

# The Corporal Works of Mercy

## Visit the Imprisoned

### Food for Thought

“For I was in prison and you visited me.”  
– *The Gospel of Matthew 25:36*

### Daily Life

- Learn about Catholic Restorative Justice Ministries in Santa Rosa at [www.restorejusticesantarosa.org](http://www.restorejusticesantarosa.org)
- Learn more about Get On The Bus, a program that helps children visit incarcerated parents at <https://crjw.us/programs/get-on-the-bus/>
- Learn about Sr. Helen Prejan and her ministry at <https://www.sisterhelen.org/>
- Pray for inmates and inmates’ families, because they are suffering too.
- Learn more about the plight of those unjustly imprisoned for political and religious beliefs, as well as how to advocate for their release.
- Guard against racism; practice inclusion, not exclusion.
- Be mindful that we are all members of the human race and equal in God’s eyes.

### For Further Consideration

- YouTube video of Kerry Weber discussing this Corporal Work of Mercy: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lbvRScmaM1M>
- Called to Heal the Brokenhearted: Stories from Kairos Prison Ministry by William H. Barnwell, published by University Press of Mississippi (2016)
- Redeeming a Prison Society: A Liturgical and Sacramental Response to Mass Incarceration by Amy Leivad, published by Fortress Press (2014)
- Fr. Greg Boyle TEDTalk on compassion <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ipROkWt1Fkc> (Learn more about his ministry at: <https://homeboyindustries.org/>)

## Questions to Contemplate

Read Mercy in the City by Kerry Weber

In what ways may we be imprisoned? How do our fears / resentments / feelings of guilt / feelings of hate imprison us? We don’t need to be behind bars to feel trapped in a certain way of thinking or acting that separates us from God. Can you think of an experience in your life that has left you feeling this way?

- (Chapter 20): How do you react to Fr. Williams comments about the “goodness” he sees in the inmates on death row? How does this fit with our general view of convicted murderers?
- (Chapter 20): Fr. Williams expresses to Kerry about how the perspective of being in San Quentin changes the way one experiences Scripture. Can you think of some other points of view that might alter one’s interpretation of the Bible and the teachings of Jesus?
- (Chapter 21): Near the end of the chapter, Kerry notes that she had almost forgotten that she was speaking with convicts, saying, “I had arrived ready to visit prisoners, but if I’m honest, I did not arrive ready to visit people.” How does this statement make you feel? What do you think about our tendency as a society to define people by their worst actions, rather than by their best?