

## ***A Time to Reflect...***

People bringing food to be dropped off for those in need is very commonplace here at St Augustine's. We have strongly supported Bread and Roses, Neighbors In Need, and Lazarus House Ministries. People also serve meals at Cor Unum just a few miles away. Our Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion bring Communion to those in hospitals, nursing homes and to their own homes to give strength and hope to those who are sick, many who may be unable to get around themselves. There will be a turkey drive to enable families without certain resources to have a Thanksgiving meal together. There are also clothing drives to assist those in need. The list goes on and on. I know firsthand that many people are grateful for the generosity of our parishioners.

In doing all these things we are generously living out our Christian call to love our neighbor. To put it another way, we are living out what are called the Corporal Works of Mercy. They are acts of mercy that are concerned with the physical needs of our brothers and sisters. In total, there are seven **Corporal Works of Mercy**:

Feed the **hungry**, Give drink to the **thirsty**, Clothe the **naked**, Shelter the **homeless**, Visit the **sick**, Visit the **imprisoned** and finally to Bury the **dead**.

I have seen situations when people or families could not afford to perform this last work and most basic need. Nothing should ever hinder us to provide a resting place for the deceased. During the month of November this last work of mercy provides the opportunity to focus on our Christian, Catholic approach when our loved ones die. How do we celebrate our faith in Christ Jesus..., pray, remember, honor, and respect our deceased?

During the month of November, I would like to offer some reflections as well as information concerning our Catholic beliefs and customs regarding those who have died and how we grieve their loss. The Catholic funeral mass is a strong support for those who are grieving with the scripture readings, songs and ritual of the mass which console and strengthen us. Christian hope and belief in the resurrection are basic as we celebrate. They enable us to be open to what Jesus has told us and also what he has shown us by his own Paschal Mystery, his own dying and rising from the dead.

I think that there are many questions that people have surrounding our funeral rites. I will concentrate on the funeral mass, cremation, Words of remembrance, and preparing for a funeral among other things. I hope that I may be able to clarify or answer some questions. If you have a question that you definitely want answered please email me [frrich@staugustineparish.org](mailto:frrich@staugustineparish.org) and I will do my best.