

Reflect on the four paragraphs below from *Gaudete et Exsultate* then use the reflection sheet 'Works of Mercy' to consider: 'During the past month how/when have I...?'

107. Those who really wish to give glory to God by their lives, who truly long to grow in holiness, are called to be single-minded and tenacious in their practice of the works of mercy.

105. Similarly, the best way to discern if our prayer is authentic is to judge to what extent our life is being transformed in the light of mercy. For "mercy is not only an action of the Father; it becomes a criterion for ascertaining who his true children are". Mercy "is the very foundation of the Church's life". In this regard, I would like to reiterate that mercy does not exclude justice and truth; indeed, "we have to say that mercy is the fullness of justice and the most radiant manifestation of God's truth". It is "the key to heaven".

135. God is eternal newness. He impels us constantly to set out anew, to pass beyond what is familiar, to the fringes and beyond. He takes us to where humanity is most wounded, where men and women, beneath the appearance of a shallow conformity, continue to seek an answer to the question of life's meaning. God is not afraid! He is fearless! He is always greater than our plans and schemes. Unafraid of the fringes, he himself became a fringe (cf. *Phil* 2:6-8; *Jn* 1:14). So if we dare to go to the fringes, we will find him there; indeed, he is already there. Jesus is already there, in the hearts of our brothers and sisters, in their wounded flesh, in their troubles and in their profound desolation. He is already there.

144. Let us not forget that Jesus asked his disciples to pay attention to details.
The little detail that wine was running out at a party.
The little detail that one sheep was missing.
The little detail of noticing the widow who offered her two small coins.
The little detail of having spare oil for the lamps, should the bridegroom delay.
The little detail of asking the disciples how many loaves of bread they had.
The little detail of having a fire burning and a fish cooking as he waited for the disciples at daybreak.