nurture and cherish the Catholic Church, which was still a tender plant in Hungary, to follow justice, humility, and charity, to be obedient to the laws, and to show at all times a reverent submission to the Holy See.

Then, raising his right hand and eyes towards heaven, he said: "O Queen of Heaven, Majestic Restorer of a desperate world, to Thy care I commend the Holy Church, my people, and my realm, and my own departing soul." In effect, Stephen asked the Virgin Mary to be the Queen of Hungarians. Saint Stephen died on his favorite feast day, the feast of the Assumption.

There had been many miracles of Healing at King Stephen's tomb after his death. He was canonized in 1083. His body was dug up and moved to a more fitting place of honor. It was noted by all present, that his body gave off a sweet smell of roses during the entire effort. The right hand, known simply as the Holy Right, with which he invoked Our Lady's protection has remained incorrupt after death when the rest of his body had returned to dust. The hand is beautifully preserved, remains as a relic in the Basilica of Saint Stephen in the heart of Budapest. To this day the Holy Right is a sign that Mary accepted his offer.

Men's Group Calendar

8/27/2016	Leadership Meeting	8 AM Sacred Heart Library
9/10/2016	Men's Group	7 AM Mass
9/24/2016	Leadership Meeting	8 AM Sacred Heart Library
10/8/2016	Men's Group	7 AM Mass
10/22/2016	Leadership Meeting	8 AM Sacred Heart Library
11/12/2016	Men's Group	7 AM Mass



A Man who never quits is Never Defeated.

Heavenly Father, Help me to understand that I am freed from the enemy and the control of sin in my life, I ask for Your forgiveness for all my sins and that I can rest in You who will set me free. Thank you. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

May God Bless You.
St. Hilary Men's Group

ACTION PLAN

This week I will do my best to listen to God's will in my life by:

- Creating a daily prayer practice.
- Seeking God in prayer and being quiet in His presence.
- Paying more attention to God's Blessings in my life.
- Asking Jesus for help in becoming a better servant.
- Going the Second Mile.



12/8/2015 – 11/20/2016

The Corporal Works of Mercy	The Spiritual Works of Mercy
To feed the hungry.	To instruct the ignorant.
To give drink to the thirsty.	To counsel the doubtful.
To clothe the naked.	To admonish sinners.
To harbor the harborless.	To bear wrongs patiently.
To visit the sick.	To forgive offenses willingly.
To ransom the captive.	To comfort the afflicted.
To bury the dead.	To pray for the living and the dead



Lord, God and Savior, by your love you draw me to yourself. Forgive me – the sinner that I am, and fill me with every good thing, not withholding even the gift of your most beloved son. Come dwell in my heart.

Send forth your Holy Spirit to guide me in your path. Make me worthy of your love, and teach me how to forgive as you forgave.

Thank you for your tender mercies. I ask you to bless my family, friends and those who I meet in my comings and goings. Where there is joy, give them continued joy. Where there is pain or sorrow, give them your peace and mercy. Where there is self-doubt, release in them a renewed confidence. Fill their every need with your Holy Grace.

You are indeed my Lord, God and Savior. Amen



"Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go with him for two miles." Matthew 5:41