The Jubilee Year of Mercy: “Merciful Like the Father”

“Let the Church always be a place of Mercy and Hope, where everyone is welcomed, loved, and forgiven.”  Pope Francis

During this Jubilee Year of Mercy, we look to God our almighty Father to bestow great love and forgiveness upon each of us. It is through our Acts of Mercy where we find a greater appreciation for Divine Love and we always recognize that Jesus Christ “is the face of the Father’s Mercy.”

Following in St. John of God’s footsteps, we never cease to proclaim to the world the salvation offered through Jesus, and to live out the Gospel through our humble Acts of Mercy.

Mercy is feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, and sheltering the homeless. Brother David Lynch, OH, Provincial Secretary and Executive Director of Good Shepherd Ministries in Toronto explains: “We welcome everybody as they were created in the image and likeness of God, no matter what their current state in life or their behavior…from individuals trapped in a cycle of poverty or mental health issues or physical health issues. Our Brothers are helping God’s people get the care, treatment, and help that they need every day.” He continues, “This is our life, our mission, and it’s our ministry.”

Mercy is clothing the naked and comforting the afflicted. A client recovering from alcoholism recalled how a Brother helped him in his darkest days, “Oh, you saved my life. You took off your coat and gave it to me when it was snowing.” This small act multiplied and has been paid forward time and again—and “every morning he hugs the Brother because he’s sober now.”

Mercy is visiting the sick, as Brother Richard MacPhee, OH, Provincial Treasurer and Executive Director of Good Shepherd Centre in Hamilton states: “Our hospice program allows us to go out into the community and provide support to families and individuals who have a loved one with a life limiting illness. Our approach is from a psychosocial spiritual viewpoint so we visit people at home and journey with the person during the dying process and then with the family afterwards to help

continued on page 2
them throughout the bereavement process.” Brother Richard views his life’s work as a “healing ministry of the Church.”

**Mercy is burying the dead.** Brother Tom Osorio, OH, Provincial Councillor and Interim Executive Director of St. John of God Community Services in Westville Grove, New Jersey shares: “We average nine child deaths a year at our ministry. We just had a family who buried a child in January and they had nothing. They had no money and they couldn’t afford the funeral. SJOGCS stepped in and we had the funeral here and we buried the child.” Even in the most difficult of times, our Brothers reach out with the hand of Mercy.

**Mercy is also praying for the living and the dead.** We pray for living persons each day and we ask you to send us your prayer intentions. We also pray for our deceased loved ones, especially as All Souls Day approaches, and encourage you to share the names of those that have gone to their Heavenly Reward. Through prayer, we all “become vessels of Mercy, of God’s love.”

As Hospitaller Brothers, our core value centers on hospitality to all and building up the Catholic Church—“where everyone is welcomed, loved, and forgiven.” We join the global world in remembering God’s infinite Mercy and unite in Pope Francis’ words, “We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of Mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace. Our salvation depends on it.”

May the Holy Spirit continue to inspire us and spread His Mercy with each person we meet—whether hungry, thirsty, homeless, naked, afflicted, sick, dying, or in need of prayers. May Christ’s flame continue to spread throughout our communities and into the world around us. Be assured of our prayers for you in this extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy!

*Logo credit: http://www.iubilaeummisericordiae.va/content/gdm/en.html*

**Peace & Justice**

In the summer of 2015 Brother Justin, our Provincial Superior, asked for volunteers to form a Justice and Peace Committee. Brother Gary was asked to chair the committee and Brothers Richard and Gerard were requested to be a part of the effort. Initially we chose to address the topics of Human Trafficking, Ecology and Restorative Justice. Articles were prepared and sent to the members of the Province in order to raise awareness and to discern how we may address these issues in our life and ministry.

Ecology is perhaps the easiest value to implement on a daily basis by recycling. Our ministry sites generate large amounts of recyclable material due to the volume of people receiving meals each day. Community gardens can also be a component of some of our ministry sites. The issue of human trafficking is more complex and necessitates our being aware of people coming into our Centers who may be victims of this violation of their life and freedom. Happily, Camillus House in Miami has recently opened a sixteen bed unit for women over the age of 18 and in need of assistance due to emotional trauma. Service includes psychiatric treatment, counseling, life skills and other healing modules. Some of the women welcomed to the program are suffering due to human trafficking.

Restorative justice calls us to reach out to and restore those who have been injured. It calls us to repair harm by giving voice to victims and rehabilitating offenders through responsibility and reconciliation. Throughout our life time all or most of us occasionally are in the role of victim or offender hopefully in matters that are relatively insignificant. For the people we serve the issues of victim and offender are often huge and the need for restoration equally strong. As Hospitaller Brothers we are privileged to be in the midst of God’s suffering people, and as such, we need to be advocates of justice and peace.

“Compassion begins when we stand in awe of what the poor have to carry instead of judgment over how they carry it.”

Fr. Philip Boyle, SJ “Tattoos on the heart”

**“Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.”**

Matthew 5:7
Be Merciful to Yourself

Showing mercy does not require you to condone a wrong or minimize the pain you have felt, but it does mean being able to let go and offer forgiveness.

So, why is it so hard for us to forgive ourselves?

“God desires us to be released from our burdens so we may live fully human lives. God desires to lift us up, not beat us down. We need to allow God to transform us,” Carmelite Father Joseph Chalmers says. “We need to work to show mercy to ourselves, as God desires for us.”

“For forgiveness is a process,” says Sr. Jane Becker, OSB, Ph.D., that includes four steps:

1. Acknowledging your injured feelings
2. Committing to forgive
3. Relinquishing revenge
4. Thinking differently

Therapist Martha Keys Barker, with Caritas Counseling Center of Saint Luke Institute, says an important part of acknowledging your feelings and beginning to let go is speaking with others.

For example, a person who loses her temper while caregiving for an elderly community member or a parent may be upset with herself and find that hard to let go.

“Talking with friends or as part of a support group can normalize your experience and be a huge help in beginning to let go,” says Keys Barker.

“You learn that you are not the only one in this situation,” she says. She notes that we often hold perfectionistic standards for ourselves and are harder on ourselves than others. She recommends thinking about how you would respond to a friend in your situation. “Typically, you would tell a friend, ‘It’s not as bad as you think’ or ‘It’s serious, but you will get through it.’”

“Be as kind to yourself as you are to your friends,” she says.

Keys Barker recommends making amends when possible. Consider how you might repair a hurt relationship or change the situation. “People often feel bad and that there is nothing they can do, but if there is, acting upon that can help you let go.”

Mindfulness is another resource. One of the practices involves “radically accepting yourself as you are and others as they are,” she says. Return to this over and over as a way to remind yourself that you are human and will make mistakes.

It is helpful to “remember that all of the things that form the person I am today have given me certain strengths and weaknesses,” she says.

Connections for Healthy Life and Ministry

A Merciful Future Together!

As Hospitaller Brothers, we are called to witness Christ’s healing love through our charism of hospitality and in compassionate service to God’s suffering people. There’s nothing in this world we would rather do than help someone in need through our ministries. Together, let’s continue to build a merciful future. Please visit us online at www.sjog-na.org/donate to make a financial gift and spread Christ’s love throughout the Holy Year of Mercy. Thank you!

Answering God’s Call

“I volunteered with the Little Sisters of the Poor at the Jeanne Jugan Residence in the Bronx. One day I was asked to sit with a resident who was sick and that resident died while I was there. I knew at that moment what I wanted to do for the rest of my life—care for others. This woman wasn’t Catholic, but on her nightstand was a holy card of St. John of God and on the back of it the address to our Brothers in New Jersey. I went to visit the Brothers, entered the Order in 1991, and the rest is history.”

Brother Tom Osorio, OH
Director of Mission Values & Interim Ex. Director of St. John of God Community Services

Interested in learning more about becoming a Hospitaller Brother?

Visit www.sjog-na.org/discerning-your-vocation or email VocationsUsa@sjog-na.org or VocationsCanada@sjog-na.org.
The first week of May, the Province began its first Canonical Visitation with Brother Rudolph Knopp, Councillor from the General Curia. During a General Definitory Meeting in January 2013, Brother Rudolph was tasked to carry out Visitation. Brother Justin Howson, Provincial, accompanied Brother Rudolph on the journey along with Sister Christina Kazimirek who served as Brother Rudolph’s secretary and translator. The Visitation began in Miami, Florida, and progressed through Albuquerque, New Mexico; Momence, Illinois; Westville Grove, New Jersey; Montreal, Ontario; Toronto, Ontario; and Hamilton, Ontario. The Visitation concluded in Orangeville, Ontario with a retreat and assembly that included the Brothers, co-workers from the various ministries throughout the Province, the Prior General of the Hospitaller Order, Brother Jesús Etayo, Councillors Brother Rudolph Knopp and Brother Pascal Ahodegnon, and a variety of other guests.

Canonical Visitation is a brotherly visit that serves to evaluate objectively, project the future of communities and ministries based on designated lines of action and priorities, make appropriate decisions to improve our responses, and to enable the Visitator to inform the whole order of the Hospitaller Family of St. John of God regarding relevant information and interests.

Brother Rudolph summarized Visitation in one image borrowed from Pope Francis: the symbol of a polyhedron. Pope Francis says, “Our model is not the sphere…, where every point is equidistant from the center and there are no differences between them. Instead, it is the polyhedron, which reflects the convergence of all its parts, each of which preserves its distinctiveness.”
Following Canonical Visitation, Brother Jesús Etayo, Prior General, and Councillors Brother Rudolf Knopp and Brother Pascal Ahodegnon from the General Curia in Rome joined Brothers at the St. Francis Centre in Orangeville, Ontario for a Retreat and Assembly. The Retreat, “Radical Discipleship in the Manner of Jesus Christ, John of God, and Mathias Barrett”, was led by Bishop Brendan Cominsky, SS.CC., Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Ferns in Ireland.

The Assembly, centering on St. John of God Hospitality, was led by Brother Brian O’Donnell, former Prior General from Sydney, Australia. Co-workers from ministries in Hamilton and Toronto, Ontario; Miami, Florida; Westville Grove, New Jersey; Momence, Illinois; and Los Angeles, California united with Brothers to discuss Mission Priorities of the Province. During this time of sharing, Brothers and co-workers re-committed to faithfully living radical values of Hospitality, Quality, Respect, Responsibility, and Spirituality in the manner of Jesus Christ, John of God, and Mathias Barrett.

Brother Joseph Smith, extended general council member, Australia, facilitated the open discussions on identity and mission of religious brothers within the church and moving forward. Brothers from California and Ireland also attended.

Visitation Highlights

In addition to visiting all community ministry sites and residences, as well as meeting with each Brother individually, highlights of the Canonical Visitation included:

- Attending Camillus House’s 6th annual fundraising auction, “Diamonds and Denim” in Miami.
- Hosting Archbishop John Wester for dinner at Villa Mathias in Albuquerque.
- Visiting the Willis Tower and taking an architectural boat tour in Chicago.
- Attending St. John of God Community Services’ annual prom in Westville Grove.
- Viewing documents and pictures regarding the veneration of God’s Servant, Brother William Gagnon, whose focus was on Vietnam while in Montreal.
- Enjoying dinner, hosted by Brother David, at Somerville House in Toronto for the Visitation Team and management team of Good Shepherd Ministries.
- Participating in the staff appreciation dinner dance for Good Shepherd Centre, Hamilton, “A Night at the Alhambra.”

Radical Discipleship

Sr. Christina attends St. John of God Community Services’ prom.
Born and baptized on May 16, 1905 at Dover, New Hampshire, U.S.A., of French Canadian parents, living both in New England and Québec, Canada. He was called from his youth to take care of others. His vocational quest was completed on November 20, 1932 by his first profession in the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God, Montréal, Québec, Canada. After having occupied various functions of authority and service, his dream of being a missionary became a reality when he arrived with two other Canadian Brothers at the Bùi-Chu Mission, in the North of Vietnam, on January 18, 1952. He was called in North of Vietnam, Brother Nhan (the good brother), and in the South of Vietnam, people used to call Cha Lyam (Father William), due to the fact that the first syllabic was hard to pronounce for them. During his 17 years, his apostolic action concentrated on the implantation of the Order in Vietnam and ministering to thousands of refugees, during the Indochina War and the War of Vietnam. He was preoccupied to develop a community respectful of Vietnamese culture. His life was nourished by his devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Blessed Virgin Mary. Exhausted after having given of himself totally, Brother William died in the odour of sanctity at Saigon, Vietnam, on February 28, 1972. Since his death, the local population has continued to pray at his tomb to obtain favors and protection. His reputation of sanctity during his life and after his death ensured, that General Curia of the Order asked for the opening of his Cause. Thus, the Servant of God William Gagnon, OH had a diocesan inquiry held in the Diocese of Xuân Loc, in Vietnam in 1999 and a diocesan process in the Archdiocese of Montreal in 2000. His Positio (dossier of proof) was written in Montreal and sent to the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints. In December 14, 2015, Pope Francis has recognized how heroically our Servant of God lived the Christian virtues (of faith, charity, hope, fortitude, justice, prudence, and temperance) and declared him Venerable.
Province of the Good Shepherd in North America Information

The Province’s sponsored ministries provide services in the following areas:

- Palliative Care
- Care for Homeless
- Supportive Housing
- Special Needs Education
- Alcohol & Drug Rehabilitation
- Social Services

Our 35 Religious Members come from 8 nationalities. We are the largest province geographically with 13 community properties.

9 Ministry Sites in 4 Countries

- UNITED STATES
- CANADA
- HAITI
- ENGLAND

Ministry Impact

- 233,755+ Clients served annually
- 1,065 Co-workers employed
- 850,000+ Meals served annually
- 20,300+ Volunteers

Religious Members & Their Ministries

- Province Administration
- Developmental Disability Services
- Retired/Prayer Ministry

Acts of Mercy (Homeless, Meals, etc.)

Visit www.sjog-na.org to learn more.
Acts of Mercy

In Misericordiae vultus, Pope Francis emphasizes the need for the Catholic Church and all Her members to live out the loving Mercy that God has for us. We are each called to imitate Jesus’ compassionate love, service, and sacrifice through our actions expressed in the Acts of Mercy. These acts, however small, compel us to alleviate the suffering of others. In what ways are you living out a moment of Mercy?

**Corporal Acts of Mercy**

Corporal Works of Mercy are kind acts, by which we help our neighbors with their material and physical needs.

- Feed the hungry
- Give drink to the thirsty
- Clothe the naked
- Shelter the homeless
- Visit the sick
- Visit the imprisoned
- Bury the dead

**Spiritual Acts of Mercy**

Spiritual Works of Mercy are acts of compassion, which we help our neighbors with their emotional and spiritual needs.

- Counsel the doubtful
- Instruct the ignorant
- Admonish sinners
- Comfort the afflicted
- Forgive offenses
- Bear wrongs patiently
- Pray for the living and the dead

To learn more about the Jubilee Year of Mercy, please visit: [http://www.iubilaeummisericordiae.va/content/gdm/en.html](http://www.iubilaeummisericordiae.va/content/gdm/en.html).

---

**Venerable Servant of God William Gagnon, OH**

Born and baptized on May 16, 1905 at Dover, New Hampshire, of French Canadian parents, living both in New England and Québec, Canada.

He was called from his youth to take care of others. His vocational quest was completed on November 20, 1932 by his first profession in the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

After having occupied various functions of authority and service, his dream of being a missionary became a reality when he arrived with two other Canadian Brothers at the Bùi-Chu Mission, in the North of Vietnam, on January 18, 1952.

He was called in North of Vietnam, Brother Nhan (the good brother), and in the South of Vietnam, people used to call Cha Lyam (Father William), due to the fact that the first syllable was hard to pronounce.

During his 17 years, his apostolic action concentrated on the implantation of the Order in Vietnam and ministering to thousands of refugees, during the Indochina War and the War of Vietnam. He was preoccupied with developing a community respectful of Vietnamese culture. His life was nourished by his devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Exhausted after having given of himself totally, Brother William died in the odour of sanctity at Saigon, Vietnam, on February 28, 1972.

Since his death, the local population has continued to pray at his tomb to obtain favors and protection. With his reputation of sanctity during his life and after his death ensured, the General Curia of the Order asked for the opening of his Cause. Thus, the Servant of God William Gagnon, OH had a diocesan inquiry held in the Diocese of Xuân Loc, in Vietnam in 1999 and a diocesan process in the Archdiocese of Montreal in 2000. His Positio (dossier of proof) was written in Montreal and
In December 14, 2015, Pope Francis recognized how heroically our Servant of God lived the Christian virtues (faith, charity, hope, fortitude, justice, prudence, and temperance) and declared him Venerable. Therefore, you can pray to him and confide to him your requests to obtain favors and documented miracles that will lead to Beatification (which a recognition for a country) and Canonization (universal recognition).

Shall he become one day the Patron Saint of Hospitality for the refugees?

Denis Morin
Vice-postulation for the Cause of the Servant of God William Gagnon, OH

Jubilee Year of Mercy Prayer

Together we pray the words from Pope Francis during this Holy Year of Mercy:

Lord Jesus Christ, you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father, and have told us that whoever sees you sees Him. Show us your face and we will be saved.

Your loving gaze freed Zacchaeus and Matthew from being enslaved by money, the adulteress and Magdalene from seeking happiness only in created things, made Peter weep after his betrayal, and assured Paradise to the repentant thief.

Let us hear, as if addressed to each one of us, the words that you spoken to the Samaritan woman: “If you knew the gift of God!”

You are the visible face of the invisible Father, of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy: let the Church be your visible face in the world, its Lord risen and glorified.

You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness in order that they may feel compassion for those in ignorance and error: let everyone who approaches them feel sought after, loved, and forgiven by God.

Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its anointing, so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord, and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed, and restore sight to the blind.

We ask this through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy, you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

sent to the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints.

Why do Catholics observe All Saints Day on November 1?

The day commemorates all those who have attained sainthood in Heaven, also known as “beatific vision”—this includes both known and unknown saints. Pope Gregory IV first ordered the church-wide observance in 837.

We celebrate All Saints Day as a fundamental belief that there is a spiritual bond between us on Earth and the saints in Heaven. Saints are holy and human people who lived extraordinary lives. Each saint the Catholic Church honors responded to God’s invitation to use his or her unique gifts to further the Kingdom of God. In fact, God calls each one of us to be a saint.

This solemn holy day is also a time to remember, reflect upon, and pray to our founder, St. John of God, known as the patron saint of hospitals, the sick, nurses, fire-fighters, alcoholics, and booksellers. Together, we ask for St. John of God’s intercession for our intentions and prayers.

“*The fervent prayer of a righteous person is very powerful.*”

James 5:16
Good Shepherd Ministry in Wolverhampton, England, run by the Hospitaller Order of St. John of God Brothers, was named a 2016 recipient of The Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service. The Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service is the highest award given to volunteer groups across England, presented for outstanding work in their communities to enhance and improve the lives of others.

Good Shepherd Ministry provides a vital foodbank and food distribution service to needy individuals and families in the city. Based on Darlington Street, the Ministry helps on average more than 250 people, individuals and families, every day of the year. Brother Stephen, who has served clients in Wolverhampton for over 15 years said, “It is wonderful to see that what our many volunteers do for the poor and needy in our city has been recognized in this way. We currently have around 75 volunteers who are involved at all levels of the organization, from sitting on the board to preparing hot meals and sandwiches and acting as delivery drivers. They are so important to us, and we are very thankful to them for all they do.”

Good Shepherd Center-Albuquerque, New Mexico

The main lobby at the Center has been in the midst of renovations that include new wall paint, updated cabinets, new countertops – and most importantly a Heritage Wall that reflects who we are and what we profess to each other. A Heritage Wall is an opportunity to share our history, our mission and values, and who inspires this. In this case, it is a reflection of St. John of God and Brother Mathias Barrett. The individual elements that make up this entire work are the Order’s Logo in silver backing, Hospitality artwork by Sr. Madeleva, portraits of St. John of God and Brother Mathias Barrett, and surrounding artwork with our values of Hospitality, Quality, Respect, Responsibility and Spirituality.
In Memoriam

Brother Luc Jolicoeur, OH
November 1, 1938- April 26, 2016

Brother Luc was born Jean Luc Jolicoeur November 1, 1938 in Jacmel, Haiti. He was baptized (1938) and confirmed (1945) at St. Anne Church in Jacmel. Prior to entrance in religious life as a Little Brother of the Good Shepherd, he was a tailor in Brooklyn, NY. He served as an ordained Deacon at Immaculate Conception Church in Brooklyn. Brother Luc entered the Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd in 1987, professed perpetual vows November 1, 1992. He was ordained a priest February 11, 1995 in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

Brother Luc served his religious community and the people of God ministering to the poor and homeless in Miami, Florida and the children of Haiti. His legacy of love will continue on at Sheepfold of the Good Shepherd an oasis of possibility and opportunity.

All Souls Day Remembrance

In remembrance of All Souls Day on November 2, 2016, the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God-Province of the Good Shepherd in North America will remember your deceased loved ones in prayer and during our Eucharistic Celebrations. Throughout the month of November, your loved ones will also be remembered in our daily prayers.

Please use the enclosed envelope to share your prayer intentions or visit www.sjob-na.org/prayer-requests/ and list the names of your faithful departed. We pray that memories of your loved ones give you strength and that your faith comforts you with the promise that you will see them again in Heaven.

Thank you for entrusting us with your intentions and your loving support. It is through our prayers that we are truly united. May God continue to bless you and your loved ones—on earth and in Heaven!

God of eternity, in faith we leave our grieving with you. We will walk forward to a new day, the day of rising life. We will sing our songs of hope where hope is hard to find. Great is your faithfulness to us. O God of the ages of ages. Amen.

Keep an Eye on Your Mailbox

With Brothers in four countries and nine ministry sites—from prayer ministry, to caring for the homeless, to providing developmental disability services—we know we can’t do it all alone. Arriving soon in your mailbox will be our Annual Appeal. Please look for it…and we humbly invite you to give as generously as you can to the Province of the Good Shepherd.

Our Brothers are eternally grateful for your friendship and financial gifts of support that allow us to respond to the Lord’s flock with great love. From the bottom of our hearts we thank you for your kindness and generosity. You are a blessing to us…may God bless you always!
Mission Statement

Encouraged by the gift we have received, we consecrate ourselves to God and dedicate ourselves to serving the Church in the assistance for the sick and those in need, with a preference for the poorest.

In this way we show that the compassionate and merciful Christ of the Gospel is still alive among men and we work with him for their salvation. When he called us to be Hospitaller Brothers of Saint John of God chose us to form a community of apostolic life, and so it is our desire to live out in communion with each other the love of God and our neighbor.

We feel that we are brothers of all mankind and we dedicate ourselves chiefly to the service of the weak and the sick: their needs and sufferings touch our hearts, and lead us to alleviate those needs and sufferings and to work for the personal development and advancement of such people.

As living members of the church, we seek to manifest the supremacy of God’s love and we wish to attain the perfection of love for God and our neighbor, through the unceasing exercise of all the virtues, the public profession of the vows of chastity, poverty, obedience and hospitality, fidelity to the spirit of the Rule of Saint Augustine, and observance of the Constitutions of the Order.