

MARY  
ICON OF GOD'S MERCY



## CÉAD MÍLE Fáilte / WELCOME

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### A SHORT HISTORY OF THE ICON

The icon of Our Mother of Perpetual Help started life many centuries ago. We only get to know of it in the sixteenth century when an Italian merchant stole it from a church in Crete and brought it to his home in Rome. Years later, as he was dying, he told a friend about the picture and asked him to restore it to a church. The friend promised he would do so, but the friend's wife had fallen in love with the picture and would not part with it. In the end, it is said that Our Lady herself appeared to the woman's six-year-old daughter and told her to tell her mother that the picture of Holy Mary of Perpetual Help was to be placed in the church of St. Matthew, which was located between the two great basilicas of St. John Lateran and St. Mary Major. So now, at least, the icon had a name given it by Our Lady herself: Mother of Perpetual Help.

The girl's mother was hard to persuade but, eventually, on 27th March 1499, the picture was handed over to St. Matthew's church, where it remained in public veneration for the next 300 years. At one period, from 1739 to 1798, this church was in the charge of the Irish Augustinians who had fled from persecution in Ireland. Throughout these years locals and pilgrims came in great numbers to venerate the Mother of Perpetual Help and many miracles were attributed to her intercession.

In 1798 Rome had its own war and persecution. The church of St. Matthew was severely damaged and eventually abandoned. The Irish Augustinians found a new home in the church of St. Mary in Posterula. St. Matthew's was eventually levelled, and 50 years later, in 1855, the newly founded Redemptorist Congregation built a monastery and church on the site. But what had happened to the picture?

The Redemptorists got to know of its previous existence and reputation. They, too, wondered what had become of it. Then Providence took over. One of the first novices to join the Redemptorists in Rome was a young man called Michael Marchi. As a lad Michael had served Mass in the private chapel of the Augustinians in St. Mary Posterula. He told his superiors how an old brother there, Br Augustine Orsetti OSA, often spoke to him about the miraculous Perpetual Help picture that had been in St. Matthew's. And there it was, Orsetti told him, neglected and covered in dust, over the very altar in the monastery chapel where Michael served daily Mass. With this information, the Redemptorist Superior General, Fr Mauron, petitioned Pope Pius IX to let the picture return to the site where it had been venerated for 300 years. The Pope agreed and after careful restoration the icon of the Mother of Perpetual Help was once again exposed for public veneration on its original site, in the new church of St. Alphonsus on the Via Merulana. The date was 26th April 1866 and the Pope's words to Fr Mauron on handing over the icon were, "Make her known to the world."

## WHAT IS AN ICON?

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The word “icon” means simply “image.” It is an Eastern Christian way of making a representation of a religious subject like the Trinity or Christ or Mary or a saint. Icons are stylised, unlike Western images of Mary painted by great artists like Murillo or Raphael and many others. The icons were written mostly by unknown monks in an atmosphere of prayer and penance. They tried to express the fruits of their own prayer and meditation on the great mysteries of religion through their icons, which are more like sermons than pictures. Their aim was to help others who meditated on the icon to deepen their own faith and contemplation.

Everything in the icon is symbolic — the way the figures are facing, the dress, the colours and the background. The impression they are intended to produce in the onlooker is one of awe and reverence in the presence of the divine and mystical. The icon of the Mother of Perpetual Help belongs to a type or group of icons known as the *Hodegetria* icons, (*Hodegetria*, in Greek, means *She who shows the Way*) or Virgin of the Passion. The original, according to legend, was painted by St Luke and is lost. But that’s all the Lukan authorship is — a legend. Each icon in this tradition tells a story about the passion of Jesus. Mary is holding her child on her left arm. Angels carry the instruments of Christ’s passion. Mary is not looking at her child but at us with sorrowful glance and pleading eyes.



## MERCY IS THE LANGUAGE GOD SPEAKS

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### THE TEXT (Mark 6:30-34)

The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, “Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

### THE MESSAGE

Mercy is a language. It is the language that God speaks. It is not a language like English, Irish, French or Portuguese. No! Mercy is language of the heart. It is a language of gestures and action, of showing, rather than saying, how deeply you care, how much you want things to be better, how much you wish the pain would go away.

If that’s true, then the job of the Christian in today’s world is to become bilingual. Jesus calls all of us to become fluent speakers of the language of mercy! How do you do this? It’s like with every other language — you practice. You look for every opportunity to use your new language, and you try it out! Sometimes you’ll make mistakes, but it’s better to try than not to try. Sometimes you will make yourself and others laugh with your stumbling and fumbling, but you’ll laugh together and bonds will be created. Mercy is the language that God speaks. Mercy is also the way God hears. And the way God sees. God hears with ears of mercy and compassion, and God sees with eyes of mercy and compassion.

Today, God hears the cries of suffering people through your ears. God sees through your eyes.



And God expresses mercy and compassion through your heart and your hands. Wherever people are crying today, God places his own crazy, wild, abundant love and compassion in the hearts of people like you and me. It is up to us to listen, to hear the cries and the need behind them, and to respond with compassion by doing some simple, yet meaningful actions, like feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and visiting the sick. You will look at this little list, and maybe say, “Well, yes, I give to food to the poor and even give away clothing sometimes, and I have visited a sick neighbour now and then — but that’s really not so much.”

Listen with your heart. There are many ways to be hungry, and people are hungry for more than food. Have you ever spent time telling stories to a child? Have you ever helped an adult to learn a new skill? If you have done this, you have met a human hunger in a practical way, and filled it. In doing so, you have spoken God's language of mercy. Look around you. Some people are physically naked, or at least, don't have adequate clothing. Others are stripped, not of physical clothing, but of their dignity or self-worth. If you have ever helped someone get back up on their feet after a set-back, you have spoken God's language of mercy, and shared God's compassion with someone in need.

Mercy is the language God speaks. Our challenge today is to become bilingual in God's language of mercy and compassion, and to share God's crazy love with crazy abandon in a world that desperately needs to know and experience this kind of love.



#### THE ICON: MARY'S FACE

Turn and gaze more closely on the face of Mary. What do you see? She is sad — desperately sad. Her almond-shaped, honey-coloured eyes under her thin eyebrows are serene and composed, but so sad, so heart breaking. She is looking at you, because today her sadness is for you. She sees your fears, your pain, your loneliness, and she says, "I understand; I want to help you. That is my vocation. I am your *Mother of Perpetual Help*. Put your trust in me and in God's mercy." Today, stay quietly contemplating Mary's face. Let her see into your thoughts, into your soul. Hold nothing back. She is your mother.

#### A PRAYER

O *Mother of Perpetual Help*, I recommend to your compassionate heart all whose hearts are breaking. On their behalf, offer to your Son the tears you shed on Calvary and pray for their healing and peace. Obtain for all of us a faithful and compassionate heart like yours that we may bring consolation and hope to those who are oppressed by pain and grief. *Mother of Mercy*, pray for us. Amen.

## SET FREE TO DREAM GOD'S DREAM

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### The Text (Luke 2:8-20)

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. [ . . . ] And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, *“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!”*

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger [ . . . ]

### THE MESSAGE

Mercy is the language that God speaks. People say that you are really fluent in a language when you get the jokes and when you dream in the language. What a beautiful thought — that we would know that we spoke God's language of mercy fluently if we dreamed as God dreams!



Our dreamer God is a God of surprises. The best and most amazing surprise of our God was to take on human flesh in a stable in Bethlehem, to a poor, refugee couple and among the poorest of the poor, God became human as a baby. The Good News is that God chooses not to remain in some heaven far, far away, but chooses to live with us, to walk with us, and to experience all that we experience. God took on human flesh in Bethlehem, and God continues to take on human flesh every time one of us, his people, chooses to surprise another person by giving drink to the thirsty; harbouring the harbourless, ransoming the captive and burying the dead.

God's mercy is all about surprising people by giving them second chances, third chances, and one hundredth chances! God's mercy has no bounds. When we learn to speak God's language of mercy, we learn to look for ways to surprise God's people, too! To do this, we need to look below the surface, to use our inner eyes, the eyes that are most like God's own eyes, and discern our surprising responses to the needs that we see.

When we look below the surface with the eyes of God, we see easily that to visit the sick is not only about going to a hospital or a nursing home for an afternoon visit. There are sicknesses that are not of the body, but of the spirit. We visit the sick when we walk into homes torn by anger and abuse, and give time and hope to the children of that home, children who need to be shown other ways, better, healthier way, of living and interacting. We visit the sick when we walk with a friend who struggles with alcoholism, and encourage him or her to find appropriate help. In this, God's mercy is made manifest anew in our world.

Who is captive in our world today? Look around you. God takes on human flesh and surprises people anew when you reach out to the person enslaved by drugs, or offer a word of hope or kindness to the sex trade worker sitting tired and alone in the coffee shop. And what of burying the dead? There are many more ways to do this than to bury a human corpse! Perhaps today we most surprisingly and fittingly bury the dead when we allow old hatreds to die, when we put aside enmities that have torn families apart for generations, and when we let go of prejudice and pre-conceived ideas of how others are to be.

Mercy is the language God speaks. Our challenge today is to become bilingual in God's language of mercy and compassion, and to share God's crazy love with crazy abandon in a world that desperately needs to know and experience this kind of love.

#### **THE ICON: THE CHILD'S FACE**

The longer we look at the child's face the more captivated we become. This is not the face of an infant a mother could carry so lightly on one arm. His body may be small, but his face is that of an older child, well chiselled and controlled, showing sadness and compassion like his mother's. We can never guess what went on behind those striking eyes. He was, after all, a true human child. When he prayed with his parents or sat silent alone, what were his thoughts and questions?



#### **A PRAYER**

Mother of Perpetual Help, your Son was the Son of God become human like us. The Father entrusted him to you and you mothered him through his childhood, enabling him to grow in wisdom, age and grace. O Mary my mother, help me to live my life in gratitude for what you and your Son endured for me. Amen.

## WITH THE LORD THERE IS MERCY AND REDEMPTION

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### THE TEXT (LUKE 19:1-10)

[Jesus] entered Jericho and was passing through it. A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax-collector and was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today." So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. All who saw it began to grumble and said, "He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner." Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much." Then Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost."

### THE MESSAGE

Redemption. What comes to you mind when you hear that word? Some of us think of redeeming vouchers to buy groceries or other items. Some think of redeeming the prize vouchers that we find on the side of a cereal box. Some of us think about Jesus the Redeemer. And if we do, we often stop thinking pretty quickly, because we have been taught that the redemption offered by Jesus has to do with Heaven and eternal life. That's true, of course! But the Good News is that it's not the only truth!

Zacchaeus had no life and no possibility in the community of Jericho. He had money. Yet he had no friends, no community and no hope. Enter Jesus. He surprised everybody by seeing the man Zacchaeus, rather than the hated tax collector. He invited himself to a meal at Zacchaeus' home.

In doing this, he walked into Zacchaeus' life and changed it forever, for the better. Jesus blessed Zacchaeus, and gave him hope.

Who are the Zacchaeuses in your world? Who is out there who has had their hope ripped away from them by death or abandonment or some other circumstance? Who can you see who is judged harshly by the community because of their occupation, or some sin of their past, or the company they keep? Look around you with the eyes of mercy. Who do you see?

And once you see, how can you surprise them and the community by sharing God's mercy? Mercy might look like a handshake. It might look like a smile. It might look like giving a new pair of shoes to a homeless woman or an umbrella to a man on the street. It might look like walking into a sandwich shop with a student far from home

and buying a lunch. It might look like teaching a man how to read, or pointing him in the direction of someone who can.

You choose to teach that man to read. You take him from the captivity of illiteracy to the freedom of being able to read. For what? You open doors. You give him options. This is the freedom that God wants for all his children, the freedom of having options. You give new shoes to a homeless woman. You take her from discomfort to comfort, from being wet to being dry. For what reason? You give her options. She can walk places she could not before. She can choose to keep the shoes or give them away to someone in greater need.

We are given many, many chances to share in and show forth the crazy love of God. With the Lord, there is mercy, and fullness of redemption. Go, and do likewise.

### THE ICON: THE CHILD'S SANDAL

The writer of the icon imagines that Jesus is resting in his mother's arms when suddenly he is disturbed by a kind of "vision" or nightmare. His head is turned towards two angels who are showing him the instruments of his passion. While still staring at the "vision," he instinctively clings to his mother for protection. His body recoils, causing his right foot to jerk under the left foot, shaking his sandal free and exposing the sole of his foot. And if further evidence is needed to confirm the lesson the child is meant to teach us, look closely at his halo and see the crossbeams and headpiece of a cross outlined in red. Yet Jesus is serene in the safety of his mother's secure embrace.



### A PRAYER

Mother of Perpetual Help, I bring to you today all the suffering of the world — my own and everyone else's. I give over to you all my pains and anxieties, my fears and my doubts.

## MERCY FOR THOSE WHO ARE HURTING

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### THE TEXT (JOHN 20:19,24-31)

[ . . . ] A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

### THE MESSAGE

Thomas the Apostle often gets a bad rap. We call him "Doubting Thomas," and we also call "Doubting Thomas" anybody who does not believe without questioning. But when we do this, we fail to see that Jesus offered a great gift to Thomas. Rather than simply chastise Thomas for his lack of belief, Jesus invites Thomas to touch his wounds, to put his hands into the holes left in his body by the nails, the spear and the crown of thorns. What Jesus offers to Thomas is real "com-passion," an actual chance to share in his passion by touching its reality. Having touched the wounds and having felt the raw, open flesh, Thomas could no longer doubt that this was really and truly his Lord. And he could not doubt how much his Lord had suffered for him.

Down through the centuries, Jesus continues to offer his disciples the invitation to see the marks



of suffering on his body. Whenever we see a refugee child lying on a beach, the body of Christ still suffers, and the rest of the body of Christ still weeps tears of compassion. Whenever we see missionaries imprisoned, tortured or put to death for the witness of their faith, the body of Christ continues to suffer, and the rest of the body of Christ is still moved with compassion. Whenever mother is tired and drained after a hard day at work and finds no support at home, the body of

Christ suffers. But whenever her friend drops by with a meal and a listening ear, the compassion of Christ is felt. Whenever an old man comes home to an empty room and cries tears of loneliness, the body of Christ still suffers. But if a neighbour drops by for a game of cards to pass the long night, the compassion of Christ is felt.

What is Jesus saying to us today? First of all, Jesus is telling us that he has walked every step we walk. He has shared every kind of suffering that we can experience — physical, emotional, social and mental. In Jesus, we have a brother who knows what we are going through, because he has been there. He walks beside us every step of the way.

You and I may not see the Resurrected Christ the way Thomas did. But we do meet the suffering Jesus every day — sometimes in ourselves and in our own suffering, and sometimes in the mental, physical or emotional anguish of family members or friends. You and I meet Jesus every day in the people around us who are suffering.

The Jesus who greeted Thomas was a Resurrected Jesus. He was risen, but he still bore on his body those wounds and marks of crucifixion. You and I live the life of the Resurrected Christ. We bear the marks of suffering, but they don't have to hold us back or hold us down. With Thomas, we can cry out, "My Lord and my God." We recognize him in one another. He lives in us.



#### THE ICON: GABRIEL AND MICHAEL

The archangel Gabriel is the one on the right dressed in purple. His name means "God is strong." He is holding a cross with four nails at the base of the cross. He seems to be holding the instruments of the passion with solemn reverence. The archangel Michael is on the left. His name means, "Who is like God?" He is holding the other instruments of the passion: a pot in which stands a soldier's lance and a stick with a sponge on it. He is holding them with the same reverence as Gabriel, for they are the symbols of Christ's victory and of our salvation.

#### A PRAYER

Whatever the misfortune, Mary, help us not to lose heart but to remain faithful and to unite our sorrow with yours and your Son's so that we may also come to share in the reward of his resurrection and live with you forever and ever. Amen.

## MERCY AND FORGIVENESS

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### THE TEXT (MATTHEW 18:21-35)

Then Peter came and said to [Jesus], "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

### THE MESSAGE

Have you ever been wronged by another human being? What was your first response? It may have been understanding and empathy for that person and sympathy for the wrongs that he or she has borne that brought them to hurt you. It may have been. Chances are, though, that your first response was to feel some degree of anger or resentment against the person who hurt you. You may even have wished — however fleetingly — that someone would hurt them as they have hurt you.

Most of us have learned something from these experiences. We have learned that acting out of anger, seeking vengeance for harm done, can harm

the other person. But causing harm is a very hollow victory. And holding on to anger, letting it fester inside us, harms us more than it harms the other. There are no winners in the game of vengeance. It poisons our outlook, destroys relationships, and makes us generally unpleasant people to be around. What's the answer? The only answer is to be practice mercy. When we practice mercy, we practice loving as God loves. We can never become merciful — we can only become more merciful, more loving, and more compassionate.

Some people think that forgiveness is easy, and that it just means saying "I forgive you." It's hardly ever that easy. Sometimes it takes a lot of healing and effort to make things right again. Some people



### THE ICON: THE COLOURS OF MARY'S CLOTHES

Mary is wearing a red tunic and a dark blue mantle. Red was the colour worn by virgins in the time of Christ and the dark blue of the mantle was the colour worn by mothers. These colours are pointing up Mary, the Virgin Mother. The title “Virgin Mother” emphasises the central mystery of Christian faith that Christ has only one Father in heaven and so is truly God, while having a human mother on earth and so is truly human. So we believe that by his birth Jesus has made us all his brothers and sisters and sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father.

think that to forgive means to forget. That’s not true, either. True forgiveness means remembering, but choosing to go beyond what was. You cannot change the past. You cannot take back words once they are spoken. But you can forgive and move beyond the harmful words or actions. Forgiving means coming to a place where you wish the best for the person who hurt you.

When Jesus tells us to forgive seventy times seven times, he is inviting us to live as people of mercy, imitating the limitless forgiveness offered by him to all of us. It’s an ideal, and it will take practice, but it’s the only way of living that makes sense. Overlook faults, and never let the sun go down on your anger. Be faithful to the Commandments and to their heart, which is love — love of God and of one another.



### A PRAYER

Lord, in this jubilee year of mercy and forgiveness, help me to forgive even as I am forgiven. Take away every desire to hurt those who have wronged me. Help me realise that you love them as much as you love me. Amen.

## MERCY ON THE MARGINS

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### THE TEXT (MATTHEW 2:1-5A.7-12)

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea." Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

### THE MESSAGE

Where do you find God? Few people are like the wise men from the East who easily recognized God in the baby born to a poor couple in a humble house. All too often, we neglect or forget to look for God in the smaller things — the singing of a bird, the sickness of a friend, success at a test in school, or the phone call at the perfect time. Some are cynical, like Herod, asking, almost without expecting an answer, "Where do I find this Messiah that you speak of?" Many people are looking at believers and asking that very question. What they don't realize is that God wants desperately to be found. If God is hiding, God is hiding in plain sight. And God will use anything and everything to get through to us the wondrous truth, that God is crazily in love with us, and will use any and all means available to get that through to us.

When the Twin Towers in New York City fell on 11th September 2001, many wondered where God was. How could a loving God have let this happen? Others, who wore different glasses, understood that God was indeed there. It was God who gave courage to those first responders who drove into the chaos, risking, and often sacrificing, their lives for the sake of others who were trapped and dying in the rubble. God was in the people who tried to help their fellow workers to escape. God was in the mothers, fathers, children and spouses who waited anxiously for word of their loved ones. For some, the word never came. God was in the reporters who stayed on the air long after it was humanly possible to do so, reassuring as many as possible that someone was watching with them, and waiting through the long hours of the night. God was in the kindness of strangers who took



in and fed and housed stranded travellers for days on end. God used all of these people to tell us all, "I am here! I am with you! See the love with which I shower you? You can't possibly miss me!"

God is there. Always! You will find God wherever that language of mercy is spoken. God can be found wherever hungry people are fed, or thirsty people receive drink, where the naked are clothed, where people who have nowhere else to go are sheltered, where the sick are visited, where captives are being freed and where the dead are being buried. God can be found where people are being taught, wherever people receive counselling, wherever afflicted people are comforted, wherever people forgive, or bear wrongs patiently, or help sinners to find better ways. Most of us have no trouble finding God in the good times, when things are going our way. We have a much harder time finding God in the difficult times. But God is there, doing everything possible to be found.

God loves to surprise and delight us, so keep your eyes open. If we seek him, we will find him. Just open your eyes.

#### THE ICON: THE STAR ON MARY'S BROW

On the blue mantle covering Mary's brow is a star of eight rays and to the left of it a smaller star in the shape of a cross. Like the star that led the Magi to Mary and her child in the crib, Mary is the Morning Star that has guided many to her Son, the light of the world.



#### A PRAYER

Mother of Perpetual Help, help us to meet one another in Christ your Son.

## MERCY IN ACTION

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### THE TEXT (LUKE 15:1-7)

Now all the tax-collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them." So he told them this parable: "Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbours, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who need no repentance."



### THE MESSAGE

You don't have to be an expert to observe that we live in a celebrity culture. This seems to be the age of the instant celebrity, often carried into the spotlight through a reality show. From sport figures, to heroes, to "American Idols," to corporate "dragons," to "weight loss programs success stories" the message is always: "If I did it, you can do it." As a society, we seem to want not to listen to speeches; we are compulsively compelled by real images, living examples, and role models when it comes to how to live our lives, the choices we make or whose example we perceive as worth following. Blessed Paul VI wrote back in 1975 that modern people "listen more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if [they do] listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses."

We are seeing the truth of this borne out in the amazing popularity of our present Pope, Francis. He is followed on Twitter by more people than most rock stars, and his words are relayed by people in social and mass media who, only recently, would never be known to quote a Pope! People are quite possibly more like to listen to what this man says because they are attracted

by the witness of his life and the example of simplicity, authenticity of lifestyle and boldness of leadership that he exudes. We listen because we are drawn. We are drawn by what we see.

As so many of us are now watching Pope Francis, others are watching us. People are watching those who profess to be Christian, and looking for a reason to believe, a reason to hope, a reason to re-commit, a reason to have joy, a reason to give. We are called to be mercy-in-action people, as our Pope shows us the way.

Mercy is the language that God speaks. So, it kind of stands to reason that, if you are looking for God, you would be smart to start looking where the language of mercy is spoken and where love is found. By his deeds, his example, Pope Francis is showing us the face of mercy, not his own mercy, but the mercy of God. What, then, does mercy look like? Mercy in action is the welcoming smile, rather than the judgmental frown. Mercy in action is the outstretched hand, rather than the crossed arms. Mercy in action is the unscripted kind word, rather than the lengthy speech. Mercy in action is the Holy Thursday spent among prisoners rather than in a full church among the committed believers. Mercy in action involves choice.

Mercy in action is a choice. It is a choice that you and I make, not once for a lifetime, but in every single encounter of every day. We are never merciful, but we do merciful things and, in so doing, take on ever more completely, the heart, the stance and the gaze. Where there is mercy and redemption, there is God. Where there is love, there is God. Where you are, God lives and is at work.



#### THE ICON: MARY'S HANDS

Look closely at Mary's hands. They are a woman's hands with their long tapering fingers, but they are the hands of a working mother. Her strong left hand gives her child firm support. With her right hand she lets him cling to her in his startled fright. But notice her fingers. They do not turn back to herself but point to her Son as if she were saying what she said at Cana, "Listen to him, do whatever he tells you — he is the way." For, though she is his mother, he is her Lord and Saviour as he is ours.

#### A PRAYER

Mother of Perpetual Help, I acknowledge you to be the Mother of my Redeemer and my mother also. I too need your help every day. I reach out my hands to you. Lift me up if I fall from grace. When I lose courage, hold me close to your heart. Mother of Perpetual Help, be my mother always.

## CROSSING THE THRESHOLD OF GOD'S MERCY

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### THE TEXT (JOHN 10:7-15)

So again Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away — and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep."

### THE MESSAGE

By his deeds, his example, Pope Francis is showing us the face of mercy, not his own mercy, but the mercy of God. Addressing participants in the plenary assembly of the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization at the Vatican on 29th May 2015, Pope Francis said this: "The New Evangelization is this: to be aware of the merciful love of the Father so that we also become instruments of salvation for our brothers." If he is right, then the New Evangelization is not about what you know — it's about who you know. The New Evangelization is about a relationship — a living, joy-filled, life-changing, mercy-pouring relationship with God the Father in and through Jesus Christ.

And now, we can go a step further. You and I are instruments of The New Evangelization, but we are not the central characters of it. The New Evangelization needs you and me to witness and model and call people into this living, joy-filled, life-changing, mercy-pouring relationship with



God the Father in and through Jesus Christ. But this is not our work. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. Only the Holy Spirit can open the hearts of people and transform them. It is always the Spirit that opens the minds of Jesus' disciples so they

can understand better what is required of them and how they are to give witness. Only the Holy Spirit can bring a human heart to awareness of the need for conversion and change and love. And here is the link between mercy and evangelization. Having experienced the mercy of Christ, people are predisposed to receive the person, the message, the hope, the joy. And, having experienced such powerful realities, who could do other than share them with others?

The image of the Good Shepherd is a great one to illustrate the link between Mercy and the New Evangelization. We follow a Good Shepherd who knows his flock and carries always about him the smell of his sheep. We are called to be good shepherds, to know our flock and carry about us the smell of our sheep. In your life, who is entrusted to your care? Who do you carry on your shoulders? Whose dreams, desires and heartaches do you know better than they may know them or be able to speak about them? Whose name is written on your heart? Today, know yourself to be both a disciple of the Good Shepherd and a good shepherd yourself. You know the smell of your sheep. You would cross the threshold of mercy and lay down your life for them.



#### **THE ICON: LOOKING FROM ANOTHER ANGLE**

Look at the icon and see how our eyes are directed to the three defining elements of the icon: the hands of Mary and Jesus; Mary's fingers pointing to her child; the child's eyes looking to his left and directing us to the angel Gabriel who is carrying the instruments of the passion. There is even a suggestion that the writer intended, through the angel Gabriel, to make a connection between the Annunciation and its conclusion on Calvary. At the Annunciation, Gabriel told Mary that she was to be the mother of the Messiah. Now Gabriel carries the cross and nails through which our salvation was achieved.

#### **A PRAYER**

Lord Jesus, I stand before the door of your mercy and knock. I bring with me no gifts, nothing but my sins and failures, my faith weakened by the allurements of this world, but above all, a contrite spirit. As your heart was opened by the soldier's lance, now open it once more to my plea for mercy and forgiveness. O Lord, be merciful to me a sinner!

## MARY — MOTHER OF MERCY

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### THE TEXT (JOHN 2:1-11)

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

### THE MESSAGE

In this story, in which Mary has a pretty major role, she really only has two lines. But they are important lines, and have a lot to teach us today. Mary's first line in this wedding story is, "They have no wine." Mary saw how the wine had run out. She was a mother. She knew how embarrassing this would be for the young couple being married, and their families. So, knowing that her Son could do something about this, she brought her concern to him. Mary didn't need to explain the situation or even ask Jesus to do anything; she just trusted and believed in him. She let Jesus know what was wrong, and then left it in his hands.

What does this reveal to us about God? Like Mary, God sees our human needs. They matter to God. There is no need to small and no burden too large to be placed at God's feet. It might be that we have no wine. It might also be that we're having difficulty in a relationship. It might be that we are

having trouble with a child. Maybe a relative is ill. Maybe you are having difficulty at school. You can take it all to Mary and all to God. If you go to Mary, you needs don't stay there. She ponders them, treasures them, and places them before her Son.

Mary's second line in the story is, "Do whatever he tells you." Mary addresses these words to the servants, and to us, the modern-day servants. She instructs us to do whatever Jesus tells us to do. Mary is the first disciple of her Son. She trusted him. And she trusted him to do the right thing. Mary's words encourage us to faith and trust in Jesus.

Notice how Mary does not tell her Son what to do. She just points out the problem and trust that he knows how to address it. Mary will point out the problem, and speak for you to her Son. But she will not tell him what to do. He will know what you need. God answers all prayers. And sometimes the answer is "yes, of course." Sometimes the answer



is, “not now.” And sometimes the answer is “no.” Mary was open to her Son’s discernment at Cana, and so must we be when we come to her today.

Mercy is the language that God speaks. It’s Mary’s language, too. You and I are called to become bilingual in mercy, fluent speakers of this beautiful language. Be mercy. Be mercy in the midst of a world that longs to hear and know the wondrous, transforming power of mercy. Mercy can change the world. It already has.

#### THE ICON: THE FULL ICON

On the two sides of the top of the icon you see the letters **ΜΡ** and **ΘΥ**, which are the first and last letters of the Greek words for Mother of God (**ΜΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΥ**) and to the right of the child’s head are the letters **ΙC** and **ΧC**, which are the first and last letters of the Greek words for Jesus Christ (**ΙΗΣΟΥC ΧΡΙCΤΟC**). Mary is saying, “Behold my Son!” And the entire icon is saying, “Behold your Mother!”

#### A PRAYER

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy; hail, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us, and after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!

## PRAYING WITH MARY

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### NOVENA PRAYER

Mother of Perpetual Help,  
with the greatest confidence  
we come before your holy picture  
to be inspired by the example of your life.  
We think of you at that moment when,  
full of faith and trust,  
you accepted God's call  
to be the mother of his Son.  
Help us, your children,  
to accept with joy our own calling in life.  
When you learned that your cousin  
Elizabeth was in need  
you immediately went to serve her  
and offer your help.  
Help us, like you,  
to be concerned for others.  
We think of you, Mother,  
at the foot of the cross.  
Your heart must have bled  
to see your Son in agony.  
But your joy was great  
when he rose from the dead,  
victorious over the powers of evil.  
Mother of Sorrows,  
help us through the trials and  
disappointments of life.  
Help us not to lose heart.  
May we share with you and your Son  
the joy of having courageously faced up  
to all the challenges of life.  
Amen.

### THANKSGIVING PRAYER

O Mother of Perpetual Help,  
with grateful hearts we join you  
in thanking God  
for all the wonderful things  
he has done for us,  
especially for giving us,  
Jesus, your Son, as our Redeemer.  
O God, our Creator,  
we thank you for the gift of life  
and all the gifts of nature:  
our senses and faculties,  
our talents and abilities.  
We thank you for creating us  
in your image and likeness  
and for giving us this earth  
to use and develop,  
to respect and cherish.  
Despite our failures,  
you continue to show your love for us today  
by increasing the life of your Spirit in us  
at the Eucharistic table.  
Finally, we thank you, loving Father,  
for giving us Mary,  
the Mother of your Son,  
to be our Mother of Perpetual Help.  
We are grateful for all the favours  
we have received through her intercession.  
We pray that those past favours  
may inspire us  
to greater confidence in your loving mercy  
and to seek the aid  
of our Mother of Perpetual Help. Amen.

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### **THE MAGNIFICAT**

My soul glorifies the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.  
He looks on his servant in her lowliness;  
henceforth all ages will call me blessed.  
The Almighty works marvels for me.  
Holy is his name.  
His mercy is from age to age  
on those who fear him.  
He puts forth his arm in strength  
and scatters the proud-hearted.  
He casts the mighty from their thrones  
and raises the lowly.  
He fills the starving with good things,  
sends the rich away empty.  
He protects Israel his servant,  
remembering his mercy,  
the mercy promised to our fathers,  
to Abraham and his ancestors for ever. Amen.

### **THE MEMORARE**

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary,  
that never was it known  
that anyone who fled to your protection,  
implored your help,  
or sought your intercession, was left unaided.  
Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto you,  
O Virgin of virgins, my Mother.  
To you do I come, before you I stand,  
sinful and sorrowful.  
O Mother of the Word Incarnate,  
despise not my petitions,  
but in your mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

### **A PRAYER TO MARY FROM THE OLD IRISH**

Holy Virgin Mary, you are the joy of my soul.  
You are the dew of heaven to relieve my parching  
thirst.  
You are the stream of God's grace,  
flowing out from his heart into mine.  
You are the light of my darkened soul.  
You are the healing of my wounds.  
You are the strength of my weakness.  
You are the consolation of my hardship.  
You are the easing of my trouble.  
You are the loosing of my chains.  
You are the help of my salvation.  
Hear me, I beg you, O Virgin most faithful.  
Take pity on me.  
Turn not away from my need.  
Let my tears move you.  
Let your own compassionate heart move you.  
I cry to you, Mother of God and lover of the  
human race.  
Hear me, poor sinner that I am, and grant me the  
grace I ask from you,  
O Mary, my Mother. Amen.

**1** **Ag Críost an síol**, ag Críost an fómhar;  
in iothlainn Dé go dtugtar sinn.  
Ag Críost an mhuir, ag Críost an t-iasc;  
i líonta Dé go gcastar sinn.

Ó fhás go haois, ó aois go bás,  
do dhá láimh, a Chríost, anall tharainn.  
Ó bhás go críoch nach críoch ach athfhás,  
i bParthas na ngrás go rabhaimid.

**2** **Let us build a house** where love can dwell  
and all can safely live,  
a place where saints and children tell  
how hearts learn to forgive.

Built of hopes and dreams and visions,  
rock of faith and vault of grace;  
here the love of Christ shall end divisions:  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where prophets speak,  
and words are strong and true,  
where all God's children dare to seek  
to dream God's reign anew.

Here the cross shall stand as witness

and a symbol of God's grace;  
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.

**3** **All that I am**, all that I do,  
All that I'll ever have,  
I offer now to you.  
Take and sanctify these gifts  
for your honour, Lord.  
Knowing that I love and serve you  
is enough reward.  
All that I am, all that I do,  
all that I'll ever have I offer now  
to you.

All that I dream,  
all that I pray,  
all that I'll ever make,  
I give you today.  
Take and sanctify these gifts  
for your honour, Lord.  
Knowing that I love and serve you  
is enough reward.  
All that I am, all that I do,  
all that I'll ever have I offer now  
to you.

**4** **Amazing Grace**,  
how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch like me.  
I once was lost but now am found,  
Was blind, but now, I see.

T'was Grace that taught  
my heart to fear.

And Grace, my fears relieved.  
How precious did that Grace appear  
the hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares  
we have already come.  
T'was Grace that brought us safe  
thus far  
and Grace will lead us home.

The Lord has promised good to me;  
His word my hope secures.  
He will my shield and portion be  
as long as life endures.

**5** **As I kneel before you**,  
As I bow my head in prayer,  
Take this day, make it yours,  
And fill me with your love.  
***Ave Maria, gratia plena,  
Dominus tecum, benedicta tu.***

All I have I give you,  
Ev'ry dream and wish are yours  
Mother of Christ, Mother of mine,  
Present them to my Lord.

As I kneel before you,  
And I see your smiling face,  
Ev'ry thought, ev'ry word  
is lost in your embrace.

**6** You shall cross the barren desert,  
but you shall not die of thirst.  
You shall wander far in safety  
though you do not know the way.

## HYMNS 1 — 10

You shall speak your words in  
foreign lands  
and all will understand.  
You shall see the face of God and live.

***Be not afraid, I go before you  
always.  
Come follow me, and I will give  
you rest.***

If you pass through raging waters  
in the sea, you shall not drown.  
If you walk amid the burning  
flames,  
you shall not be harmed.  
If you stand before the power of hell,  
and death is at your side,  
know that I am with you through  
it all.

**7** **Be still for the Presence of the Lord,**  
the Holy One is here.  
Come, bow before him now  
with reverence and fear.  
In Him no sin is found,  
we stand on holy ground.  
Be still for the presence of the Lord,  
the Holy One is here.

Be still for the glory of the Lord  
is shining all around.  
He burns with holy fire,  
with splendour He is crowned.  
How awesome is the sight,  
our radiant King of light!  
Be still for the glory of the Lord is  
shining all around.

Be still for the power of the Lord  
is moving in this place.  
He comes to cleanse and heal,  
to minister his Grace.  
No work too hard for Him –  
in faith, receive from Him.  
Be still for the power of the Lord  
is moving in this place.

**8** **Brother, sister,** let me serve you,  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.

We are pilgrims on a journey,  
and companions on the road;  
we are here to help each other  
walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you  
in the night-time of your fear;  
I will hold my hand out to you,  
speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping;  
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;  
I will share your joy and sorrow  
till we've seen this journey through.  
When we sing to God in heaven

we shall find such harmony,  
born of all we've known together  
of Christ's love and agony.

Brother, sister, let me serve you,  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.

**9** **Céad míle fáilte romhat,**  
a Íosa, a Íosa  
Céad míle fáilte romhat, a Íosa.  
Céad míle fáilte romhat,  
a Shlánaitheoir,  
Céad míle, míle fáilte romhat,  
a Íosa, a Íosa

Glóir agus moladh duit,  
a Íosa, a Íosa.  
Glóir agus moladh duit, a Íosa.  
Glóir agus moladh duit,  
a Shlánaitheoir,  
Glóir, moladh, agus búiochas duit,  
a Íosa, a Íosa

**10** **Christ be beside me,**  
Christ be before me,  
Christ be behind me,  
King of my heart.  
Christ be within me,  
Christ be below me,  
Christ be above me,  
never to part.

Christ on my right hand,  
Christ on my left hand.  
Christ all around me,  
shield in the strife.  
Christ in my sleeping,  
Christ in my sitting,  
Christ in my rising,  
light of my life.

*continued on the next page*

**10** Christ be in all hearts  
*continued* thinking about me,  
Christ be in all tongues  
telling of me,  
Christ be the vision  
in eyes that see me,  
in ears that hear me,  
Christ ever be.

**11** **Come as you are,**  
that's how I want you.  
Come as you are, feel quite at home.  
Close to my heart, loved and forgiven,  
Come as you are, why stand alone.

No need to fear, love sets no limits,  
No need to fear, love never ends.  
Don't run away, shamed and  
disheartened  
Rest in my love, trust me again.

I came to call sinners,  
not just the virtuous.  
I came to bring peace, not to condemn.  
Each time you fail, to live by my promise,  
Why do you think I'd love you the less.

Come as you are, that's how I love you,  
Come as you are, trust me again.  
Nothing can change the love that I  
bear you,  
All will be well, come as you are.

**12** **Diverse in culture,** nation, race,  
We come together by your grace.  
God, let us be a meeting ground  
Where hope and healing love are found.

God, let us be a bridge of care  
Connecting people everywhere.  
Help us confront all fear and hate  
And lust for power that separate.

When chasms widen, storms arise,  
O, Holy Spirit, make us wise.  
Let our resolve, like steel, be strong  
To stand with those who suffer wrong.

God, let us be a table spread  
With gifts of love and broken bread,  
Where all find welcome, grace attends,  
And enemies arise as friends.

**13** **Give me joy in my heart,** keep me  
singing,  
Give me joy in my heart, I pray,  
Give me joy in my heart, keep me  
singing,  
Keep me singing till the break of day.

*Sing Hosanna, Sing Hosanna,  
Sing Hosanna to the King of Kings.  
Sing Hosanna, Sing Hosanna,  
Sing Hosanna to the King.*

Give me faith in my heart, keep me  
searching, etc.  
Give me hope in my heart, keep me  
striving, etc.  
Give me love in my heart, keep me  
serving, etc.

**14** **God, beyond our dreams,**  
you have stirred in us a memory,  
you have placed your powerful spirit

in the hearts of humankind.  
All around us, we have known you;  
all creation lives to hold you,  
In our living and our dying  
we are bringing you to birth.

God, beyond all names,  
you have made us in your image,  
we are like you, we reflect you,  
we are woman, we are man.

God, beyond all words,  
all creation tells your story,  
you have shaken with our laughter,  
you have trembled with our tears.

**15** **Hail, Queen of heav'n,**  
the ocean star,  
guide of the wanderer here below  
thrown on life's surge, we claim  
thy care;  
save us from peril and from woe.  
Mother of Christ, star of the sea,  
pray for the wanderer, pray for me.  
O gentle, chaste and spotless maid,  
we sinners make our prayers  
through thee;  
remind thy Son that he has paid  
the price of our iniquity.  
Virgin most pure, star of the sea,  
pray for the sinner, pray for me.

**16** **Hail Redeemer, King divine!**  
Priest and Lamb, the throne is  
thine;  
King, whose reign shall never cease,  
Prince of everlasting peace.

## HYMNS 10 — 20

*Angels, saints and nations sing;  
“Praise be Jesus Christ our King;  
Lord of life, earth, sky and sea,  
King of love on Calvary!”*

King whose name creation thrills,  
rule our minds, our hearts, our wills,  
till in peace each nation rings  
with thy praises, King of kings.

**17** **I, the Lord of sea and sky,**  
I have heard my people cry.  
All who dwell in dark and sin  
my hand will save.  
I who made the stars of night,  
I will make their darkness bright.  
Who will bear my light to them?  
Whom shall I send?

*Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?  
I have heard You calling in the  
night.  
I will go, Lord, if You lead me.  
I will hold Your people in my heart.*

I, the Lord of snow and rain,  
I have borne my people's pain.  
I have wept for love of them,  
They turn away.  
I will break their hearts of stone,  
give them hearts for love alone.  
I will speak my words to them,  
Whom shall I send?

**18** **O Lord my God, when I in awesome  
wonder,**

Consider all the works thy hands  
have made;  
I see the stars, I hear the rolling  
thunder,  
Thy power throughout the universe  
displayed.

*Then sings my soul,  
my Saviour God, to thee,  
How great thou art,  
how great thou art.  
Then sings my soul,  
my Saviour God, to thee,  
How great thou art,  
how great thou art!*

And when I think, that God his Son  
not sparing;  
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take  
it in;  
That on the cross, my burden gladly  
bearing,  
He bled and died, to take away  
my sin.

When Christ shall come, with  
shouts of acclamation,  
And take me home, what joy shall  
fill my heart.  
Then I shall bow in humble  
adoration,  
And there proclaim: “My God, how  
great thou art!”

**19** **How lovely on the mountains** are  
the feet of him,  
who brings good news, good news,

announcing peace, proclaiming  
news of happiness.  
Our God reigns, our God reigns

*Our God reigns, our God reigns.  
Our God reigns, our God reigns.*

You watchmen lift your voices  
joyfully as one;  
shout for your King, your King  
See eye to eye the Lord restoring  
Zion,  
our God reigns, our God reigns!

Waste places of Jerusalem break  
forth with joy,  
We are redeemed, redeemed.  
The Lord has saved and comforted  
his people,  
our God reigns, our God reigns!

**20** **In Christ there is no east or west,**  
in Him no south or north;  
but one great fellowship of love  
throughout the whole wide earth.

In Him shall true hearts everywhere  
their high communion find;  
His service is the golden cord,  
close-binding humankind.

Join hands, then, members of the faith  
whatever your race may be!  
Who serve each other in Christ's love  
are surely kin to me.

*continued on the next page*

**20** continued In Christ now meet both east and west,  
in him meet south and north;  
all Christly souls are one in him  
throughout the whole wide earth.

**21** **I will never forget you**, my people;  
I have carved you on the palm of  
my hand.  
I will never forget you, I will not  
leave you orphaned.  
I will never forget my own.

Does a mother forget her baby?  
Or a woman the child within her  
womb?  
Yet even if these forget, yes even if  
these forget,  
I will never forget my own.

**22** **Let us be bread,**  
***blessed by the Lord,***  
***broken and shared, life for the world.***  
***Let us be wine, love freely poured.***  
***Let us be one in the Lord.***

I am the bread of life, broken for all.  
Eat now and hunger no more.  
One faith, one hope, one symbol  
of love  
given to us in this one bread,  
one cup. O let us be one in the Lord.

You are my friends if you keep my  
commands,  
no longer servants but friends.

See how my people have nothing  
to eat.

Give them the bread that is you.  
As God has loved me so I have loved  
you.  
Go and live on in my love.

**23** **Nearer, my God, to Thee,**  
Nearer to Thee;  
E'en though it be cross  
That raiseth me.  
Still all my song shall be,  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee.

Deep in Thy Sacred Heart,  
Let me abide;  
Thou that hast bled for me,  
Sorrowed and died,  
Sweet shall my weeping be,  
Grief surely leading me  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee.

**24** **Make me a channel of your peace.**

Where there is hatred,  
let me bring your love.  
Where there is injury your pardon, Lord.  
And where there's doubt true faith  
in you.

Make me a channel of your peace.  
Where there's despair in life, let me  
bring hope.  
Where there is darkness only light  
and where there's sadness ever joy.

Oh, Master, grant that I may never  
seek

so much to be consoled as to  
console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved, as to love with all my  
soul.

Make me a channel of your peace.  
it is in pardoning that we are  
pardoned,  
in giving to all men that we receive,  
and in dying that we're born to  
eternal life.

**25** ***Salve Mater,***  
***The Mother of our Lord:***  
***Virgin Mary,***  
***The Mother of our God.***  
***Eyes so tender***  
***That turn to all our cares,***  
***Heart so ready***  
***To run to all our prayers.***

Mary, blessèd one,  
To us you always run:  
We are to you  
As Christ, your only Son:  
Perpetual Help,  
You're with us in our tears:  
We place our hands  
In yours with all our fears.  
O Maria! **R/.**

Sister of all flesh,  
So human with us all,  
Disciples too,  
We're gathered by our call;  
Perpetual Help

You are to us indeed:  
We'll watch with you  
For all who are in need.  
O Maria! **R/.**

Help Perpetual,  
An Icon of our race,  
With you we stand,  
All filled with God's own grace:  
Our Sister Earth,  
We'll cherish, will not harm,  
And hold the world  
Of peoples in our arms:  
O Maria! **R/.**

**26** **Seek ye first** the kingdom of God,  
and His righteousness;  
and all these things shall be added  
unto you.  
Allelu, Alleluia.

Ask and it shall be given unto you.  
Seek and you shall find.  
Knock and the door shall be opened  
unto you.  
Allelu, Alleluia.

We do not live by bread alone,  
but by every word;  
that proceeds from the mouth of  
the Lord.  
Allelu, Alleluia.

**27** **Soul of my Saviour,**  
sanctify my breast;  
Body of Christ, be thou my saving  
guest;

Blood of my Saviour, bathe me in  
thy tide  
wash me ye waters flowing from  
his side.

Strength and protection may thy  
Passion be;  
O blessed Jesus hear and answer me;  
deep in thy wounds, Lord, hide and  
shelter me;  
so shall I never, never part from thee.

Guard and defend me from the foe  
malign;  
in death's dread moments make me  
only thine;  
call me, and bid me come to thee  
on high,  
where I may praise thee with thy  
saints for aye.

**28** **Sweet sacrament divine,**  
hid in thy earthly home,  
lo, round thy lowly shrine,  
with suppliant hearts we come;  
Jesus, to thee our voice we raise,  
with songs of love and heartfelt praise,  
sweet sacrament divine,  
sweet sacrament divine.

Sweet sacrament of peace,  
dear home of ev'ry heart,  
where restless yearnings cease,  
and sorrows all depart,  
there in thine ear all trustfully  
we tell our tale of misery,  
sweet sacrament of peace,  
sweet sacrament of peace.

**29** **The love I have for you, my Lord,**  
is only a shadow of your love for me:  
only a shadow of your love for me;  
your deep abiding love.

My own belief in you, my Lord,  
is only a shadow of your faith in me;  
only a shadow of your faith in me;  
your deep and lasting faith.

My life is in your hands;  
my life is in your hands.  
My love for you will grow, my God.  
Your light in me will shine.

The dream I have today, my Lord,  
is only a shadow of your dreams  
for me;  
only a shadow of all that will be;  
if I but follow you.

**30** **Take our bread,** we ask you,  
take our hearts, we love you,  
take our lives, oh Father,  
we are yours, we are yours.

Yours as we stand at the table you set,  
yours as we eat the bread our  
hearts can't forget.

We are the signs of your life with  
us yet;  
we are yours, we are yours.

Your holy people stand washed in  
your blood,  
Spirit filled, yet hungry, we await  
your food.

*continued on the next page*

**30** continued Poor though we are, we have brought ourselves to you: we are yours, we are yours.

**31** **The bells of the Angelus**  
calleth to pray.  
In sweet tones announcing the sacred Ave.  
***Ave, Ave, Ave Maria.***  
***Ave, Ave, Ave Maria.***

Immaculate Mary, our hearts are all thine.  
Protect us, thy children, who kneel at thy shrine.

O bless us, dear Lady, with blessings from heaven,  
And to our petitions let answer be given.

**32** **This is my body,**  
broken for you,  
bringing you wholeness,  
making you free.  
Take it and eat it,  
and when you do,  
do it in love for me.

This is my blood,  
poured out for you,  
bringing forgiveness, making you free.  
Take it and drink it,  
and when you do,  
do it in love for me.

Back to my Father soon I shall go.  
Do not forget me;  
then you will see  
I am still with you,  
and you will know  
you're very close to me.

Filled with my Spirit,  
how you will grow!  
You are my branches;  
I am the tree.  
If you are faithful,  
others will know  
you are alive in me.

Love one another -  
I have loved you,  
and I have shown you  
how to be free;  
serve one another,  
and when you do,  
do it in love for me.

**33** Let's all join together  
in communion sweet,  
Walk, walk in the light.  
And love one another till the  
Saviour we meet,  
Walk, walk, in the light.

***Walk in the light***  
***Walk in the light***  
***Walk in the light***  
***Walk in the light of God.***

Jesus died on Calvary,  
Walk, walk, in the light,  
To save the lost like you and me;  
Walk, walk, in the light.

Jesus did what He said,  
Walk, walk, in the light,  
He healed the sick and He raised  
the dead;  
Walk, walk, in the light.

**34** **When creation was begun,**  
God had chosen you to be  
Mother of his blessed Son,  
Holy Mary, full of grace.  
***Ave, Ave, Ave Maria.***

When creation was restored,  
You were there beside the Lord  
Whom you cherished and adored,  
Holy Mary, full of grace.  
***Ave, Ave, Ave Maria.***

All of us are children too,  
often doubtful what to do,  
Needing to confide in you,  
Holy Mary, full of grace.  
***Ave, Ave, Ave Maria.***

**35** **You who dwell**  
in the shelter of the Lord,  
who abide in his shadow for life,  
say to the Lord: "My refuge, my rock  
in whom I trust!"

*And he will raise you up on eagles' wings,  
bear you on the breath of dawn,  
make you to shine like the sun,  
and hold you in the palm of his hand.*

The snare of the fowler will never capture you,  
and famine will bring you no fear:  
under his wings your refuge, his faithfulness your shield.

You need not fear the terror of the night,  
nor the arrow that flies by day;  
though thousands fall about you,  
near you it shall not come.

### CHANTS & RESPONSES

**36** Christ be our light!  
Shine in our hearts,  
shine through the darkness.  
Christ be our light!  
Shine in your church,  
gathered today.

**37** My soul is longing for your peace  
Near to you my God.

**38** Guiding me, guarding me, the Lord  
is by my side.  
Guiding me, guarding me, the Lord  
upholds my life.

**39** I will search in the silence for your  
hiding place.  
In the quiet, Lord, I seek your face.

**40** Even though the rain hides the  
stars,  
even though the mist swirls the  
hills,  
even when the dark clouds veil  
the sky,  
God is by my side.

Even when the sun shall fall in  
sleep,  
even when at dawn the sky shall  
weep,  
even in the night when storms  
shall rise,  
God is by my side.  
God is by my side.

**41** Bless the Lord my soul  
and bless God's holy name.  
Bless the Lord my soul,  
He leads me into life.

**42** Be still and know that I am God.  
(sing 3 times)  
I am the Lord that healeth thee.  
(sing 3 times)  
In thee, O Lord, I put my trust. (sing  
3 times)

**43** Confitemini Domino,  
quoniam bonus.  
Confitemini Domino,  
Alleluia.

**44** Eat this bread,  
drink this cup,  
come to me and never be hungry.  
Eat this bread,  
drink this cup,  
trust in me and you will not thirst.

**45** O Christe Domine Jesu,  
O Christe Domine Jesu.

**46** Father, we adore you.  
(Jesus, Spirit)  
Lay our lives before you.  
How we love you.

**47** Father, we love you,  
we worship and adore you,  
Glorify thy name through all the earth.  
Glorify thy name,  
glorify thy name,  
Glorify thy name through all the  
earth. (Jesus, Spirit).

**48** In the Lord  
I'll be ever thankful,  
in the Lord I will rejoice!  
Look to God,  
do not be afraid;  
lift up your voices,  
the Lord is near;  
lift up your voices the Lord is near.

## HYMNS 50 — 62

**49** Jesus,  
name above all names,  
beautiful Saviour,  
glorious Lord.  
Emmanuel, God is with us,  
blessed Redeemer,  
living Word.

**55** Open our eyes, Lord,  
we want to see Jesus,  
to reach out and touch him  
and say that we love him;  
open our ears, Lord,  
and help us to listen;  
open our eyes, Lord,  
we want to see Jesus.

**59** Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
that I might serve you.  
Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
that I might be renewed.  
So fill me, heal me,  
then bring me back to you.  
Create in me a pure heart, O God,  
that I might serve you.

**50** Jesus, I place all my trust in you.  
I place all my trust in you.

**56** Spirit of the living God,  
fall afresh on me. (sing twice)  
Melt me, mould me, fill me, use me.  
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh  
on me.  
(...on us, on all)

**60** Take, O take me as I am; summon  
out what I shall be;  
set your seal upon my heart and  
live in me.

**51** Jesus, remember me  
when you come into your Kingdom.  
Jesus, remember me  
when you come into your Kingdom.

**61** Faithful is the Lord, our King. Let  
us all in glory sing,  
ever praise in song and word: Holy,  
holy, holy Lord!

**52** Lay your hands gently upon us.  
Let their touch render your peace.  
Let them bring your forgiveness and  
healing.  
Lay your hands gently,  
lay your hands.

**57** Sweep over my soul, (sing twice)  
Sweet Spirit,  
sweep over my soul,  
my rest is complete  
when I sit at your feet,  
Sweet Spirit  
sweep over my soul.

**62** Salvator mundi, salva nos;  
qui per crucem et sanguinem  
redemisti nos,  
auxiliare nobis, te deprecamur,  
Deus noster.

**53** Misericordias Domini  
In aeternum cantabo

**58** Ubi caritas et amor,  
Ubi caritas Deus ibi est.

**54** O Lord, hear my prayer,  
O Lord, hear my prayer,  
when I call answer me.  
O Lord, hear my prayer,  
O Lord, hear my prayer,  
come and listen to me.

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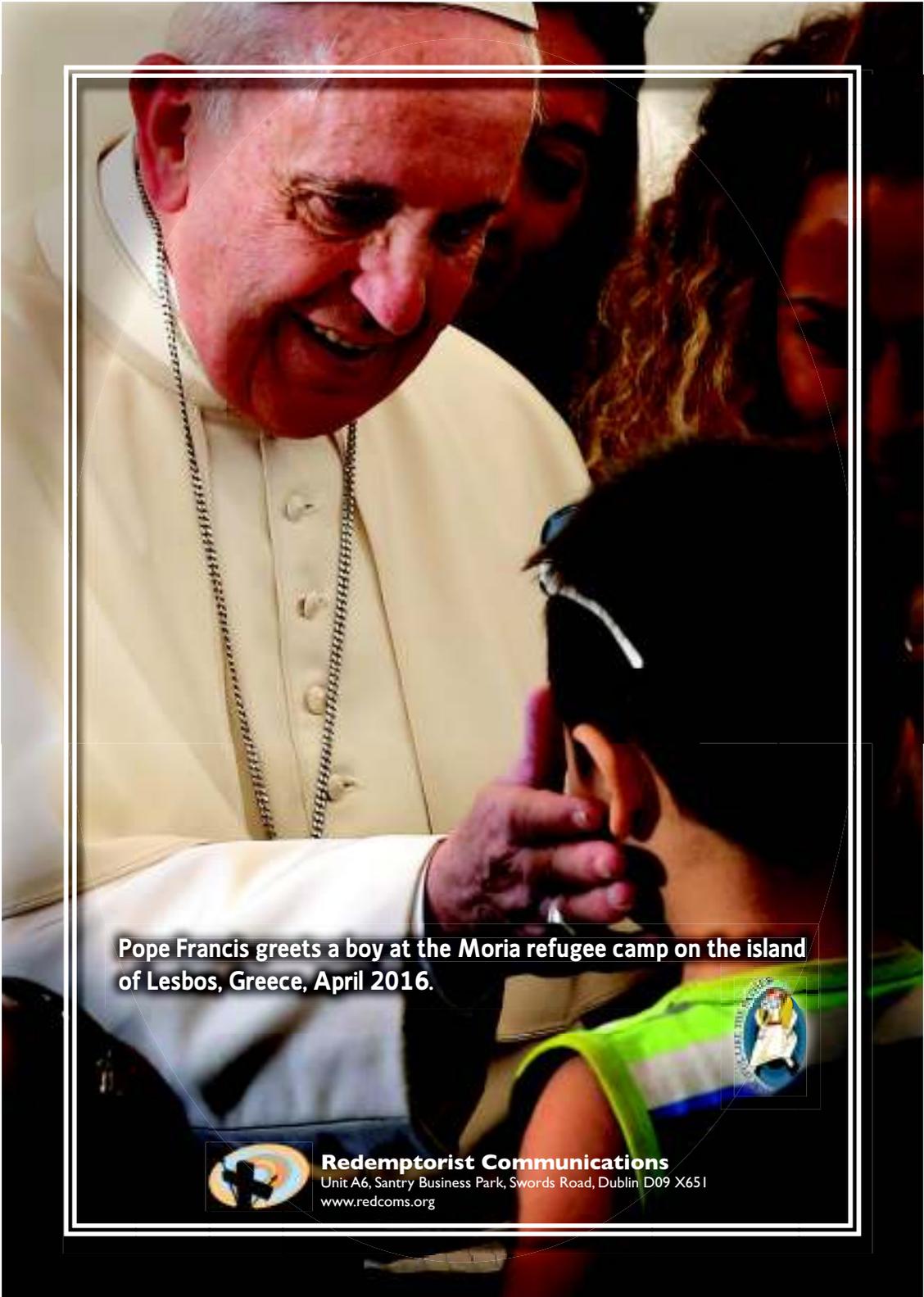
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**Pope Francis greets a boy at the Moria refugee camp on the island of Lesbos, Greece, April 2016.**



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