

Jubilee of Mercy Resource Books

8 Resource Books for the Jubilee of Mercy have been prepared by the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelisation. They are brief and concise and are published by Our Sunday Visitor (www.osv.com). This is just a brief summary of their content.

1. Celebrating Mercy

This book offers pastoral ideas for the liturgical celebration of the Jubilee. The chapter headings are: The Liturgical Year, The Celebration of the Sacraments, Praying as One, Lectio Divina, Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy Rites, Rite of the Opening of the Door of Mercy in Local Churches and the Closing Celebration of the Extraordinary jubilee in Local Churches.

It is a useful source of suggestions to highlight the Jubilee at different times of the year and in the celebration of sacraments. The Lectio section offers a prayerful approach to various Scripture passages about mercy. It is easy to read and would be helpful for a liturgy group to have as a limited resource for the year. This book encourages praying the liturgy of the Hours during the year with a special emphasis on the 'two hinges': morning and evening prayer.

2. Psalms of Mercy

This book is richly spiritual, prayerful and scholarly. This commentary on ten psalms of mercy was prepared by Father Sebastiano Pinto, Professor of Old Testament exegesis in the Theology Faculty in Puglia. It could be used for personal prayer, leading group prayer or a series of talks on the Psalms of Mercy. For example when considering Psalm 25.6 he speaks of compassion and merciful love and says that "the Lord acts with a maternal womb and knows how to love with the same intensity that a woman loves her own child".

3. Parables of Mercy

This resource was prepared by Monsignor Antonio Pitta on the parables of mercy - those mirrors of life that Jesus uses so cleverly in his ministry. This is a resource grounded in scholarly research and rooted in the grace of mercy. The material would be useful for prayer, homilies and the celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation. A striking quote from the book speaks of mercy as encounter with Christ. "...mercy is a question of an inner disposition that matures as one spends time with Jesus."

4. Confession: The Sacrament of Mercy

This book was prepared by Father Maurizio Compiani and offers a valuable pastoral response to the two classic mercy bible stories - 'A Father had two sons' and 'of debts and debtors'. He also offers a reflection on 'Jesus' Forgiveness of Sins' and 'The Words of Forgiveness' which are thought provoking for both penitent and confessor. This book brings welcome freshness to stories and formulas that are well used and may be under appreciated.

5. The Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy

This book was the work of Professor Salvador Pié Ninot and offers the scriptural roots of the seven corporal and spiritual works of mercy. This interesting pastoral commentary adds a strong background to the call by Pope Francis for reflection on these works. This book could be a useful source for a retreat or a novena of grace on this topic for example - Day 1 could look at the Scriptural background in general of the works while days 2-8 would consider 2 of the works each session. Day 9 could bring it all together. Anyone who is going to speak about these works of mercy would spend their time well with his contribution.

6. The Saints In Mercy

There are 27 'Saints' considered in this resource, 10 women and 17 men. Some are well known such as the Curé of Ars and Sister Faustina to the less famous Venerable Marcello Candia - 'one cannot share in heavenly Bread if one cannot share his earthly bread' – and Blessed Elizabeth Canori Mora - 'you too will have your Christmas Eve. Their stories might find their way into themed talks on mercy inspired by the lives of holy people.

7. Mercy in the Fathers of the Church

This book does what it 'says on the tin' – it is the teachings of the Fathers of the Church. There are only 3 chapters and one of which is devoted to Saint Augustine, preacher of Mercy. The anthology which is the third chapter has some useful quotations such as Saint Chromatius who commenting on the 'blessed are the merciful' passage in Matthew 17 says that this shows 'that no one can obtain mercy from the Lord if in turn he has not used mercy.'

8. Mercy in the Teaching of Popes

The now often quoted words of Pope John XXIII at the opening of the Second Vatican Council are among the many quotations cited in this collection.

"Now the Bride of Christ wishes to use the medicine of mercy rather than taking up arms of severity'. The concentration in this book is on the teachings on mercy from the more recent popes such as Paul VI and Saint John Paul II. Once again this resource will find its way into homilies, conferences and prayer gatherings.