

## 2.4 PASTORAL CHARISMS

### 2.4 a MERCY GIVING / COMPASSION

#### What is it?

- The **Charism of Mercy Giving/Compassion** is the spiritual gift given to some Christians to experience exceptional empathy and compassion for those who are suffering (physically, mentally, or emotionally) so as to feel genuine sympathy for their misery, speaking words of compassion, and even more so caring for them with acts of love that help alleviate their distress.
- **Mercy Giving/Compassion** is a gift of the Holy Spirit that enables one to cheerfully and practically help those who are suffering or are in need by putting compassion into action.

#### When does Jesus express it?

Jesus expresses Mercy and Compassion in proclaiming the Beatitudes, in feeding the hungry crowds, in healing the sick, talking with tax collectors, and in His forgiveness of sinners and forgiveness of our sins by His dying on the Cross of Mercy.

#### Why is it important?

- Mercy givers provide the physical help that is needed as well as comfort and aid especially to the needy, the poor, the sick, and the marginalized.
- It is the special gift whereby the Spirit enables certain Christians to want to devote large amounts of time and energy to alleviate pain, suffering, distress, and poverty.
- Mercy givers express genuine empathy and compassion for individuals who suffer distressing physical, mental or emotional problems and translate that compassion into action that reflects Christ's love and help those who are suffering.
- Mercy givers are compassionate and empathic towards those who are suffering and use words to comfort those in need.

#### How would someone express it?

- Focus upon alleviating the sources of pain or discomfort in suffering people.
- Address the needs of the lonely and forgotten.
- Express love, grace, and dignity to those facing hardships and crisis.
- Serve in difficult circumstances and do so cheerfully.
- Concern themselves with individual or social issues that oppress people.

#### What could a parish or religious community do to call it forth and/or support it?

- Learn more about those in your parish or community who have the Charism of Mercy and record what you learn in your parish/community database.
- Maintain a database of those who have the Charism of Mercy.
- Correlate their gifts with their preference for teaching to various ages and stages of development.
- Call forth those with the Charism of Mercy to visit the homebound, the sick or infirmed.

- Invite those with the Gift of Mercy to serve in ministries to the poor or marginalized.
- Establish parish and/or community ministries that will engage mercy givers.
- Invite those with this gift to participate in home/hospital visitations, transportation services, social ministries, support group leadership, or care givers.

**Scripture Passages:** Romans 12:3-8; Luke 7:12-15; Luke 10:30-37; Matthew 20:29-34; Matthew 25:34-40; Mark 9:41; Matthew 5:7

**Caution You Are About To Enter The No Sin Zone**

Be careful not to find yourself offended if someone does not appreciate or want your compassion, your ministry, or your presence.

**Evangelization Team Notes:** When you go on a home visit or evangelize others, ask what needs they may have for food, shelter, or clothing, or your time.

**Author’s Notes:** Those with this charism have a passion for the marginalized. They spend their lives ministering to the poor, the disabled, and homeless, and those who are spiritually void.

**Witness:** More than once I have witnessed that teens and young adults have been gifted with this charism. They have a passionate desire to work with the poor and marginalized people who have experienced tragedies such as tornados, earthquakes, and hurricanes. As a parish family, the Church must focus on calling forth the gifts of teens and young adults or they will find another way to operate in their spiritual gifts.

**Discussion Questions:**

- How do you feel when you operate in this charism?
- What do others tell you when you operate in this charism?
- What do you see happening to others when you operate in this charism?
- Talk about someone you know with this charism.

**Your Notes Here:**

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