

## Looking Ahead

In this chapter, the Holy Spirit invites you to ►



**EXPLORE** simple ways to work for justice.



**DISCOVER** how God calls us to live with grace and freedom.



**DECIDE** how you can grow through the Works of Mercy.

# CHAPTER 17



# Our Call to Holiness

**?** What is something unique about you?  
What do your actions say about you?

God's actions among his people revealed something about God.  
Listen to the psalmist's prayer of praise of God.

*O mighty king, lover of justice,  
you alone have established fairness . . .  
From the pillar of cloud God spoke to them;  
they kept the decrees, the law they received.  
Exalt the LORD, our God;  
bow down before his holy mountain;  
holy is the LORD, our God.* PSALM 99:4, 7, 9

**?** What examples of God's justice do you know from the Scriptures?



# Disciple Power

## Understanding

This Gift of the Holy Spirit helps us to know ourselves better as we grow in our relationship with God. Saint Augustine said of this gift, "That I may know You, may I know myself." Ruth in the Old Testament understood the needs of others, and her actions showed it (read Ruth 1:11-18).

# THE CHURCH FOLLOWS JESUS

## The Gleaning Network

The work of the Gleaning Network tells us much about their focus on justice. This group of dedicated people value and live Christ's command to love one another.

The Gleaning Network is an organization that responds to the needs of many people who are without food. Its thousands of volunteers provide millions of servings of nourishing food to feed the hungry in the United States each year. These people call themselves, "gleaners." Do you remember Ruth in the Old Testament who stood by her mother-in-law, Naomi? The Gleaners chose their name to honor Ruth, who gleaned from the fields crops not harvested to support her and her family.

The Gleaners in the Midwest saw that their fertile region produced an abundance of crops, such as tomatoes, oranges, onions, and carrots. Some of this food went to waste. The Gleaners contacted local farmers to help them collect the unused crops.

The Gleaners grew larger and larger, involved members of other churches, and they purchased their own buildings. They now bring in fresh produce and canned goods from grocery stores and from food drives. They distribute food not just to people in their own communities but to the needy throughout the country in which they live. Gleaners in your community are living the call to holiness and justice. They take up the challenge to feed the poor and live the Works of Mercy.



### Activity

List items that you have in abundance that you can "glean" for those in need. Who would gain by gleaning from your abundance?

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# Called to Be Saints

Our life's job description is to share in God's **holiness**. God created us to be holy as he is holy. He created us to know him, to love him, to serve him, and to live with him forever in eternal happiness. God's command to the Israelites is a command to all his people:

*"For I, the Lord, am your God; and you shall make and keep yourselves holy, because I am holy. . . . Since I, the Lord, brought you up from the land of Egypt that I might be your God, you shall be holy, because I am holy."* LEVITICUS 11:44-45

The ability and freedom to live a holy life is a gift from God. He not only invites us to live a life in communion with him but also gives us the powers to live that life. God gives us the **Theological Virtues**, which help us to live as his children.

## Faith, Hope, and Charity

The Theological Virtues enable us to grow stronger in holiness, the life of God within us. They are those strengths that begin in God and direct us toward holiness. There are three Theological Virtues: faith, hope, and charity. You may recall that Saint Paul concludes his great hymn to love with this memorable verse,

*So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love.* 1 CORINTHIANS 13:13

These virtues are gifts from God. The more we choose to live according to these virtues, the more we grow in holiness.

### Activity

Draw a symbol that reflects your understanding of faith, hope, and love.

### FAITH FOCUS

What does it mean to live a holy life?

### FAITH VOCABULARY

#### holiness

The quality, or condition, of a person who is living in communion and in right relationship with God, with others, and with all of creation; being in the state of grace

#### Theological Virtues

The virtues of faith, hope, and charity; gifts of God that enable us to live a life of holiness, or a life in communion with the Holy Trinity

#### Works of Mercy

Virtuous actions that we do to help others in need, grouped as Corporal (bodily needs) and Spiritual (spiritual needs)





# Faith-Filled People

## Job

The story of Job is told in the Old Testament. Job was wealthy and faithful to God. He lost all his wealth and became ill with a serious disease. In all of this trouble, he did not blame or reject God even when his friends tried to convince him to do so. Job's story is one of grace, freedom, faith, and hope.



## Grace and Freedom

With Christ, everything changed. Before Christ's life, Passion, Death, Resurrection, and glorious Ascension, humanity was under the power of sin and death. By dying, he destroyed our death and freed us from sin's power. By rising from the dead, he restored our life of holiness. We join with the Church and proclaim this faith at Mass when we sing or pray aloud:

*Save us, Savior of the world,  
for by your Cross and Resurrection  
you have set us free.*


MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION, ROMAN MISSAL

At Baptism, we are joined to Christ and are made sharers in his work of Salvation and Redemption. We receive the grace of holiness called sanctifying grace. We are made right with God the Father in Christ. We receive the gift of the Holy Spirit to live holy lives. God freely gives us the gift of Salvation in Christ. Salvation is not something we could ever earn on our own.

*It is due to him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, as well as righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.*

1 CORINTHIANS 1:30

With the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit, we are made holy again. The grace of the Holy Spirit calls us to use responsibly the gift of freedom and to grow in holiness (read Proverbs 12:13). With the grace of the Holy Spirit, we grow in our ability to make the right choices and to live as adopted children of God the Father. We turn toward God and away from sin. We accept forgiveness and the gift of having our communion and life with God restored.

 How does grace help us to be free?





## Sacramentals

Sacramentals are sacred signs that help us give praise to God and live holy lives. The Church uses sacramentals to remind us of God's presence with us. One of the most important sacramentals is blessings. Blessings include praising God for his works and gifts and the Church's intercessions for people to use God's gifts according to the Gospel.

## Growth in Holiness

God's gift of holiness is not just for us as individuals. It is not something we keep for ourselves. As God shares his life and love with us, we also share our life and love with others. Our growth in holiness involves the way that we live with other people. Holiness is about how we act with others.

Saint Paul teaches,

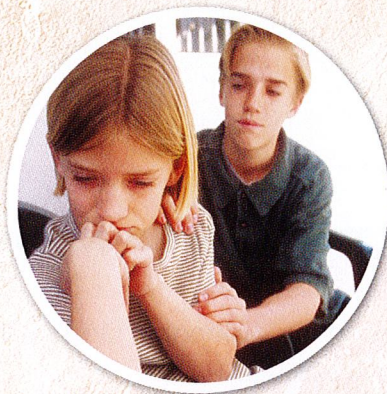
*Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another. . . . And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection.*

COLOSSIANS 3:12-14

The Church gives us the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy to guide us in living the life of mercy and compassion that Saint Paul describes. These **Works of Mercy** are part of the Church's social teachings—a collection of principles that guide us to moral living as a holy community. Yet the Works of Mercy are not just an idea; they are concrete, practical things that we can do to live the Gospel. They clearly show that holiness is not just an idea but something we must practice everyday. Holiness is a life of true courage, a life that requires God's grace.

### Activity

Read the lists of Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy on page 261. Under each picture write the Work of Mercy it illustrates. In the space provided, draw or write how you can live one of the Works of Mercy.



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# I FOLLOW JESUS

Ruth told her widowed mother-in-law, Naomi, "Wherever you go I will go" (Ruth 1:16). Focus on trying to understand how God desires for you to live your life in holiness. Go where God wants you to be. Living the Works of Mercy is a way you can strive to live a holy life. See God in each person you help, for each of us is created in the image and likeness of God.

## HOLY LIFE IN ACTION

Develop a list of three activities that you could do with others that would help you to live a holy life. Choose one and draw up a plan to put it into action.

Which Work of Mercy?	With whom?	What will we do?	When will we do this?	What will we need to do it?
1.				
2.				
3.				

## MY FAITH CHOICE

This week, I will focus on understanding God's will for me so that I can know myself better and live a life of holiness. I will

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Pray, "Lord, help me to know you more so that I may know myself better and know your will for my life. Amen."

# Chapter Review

Match each term with its description.

Faith Term	Description
_____ 1. holiness	<b>A.</b> The virtue by which we love God above all else and love our neighbor as ourselves.
_____ 2. virtues	<b>B.</b> Good habits that enable us to grow stronger in the God-life that dwells within us.
_____ 3. faith	<b>C.</b> The virtue by which we believe in God.
_____ 4. hope	<b>D.</b> God's presence in us and our fidelity to him.
_____ 5. charity	<b>E.</b> The virtue by which we trust that God is looking after us.

## TO HELP YOU REMEMBER

1. The Theological Virtues are gifts from God that connect us with him and strengthen us to live lives of holiness in communion with God.
2. The grace of the Holy Spirit helps us grow in our ability to freely make choices to grow in holiness.
3. Living the Works of Mercy is a sign that we are trying to live holy lives.

# The Road Ahead

*The road to living a holy life is not always an easy road to travel. Yet God always leads us along that road. Quiet yourself and place your trust in God, praying this prayer. Pray it often.*

My Lord,

*I have no idea of where I am going.*

*I do not see the road ahead of me.*

*I cannot know for certain where it will end.*

*I hope that I have the desire to please you in all that I am doing.*

*And I know that if I do this,*

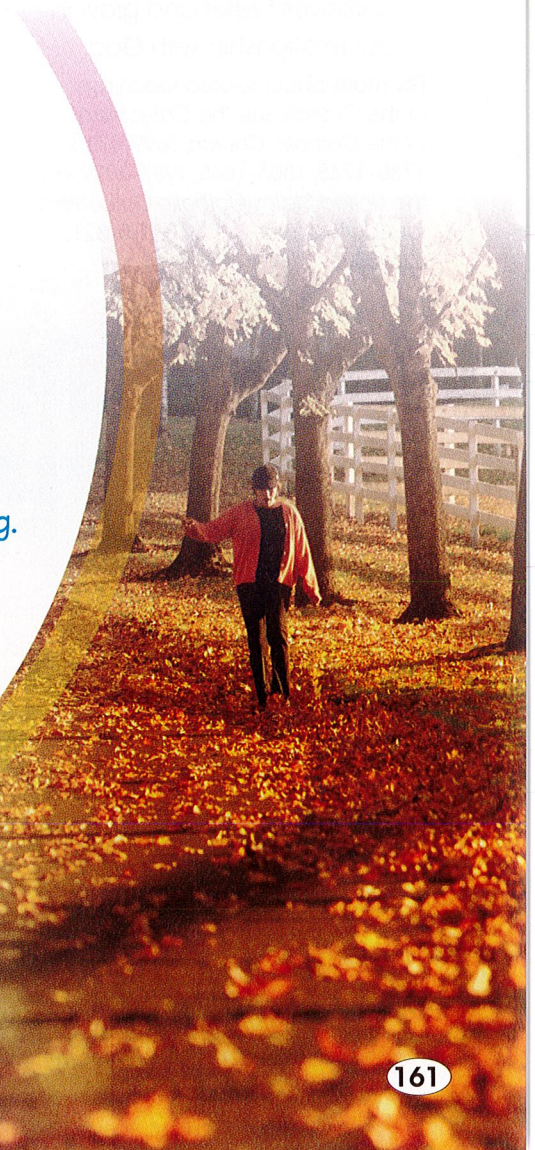
*you will lead me by the right road.*

*Therefore, I will trust you.*

*I will not fear, for you are ever with me,*

*and you will never leave me.*

ADAPTED FROM "THE ROAD AHEAD" BY THOMAS MERTON



# With My Family

## This Week ...

In Chapter 17, "Our Call to Holiness," your child learned:

- ▶ Each of us is called to live the way of holiness that Jesus lived and taught to his disciples.
- ▶ We are joined to Christ and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and the grace to live as adopted children of God the Father.
- ▶ As we strive to understand more about God, we come to know more about ourselves and how we can respond to his call of holiness. Understanding, a Gift of the Holy Spirit, helps us know ourselves better and grow in our relationship with God.

For more about related teachings of the Church, see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1699–1715, 1730–1748, 1803–1845, 1987–2029, and the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, pages 307–313, 315–321, 328–330.

## Sharing God's Word

**Read** together Leviticus 11:44–45. Emphasize that every person is created by God and is to live a holy life.

## We Live as Disciples


**The Christian home** and family is a school of discipleship. Choose one of the following activities to do as a family, or design a similar activity of your own:

- ▶ Write a family pledge to live holy lives. Be sure that the pledge describes specific behaviors and attitudes that constitute holiness.

- ▶ During family prayers, remind everyone that God is with you as you journey on the road of holiness.

## Our Spiritual Journey

**Trusting God** may not be easy, especially during times of distress and anxiety. During such times, God is there. He might be inviting you to help others in need through Works of Mercy. In doing so, we take up our cross for the sake of others and receive the grace to persevere.



For more ideas on ways that your family can live as disciples of Jesus, visit

[www.BeMyDisciples.com](http://www.BeMyDisciples.com)