

ARE YOU READY?

June 15

DEVOTIONAL

Responding to human need
by loving service



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Devotion for June 15th – MONTH of MISSION

You can find all five Marks of Mission here -

<https://www.anglican.ca/ask/faq/marks-of-mission/>

Join us on Tuesday at 1pm with this Zoom link for the Spark Session where you can discuss the devotion and the topic of this devotional.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85108746713?pwd=ejVLaUxFS0VsQlNlMDJRRVBUbURGVVBT09>

Meeting ID: 851 0874 6713

Passcode: 175242

DEVOTIONAL

Mark of Mission #3

“To Respond to human need by loving service”

By Rev. Matthew Perreault

Then the King will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me. Matthew 25:34-36

One cannot read the Scriptures of either the Old or New Testaments without concluding God’s extreme concern for the needs of our neighbours. In the Old Testament, we are given the Law, which is summarized as loving God and loving our neighbour. In the New Testament, we are called further, as our Lord commands those who would follow him to love others, “just as I have loved you.” (St. John 13:35)

In Holy Scripture, in the life of the early Church, and ever since, the giving of alms, which linguistically is rooted in mercy, has been a key Christian principle. Almsdeeds, that is to say works of mercy, are one of the key ways that this imperative of loving service has been categorized. Motivated by the virtues of charity (love), mercy, and justice to alleviate the misfortunes of another’s body or soul, the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, rooted in Scripture, were used by

the Church as helpful illustrations of how every Christian is called to loving service to others, for God's sake.

The seven corporal works of mercy, rooted in the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ, are: feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, sheltering the homeless, visiting the imprisoned, and burying the dead. Each of these Biblical acts of mercy is rooted in the love of God for humanity, and responds to the basic human needs of our brothers and sisters.

What does it look like today, of our love of God and neighbour, to perform these works of mercy? God calls us to use the talents and treasure he has given each of us (Parable of the Talents, St. Matthew 25:14-30), and works of mercy often involve both of these. It involves opening our eyes to the need of our brothers and sisters, and may involve the use of our time or our finances to support organizations that provide food, drink and shelter to those who go without, donating clothing, especially in winter, for those in need, visiting long-term care homes or phoning someone who is shut-in due to ill-health, supporting prison ministry programmes to visit those who are incarcerated, or sending a card to the family of someone who has died.

As an act of virtue, borne out of our love for God, our obedience to Christ, and our love of neighbour, as Scripture tells us, will not merely alleviate the need of a brother, but will bear spiritual fruit for us (Sirach 29:10-11), and bears faithful witness to those whose needs are met.

See also: St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II-II.32.

<https://www.anglicannews.org/features/2020/02/the-five-marks-of-mission-three-to-respond-to-human-need-by-loving-service.aspx>