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Just Start (11): Accompany Those in Prison

The final video in the series on the works of mercy, for the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

11/19/2016

Suggestions for action

— Find out about the prisons near where you live, the possibilities of visiting the inmates and what their main needs are.

— If you can't go yourself to visit prisoners, visit them with your prayer.

— Pray frequently for prisoners and their families.

— Consider whether you have any items, such as books, which could be donated to a prison.

— On big feasts, such as Christmas, try to send a card or a special treat to someone in prison.

Quotes from Sacred Scripture to reflect on

— 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you

visited me, I was in prison and you came to me' (*Mt 25:34-36*).

— Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them; and those who are ill-treated, since you also are in the body (*Heb 13:3*).

— Happy is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who keeps faith for ever; who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down (*Ps 146:5-8*).

Quotes from Pope Francis to reflect on

— If you are not in prison, it's because God has helped you not to fall. Do prisoners have a place in

your heart? Do you pray for them, so that our Lord helps them to change their life? (Homily, 20 February 2013).

— I really love going to prisons. To talk with the inmates.... Perhaps you will understand what I am saying— every time I enter a prison, I ask myself: “Why them and not me?” And there I feel the salvation of Jesus Christ, the love of Jesus Christ for me. Because it is He who saved me. I am no less a sinner than they are (Address, 15 November 2015).

— Today capital punishment is unacceptable, however serious the condemned person’s crime may have been. It is an offence to the inviolability of life and to the dignity of the human person which contradicts God’s plan for man and for society and his merciful justice, and it fails to conform to any just purpose of punishment. It does not

render justice to the victims, but rather foments revenge (Letter, 20 March 2015).

Quotes from Saint Josemaria to reflect on

— One can be a prisoner in the most horrible and inhuman cell, and be free, accepting God's will and loving sacrifice, thinking about all the souls on earth. How many martyrs for the faith in our days have soared like eagles, with their body in irons and their soul free to love God without any limit! (25 June 1972).

— Love of God marks out the way of truth, justice and goodness. When we make up our minds to tell Our Lord, 'I put my freedom in your hands,' we find ourselves loosed from the many chains that were binding us to insignificant things, ridiculous cares or petty ambitions. Then our freedom, which is a treasure beyond price, a wonderful pearl that it would

be a tragedy to cast before swine,
will be used by us entirely to learn
how to do good. This is the glorious
freedom of the children of God
(*Friends of God*, no. 38).

— I will tell you which are man's
treasures on earth so that you will
appreciate them: hunger, thirst, heat,
cold, pain, dishonor, poverty,
loneliness, betrayal, slander, prison...
(*The Way*, no. 194).

"You visited me in prison"

The Book I Read in Prison

*Restoring Hope to Prisoners through
Rugby*