

Distributed by



# Hands of Mercy



*A Creative Way to Teach About the Acts of Mercy!*

**Introduction:** Here is an engaging and empowering large group activity for your faith formation students and their families! "Hands of Mercy" will give participants of all ages an opportunity to learn in a very special way about the Corporal Acts of Mercy. During this 90 minute program, students and parents (if they are present) will visit four activity stations where they will be creatively involved with *"Feeding the Hungry"*, *"Sheltering the Homeless"*, *"Clothing Those in Need"* and *"Comforting the Afflicted"*.

While visiting these stations participants will also be assembling their own personal rosary beads, so that they will have the opportunity in the future for further prayer and reflection on serving the poor.

"Hands of Mercy" is easy to prepare for and do at your church! Everything you will need for supplies, as well as directions for catechists, is listed in these documents. We believe your faith formation children and their families will be deeply enriched by this very enjoyable, creative and affirming special event!

# Hands of Mercy

## Leader Directions

**Opening:** (*10 minutes*) Gather the group together and explain that this activity is about Acts of Mercy. Jesus calls us to help others by providing food, shelter, clothing and comfort for those in need. Divide the group into 4 smaller groups. Tell them that they will have an opportunity to do 4 activities before coming back together again for a closing activity. These activities will be about feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing those in need and comforting people who are alone and lonely. And, since they will be drawing and coloring at all of the activity stations, they will be using their hands (as well as their imaginations) to practice these Acts of Mercy. Briefly show them what they will be making at each activity station: Feeding the Hungry—a paper plate with nutritious food in it, Sheltering the Homeless—drawing houses for people, Clothing Station—creating and coloring clothing, and Caring for Others—making and coloring cards

At this point, each child is handed a rosary chain minus the ten beads. Tell them that as they go about doing these activities today, they will receive rosary beads for their rosary. This is to remind them that as they pray the rosary they make today, they can think about serving those who are hungry, homeless, in need of clothing or friendship.

Prepare to send each group to a different station. Tell them they will hear 2 bells at each one of their station visits. The first one is a Warning Bell which means they have 5 minutes to complete their activity. The second is the Change Bell which means it is time to move on to the next station. (As the leader, you will have to manage the bell ringing. Suggested timing would be 12 minutes before ringing the Warning Bell and then another 5 minutes before ringing the Change Bell. The larger the groups of children, the more time you should allow before ringing the Warning Bell at each activity.)

# Hands of Mercy

## Leader Directions

**Closing:** (10 minutes) When all four groups have returned to the original large group, tell them that they have used their hands in today's activities to practice Acts of Mercy in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing those in need and comforting the lonely. Invite them now to trace their hands on a large mural that says, "Hands of Mercy". They can then write their name inside their hand. Distribute the final 2 rosary beads and a Mary metal so that they may complete their individual rosaries. Close the program by having the group say one decant of the rosary while thinking about those who need our Mercy. Or if you are short on time, you can save praying the rosary next time and use this prayer instead:

*Loving God, we have learned more about those who need our help. May we always be mindful in our prayer of their needs, and to make decisions and take action that can make a difference in their lives. Amen.*

**Suggestion for the Art Work:** All the art work that has been made in the course of this activity could be displayed at your parish, along with the "*Hands of Mercy*" paper banner, before returning it your students.

# Hands of Mercy

## Hunger Station Directions

At this station, the students will be using paper plates to draw and color a nutritious meal for a hungry child. State that about 800 million people in the world do not have enough to eat. That is about 1 out of every 9 persons. So let's think about preparing one of those persons a meal. (You could also put this introduction in the form of a sentence: *Do you know how many people in the World do not have enough to eat every day?*) Discuss that a healthy meal consists of 1 Grain Food (examples: bread, cereal), 1 Protein Food (examples: meat, fish, eggs, beans), 1 Vegetable (examples: carrots, peas, corn, salad) and 1 Fruit (apple, banana, orange), plus a glass of milk for the dairy group. Have the students give examples of their favorite foods from these groups. Tell them to use their imagination to create a nutritious meal, using at least one food item from each of the four food groups, that the person they are "cooking for" would really like!

At the Warning Bell, have each child show his food plate to the others. Briefly discuss their meals. At the Change Bell, you collect their colored food plates for display later and give each child 2 rosary beads before sending the group to the Homeless Station.

# Hands of Mercy

## Homeless Station Directions

At this station, children will be drawing and coloring various shelters, houses and buildings on a very large area of paper. They may also want to “connect” some of their dwellings with streets, roads or bridges, so that their work resembles a small town. Explain to the children that many people in our country do not have a home to sleep in at night. There are over 500,000 people each night in our country that do not have a home to sleep in. Over 200,000 of them are members of families. (You also could put this opening in the form of a question: *Do you know how many people in our country do not have a home to sleep in each night?*)

Have the children think about what kind of house or home they would like those who are homeless to live in. Have each child pick a spot on the large area of paper to draw and color their home. Towards the end of the activity, they can fill in the picture with roads, streets, trees, etc., etc. If time allows, have each child briefly talk about the home they have built. When the Change Bell rings, give each child two beads for his or her rosary and send the group to the Clothing Station. (You keep the large paper drawing for display later.)

# Hands of Mercy

## Clothing Station Directions

At this station, the children will be drawing and coloring clothes from the head outlines of children that are on the paper handed to them. To begin, tell the group that many people around the world cannot afford to buy clothes. That is because about 3 billion people in our world live on less than \$2.50 per day. So, their money is spent to buy food. Clean clothes help us to not to get sick and to keep us warm when the temperatures get colder.

As you distribute the paper to the children, have them think about the person whose silhouette they are seeing. What kind of clothes do they think that child would like to have? Would they need clothes for warm weather or cold weather? What kind of foot wear would they have? In sunny, hot climates what protective clothing might the children wear?

Have the children draw and color their clothing for their person. At the Warning Bell, have each child talk a little bit about what they have drawn and colored. At the Change Bell, you collect their art work for display later, and give each child 2 rosary beads before sending them to the Caring For Others Station.

# Hands of Mercy

## Caring For Others Station Directions

At this station, the children will be creating “I Care” cards for people who are lonely, sad, away from home or generally feeling alone. To begin, have the children think about a time when they felt a little sad or lonely. What happened to make them feel better? Did someone help them or comfort them? Did someone make them feel like they were not all alone?

Distribute the blank cards to the children. Tell the group about a specific group you would like them to create the cards for, like people in a hospital or elderly citizens living alone. (These cards should be made for an actual place or person, like a nearby nursing home or parishioners who are homebound and cannot attend Mass.) Have the children create and color an “I Care” card. (The card doesn’t necessarily have to say “I Care”, but should convey that the sender is thinking about the person receiving the card and hopes that will not continue to feel sad or lonely.)

At the Warning Bell, have each child show and talk about the card they created. At the Change Bell, collect their cards for distribution later and give each child 2 rosary beads before sending them to the Hunger Station.

Distributed by



# Hands of Mercy

## Leader Directions

**Opening:** Gather the group together and explain that this activity is about Acts of Mercy. Jesus calls us to help others by providing food, shelter, clothing and comfort for those in need. Divide the group into 4 smaller groups. Tell them that they will have an opportunity to do 4 activities before coming back together again for a closing activity. These activities will be about feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing those in need and comforting people who are alone and lonely. And, since we will be drawing and coloring at all of the activities, we will be using our hands (as well as our imagination) to practice these Acts of Mercy.

At this point, each child is handed a rosary chain with a no beads, just a cross. Tell them that as they go about doing these activities today, they will receive rosary beads for their rosary to remind them that as they pray the rosary they can think about serving those who are hungry, homeless, in need of clothing or friendship. They will also each receive a bag for collecting the items they will be making at each station.

Prepare to send each group to a different station. Tell them they will hear 2 bells at each one of their station visits. The first one is a Warning Bell which means they have a couple of minutes to complete their activity. The second is the Change Bell which means it is time to move on to the next station. (As the leader, you will have to manage the bell ringing. Suggested timing would be 9 or 10 minutes before ringing the Warning Bell and then another 2 or 3 minutes before ringing the Change Bell.)

**Closing:** When all four groups have returned to the original large group, tell them that they have used their hands in today's activities to practice Acts of Mercy in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing those in need and comforting the lonely. Invite them now to trace their hands on a large mural that says, "Hands of Mercy". Distribute the final 2 rosary beads so that they may complete their individual rosaries. Close the program by having the group say one decant of the rosary while thinking about those who need our Mercy.



# Hands of Mercy

## Hunger Station Directions

At this station, the students will be using paper plates to draw and color a nutritious meal for a hungry child. State that about 800 million people in the world do not have enough to eat. That is about 1 out of every 9 persons. So let's think about preparing one of those persons a meal. Discuss that a healthy meal consists of 1 Grain Food (examples: bread, cereal), 1 Protein Food (examples: meat, fish, eggs, beans), 1 Vegetable (examples: carrots, peas, corn, salad) and 1 Fruit (apple, banana, orange), plus a glass of milk for the dairy group. Have the students give examples of their favorite foods from these groups. Tell them to use their imagination to create a nutritious meal, using at least one food item from each of the four food groups, that the person they are "cooking for" would really like!

At the Warning Bell, have each child show his food plate to the others. Briefly discuss their meals. At the Change Bell, have the children put their completed dinner plate in their bag and give each child 2 rosary beads before sending the group to the Homeless Station.

# Hands of Mercy

## Homeless Station Directions

At this station, children will be drawing and coloring various shelters, houses and buildings on a very large area of paper. They may also want to “connect” some of their dwellings with streets, roads or bridges, so that their work resembles a small town. Explain to the children that many people in our country do not have a home to sleep in at night. There are over 500,000 people in each night in our country that do not have a home to sleep in. Over 200,000 of them are members of families.

Have the children think about what kind of house or home they would like those who are homeless to live in. Have each child pick a spot on the large area of paper to draw and color their home. Towards the end of the activity, they can fill in the picture with roads, streets, trees, etc., etc. If time allows, have each child briefly talk about the home they have built. When the Change Bell rings, give each child two beads for his or her rosary and send the group to the Clothing Station. (You will keep the large paper drawing to display for everybody later.)

# Hands of Mercy

## Clothing Station Directions

At this station, the children will be drawing and coloring clothes from the head outlines of children that are on the paper handed to them. To begin, tell the group that many people around the world cannot afford to buy clothes. That is because about 3 billion people in our world live on less than \$2.50 per day. So, their money is spent to buy food. Clean clothes help us to not to get sick and to keep us warm when the temperatures get colder.

As you distribute the paper to the children, have them think about the person whose silhouette they are seeing. What kind of clothes do they think that child would like to have? Would they need clothes for warm weather or cold weather? What kind of foot wear would they have?

Have the children draw and color their clothing for their person. At the Warning Bell, have each child talk a little bit about what they have drawn and colored. At the Change Bell, the children may put their drawings in their bags, and give each child 2 rosary beads before sending them to the Caring For Others Station.

# Hands of Mercy

## Caring For Others Station Directions

At this station, the children will be creating “I Care” cards for people who are lonely, sad, away from home or generally feeling alone. To begin, have the children think about a time when they felt a little sad or lonely. What happened to make them feel better? Did someone help them or comfort them? Did someone make them feel like they were not all alone?

Distribute the blank cards to the children. Have them think about someone who may be feeling sad or lonely or all alone. It could be a real person or a person in their imagination. Have the children create and color an “I Care” card for this person. (The card doesn’t necessarily have to say “I Care”, but should convey that the sender is thinking about the person receiving the card and hopes that will not continue to feel sad or lonely.)

At the Warning Bell, have each child show and talk about the card they created. At the Change Bell, have the children put their cards in the bags they are carrying and give them each 2 rosary beads before sending them to the Hunger Station.

Distributed by



# Hands of Mercy

## Supplies

### Opening:

Bell

Rosary Supplies (*see attachment or use another option*)

### Hunger Station:

White paper plates

Chart paper if needed for brainstorming food choices

Markers, crayons, colored pencils

### Homeless Station:

Banner paper

Markers/crayons/colored pencils

### Clothing Station:

Handout sheets with face outlines

Markers/crayons/colored pencils

### Caring for Others Station:

Paper (construction and cardstock) for making cards

Markers/crayons/colored pencils

### Closing:

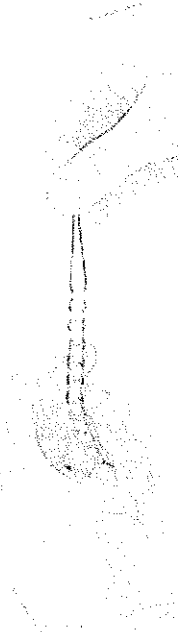
Mural paper that says Hands of Mercy

Pencils for tracing

Markers for coloring hand-tracing in

## How to Make a Corded Rosary Knot for Step 5

*Step A.* Leave about 3 beads length for the Corded Rosary knot.



*Step B.* Fold the cord over your index finger.



Wrap the cord around your index finger so that the cord forms an X.

*Step C.* Wrap the cord twice more around the finger for a total of 2 times (3 loops), moving toward the palm of your hand.



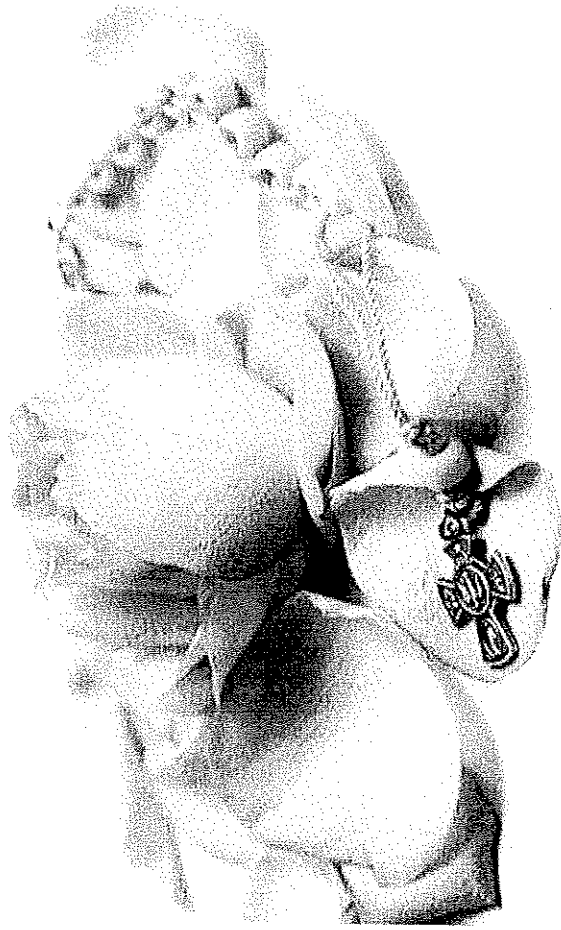
*Step D.* Gently slide the resulting coils off your finger while maintaining their form.

*Step E.* Pull the end of the cord through these coils from the rear to the front.

Very carefully, tighten the knot, pulling on the right side and maintaining the position of the knot with the left hand, (slowly) taking care to keep the coils in order, not letting the coils tangle or slip over one another. Once you are certain that the knot is correctly placed, pull to tighten.

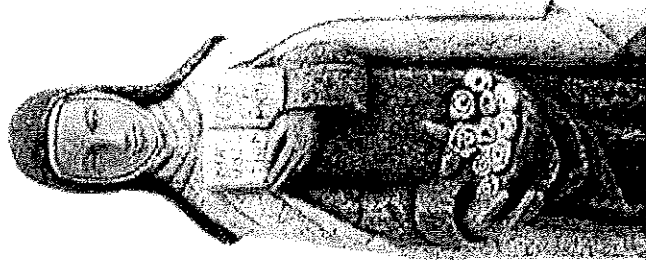


## Instructions for Making Sacrifice Beads / Good Deed Beads



**S**t. Therèse, the Little Flower, as a child, used a small string of beads in her pocket to help her count the gifts she did to offer to God. In this way she was able to advance in perfection daily. You too, can grow in holiness by following the example of the Little Flower.

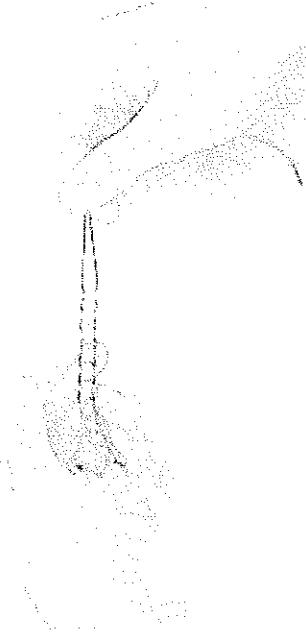
**S**acrifice Beads or Good Deed Beads are a string of ten beads, which can be pulled and remain in place. They are used to count the acts of love or sacrifices a person makes in a day for God. The string of beads helps a person to grow in virtue by challenging them to be faithful in making acts of love each day. Sacrifice Beads also have a fixed Our Father bead on the end of them and can double up as a rosary.



For more information or to order sacrifice beads or kits, visit:  
[www.thelittleways.com](http://www.thelittleways.com)

## How to Make a Corded Rosary Knot for Step 5

**Step A.** Leave about 3 beads length for the Corded Rosary knot.



**Step B.** Fold the cord over your index finger.



Wrap the cord around your index finger so that the cord forms an X.

**Step C.** Wrap the cord twice more around the finger for a total of 2 times (3 loops), moving toward the palm of your hand.

**Step D.** Gently slide the resulting coils off your finger while maintaining their form.



**Step E.** Pull the end of the cord through these coils from the rear to the front.

Very carefully, tighten the knot, pulling on the right side and maintaining the position of the knot with the left hand, (slowly) taking care to keep the coils in order, not letting the coils tangle or slip over one another. Once you are certain that the knot is correctly placed, pull to tighten.

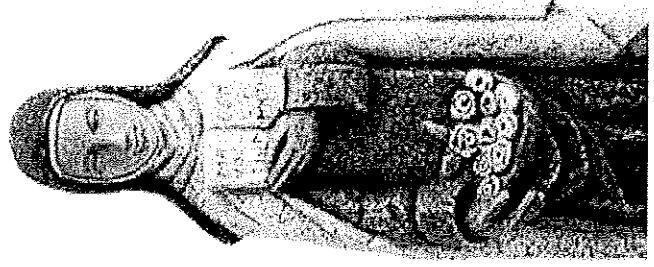


## Instructions for Making Sacrifice Beads / Good Deed Beads



St. Therèse, the Little Flower, as a child, used a small string of beads in her pocket to help her count the gifts she did to offer to God. In this way she was able to advance in perfection daily. You too, can grow in holiness by following the example of the Little Flower.

Sacrifice Beads or Good Deed Beads are a string of ten beads, which can be pulled and remain in place. They are used to count the acts of love or sacrifices a person makes in a day for God. The string of beads helps a person to grow in virtue by challenging them to be faithful in making acts of love each day. Sacrifice Beads also have a fixed Our Father bead on the end of them and can double up as a rosary.



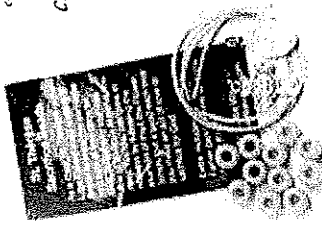
For more information or to order sacrifice beads or kits, visit:  
[www.thelittleways.com](http://www.thelittleways.com)

# How to Make Sacrifice Beads / Good Deed Beads

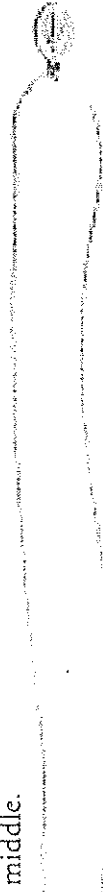
*"Without love, deeds - even the most brilliant, count as nothing" - St. Therèse of Lisieux*

## Supplies Needed

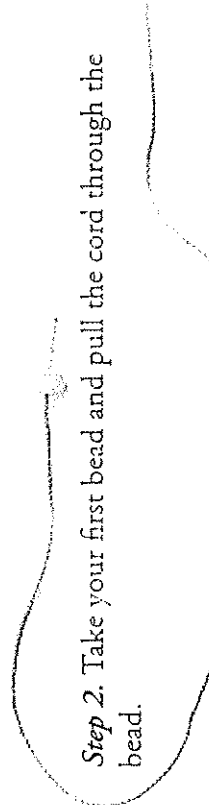
- 25" (64cm) piece of cord (#9 twine)
- 11 beads (pony or wooden)
- 1 Miraculous Medal
- 1 Crucifix/Cross/Saint Medal



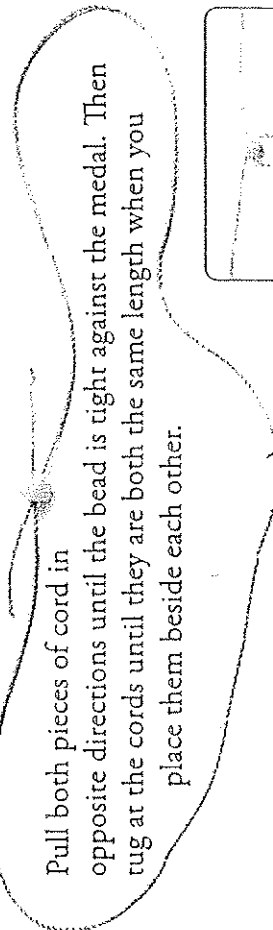
**Step 1.** Put the miraculous medal or the medal that you wish to use at the bottom of the set of sacrifice beads on the string and pull it to the middle.



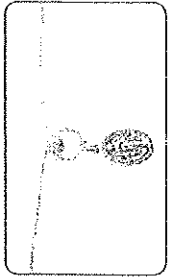
**Step 2.** Take your first bead and pull the cord through the bead.



**Step 3.** Take the other end of the cord and pull it through the same bead but in the opposite side so that the string makes an X inside the bead.



Pull both pieces of cord in opposite directions until the bead is tight against the medal. Then tug at the cords until they are both the same length when you place them beside each other.



Copyright 2004-2008 The Little Ways  
 - [www.thelittleways.com](http://www.thelittleways.com) -  
 Please copy; contact for publishing.

**Step 4.** Pick-up your next bead and again form an X with the string through the bead.

Pull both cords in opposite directions until the beads are tight against each other.

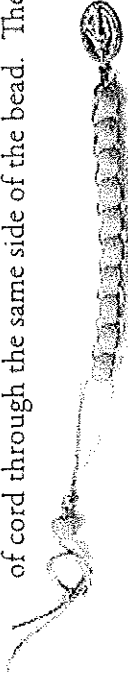
Repeat this step until you have 10 beads in total.



**Step 5.** Leave about 3 bead lengths and tie a double knot - or do a corded rosary knot (A corded rosary knot is the best knot to do. See instructions for a rosary knot on the next page).

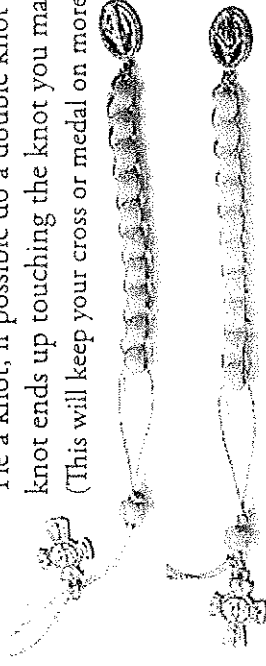


**Step 6.** Take your last bead (The Our Father Bead) and string both pieces of cord through the same side of the bead. Then tie a knot.



**Step 7.** Take your Cross, Crucifix or Medal and string both pieces of cord through the same side of it.

Tie a knot, if possible do a double knot so that the knot ends up touching the knot you made in step 6. (This will keep your cross or medal on more securely).



**Step 8.** Burn/melt your extra cord off as cutting it will cause it to fray. (Adult supervision required)



*Start pulling beads and doing acts of love!*



## MEMBER PROGRAM

- Full access to our training website and certification courses with updates and new training modules each month.
- Access to catechetical courses to help you increase your knowledge of faith.
- Access to video training conferences.
- Access to all of our pamphlets in PDF format for you to print out and distribute at no charge.
- Access to all of the other various resources and templates that our evangelization teams use around the world.
- Huge discounts on evangelization resources in our Members Only Store. [Pledging Members Only]
- The knowledge that your membership will allow you to be involved in the conversion of our entire world to Jesus Christ and His Church.



[stpaulse.com/members](http://stpaulse.com/members)

