

Ministry of Compassion

It is inherent to human nature to long for meaning, peace, justice, love and preservation of the sources of life. Christians confront fear, hatred and hopelessness with the hopeful and life-affirming message of the Gospel. We trust in God's loving and healing power and are called to proclaim and to live this charitable promise. When we neglect to do so, we fail our Christian calling to be witnesses of Christ in the world.

Our active Christian life does not aim to modernize or modify the Church. Rather, we seek ways to introduce Jesus Christ and His Good News to today's people. According to the pastoral constitution of the Second Vatican Council, we are called not to turn away from the world but to be vigilant contemporaries, to interpret the signs of the times in the light of the Gospel and to act accordingly.

The focus of the Gospel is Jesus's call to love God and our neighbor. This should be the foundation of our actions here and now. In a ministry of compassion, we want to treat those around us with love and care, respect and tolerance, regardless of their social or ethnic background, their religion or culture. We are a community of dialog, in which the equality of all people is the basis of our actions and where we have an open ear for their needs. In the large pastoral units of our time, it is impossible for this pastoral care to be solely the duty of priest, deacons and others who work full time in ministry. The communion of the Church can only return to its mission of compassion by recalling the common priesthood of all baptized Christians, in which each individual is called to care for his neighbor.

Today, the Church's commitment to charity receives positive recognition from many people, even from those who are distant from the Church. However, we are not able to adequately respond to individuals who have experienced setbacks in life or who, because of their life choices or circumstances, remain at the margins of society and the Church. These people include divorced and remarried Catholics, mixed-faith couples, those in same-sex relationships and those who have left the Church. We want to engage with them in a ministry of compassion by not excluding them but instead enabling them to participate in the life of the Church. We can only transport this attitude authentically if we as a Christian community not only proclaim our faith but also live it:

- We do not complain about wickedness and unfairness in the world, but we do something about it.
- We do not despair at the problems in our Church, but we work to solve them.
- We value humility and respect over ambition and power.
- We talk with others, not about them.
- We solve conflicts in mutual respect.
- We celebrate together and support one another.
- Time and time again, we are ready for forgiveness and reconciliation.