

# Candidate Retreat

## The Corporal Works of Mercy

Use this sheet as a tool for your own private reflection and prayer.

1. Feed the hungry.
2. Give drink to the thirsty.
3. Clothe the naked.
4. Shelter the homeless.
5. Visit the sick.
6. Ransom the captives.
7. Bury the dead.

- In what ways do you practice these works of mercy?
- As you look at your own neighborhood, school, and surrounding workplaces, where do you see needs?
- Who do you know who practices some of these works of mercy?
- For which of these works do you most have an interest?
- Are you satisfied with your own responses to the “neighbor” in your life?

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## Some Facts about Hunger from Bread for the World\*

- 852 million people across the world are hungry, up from 842 million a year ago.
- Every day, more than 16,000 children die from hunger-related causes—one child every five seconds.
- In essence, hunger is the most extreme form of poverty, where individuals or families cannot afford to meet their most basic need for food.
- Hunger manifests itself in many ways other than starvation and famine. Most poor people who battle hunger deal with chronic undernourishment and vitamin or mineral deficiencies, which results in stunted growth, weakness, and heightened susceptibility to illness.
- Poor nutrition and calorie deficiencies cause nearly one in three people to die prematurely or have disabilities, according to the World Health Organization.
- Pregnant women, new mothers who breastfeed infants, and children are among the most at risk of undernourishment.
- 153 million children under the age of five in the developing world are underweight. Worse yet, 11 million children younger than five die every year, more than half from hunger-related causes.
- Most of these deaths are attributed, not to outright starvation, but to diseases that move in on vulnerable children whose bodies have been weakened by hunger.
- Every year, more than 20 million low-birth-weight babies are born in developing countries. These babies risk dying in infancy, while those who survive often suffer lifelong physical and cognitive disabilities.
- The four most common childhood illnesses are diarrhea, acute respiratory illness, malaria, and measles. Each of these illnesses is both preventable and treatable. Yet, again, poverty interferes in parents' ability to access immunizations and medicines. Chronic undernourishment on top of insufficient treatment greatly increases a child's risk of death.
- In the developing world, 27 percent of children under five are moderately to severely underweight, 8 percent are severely underweight, 8 percent of children under five are moderately to severely wasted, or seriously below weight for one's height, and an overwhelming 31 percent are moderately to severely stunted or seriously below normal height for one's age.

\*From <http://www.bread.org/learn/hunger-basics/hunger-facts-international.html>