

Day 219 – Sunday, October 25

I have ten minutes to leave the house for Mass in Albertville. So I only have time for the following.

The works of mercy are broken up into two categories: the corporal works of mercy and the spiritual works of mercy. Sacred Scripture defines seven corporal works of mercy (Matt 25:31-46): Feed the hungry, Give drink to the thirsty, Clothe the naked, Shelter the homeless, Visit the sick, Visit the imprisoned, Bury the dead. The corporal works of mercy are concerned primarily with meeting the physical needs of others.

Ransom The Captive

There are three great practical suggestions on how to tangibly “ransom the captive” in your hometown. They are:

1. Invite those held captive by loneliness to join you for a holiday meal.
2. Reach out to a local school to offer food and Christmas gifts to young people who are held captive by poverty.
3. Support Covenant House and other ministries that house those held captive by homelessness.

These are three great ways to ransom the captive, but they are not the only three. If you can, take a moment to examine your own life and prayerfully consider who God might be calling you to help. Earlier this year, my friend Evan’s grandmother fell and broke her wrist. She is 87 years old and the fall demanded that she spend a significant amount of time in a nursing home to regain her strength. The physical therapy was rough for her, really rough. Evan and his family couldn’t imagine the pain and the struggle “Grandma Ellie” was going through. One day, Evan went to the nursing home to visit his recovering Grandmother. For Evan, Grandma Ellie had always been a beacon of joy. She had a way about her that never failed to bring a smile to those around her. Evan was hoping to see that smile despite the circumstances. When he arrived, Grandma Ellie greeted him with a smile and a kiss, but she was tired. Evan could tell the therapy had worn her out. After some time together, Grandma Ellie asked Evan to sit down next to her. She began to tell him how she wasn’t much of a morning person but no one knew it because her smile always started with Mass. She told him the day was more of a struggle without Communion. She begged him to bring her the Eucharist. Evan was so moved by his Grandmother’s plea that he promised to bring her Jesus each week. Grandma Ellie was held captive by her homebound state and Evan set her free by bringing Communion to her. There are countless, immensely practical ways to ransom the captive. Imagine if each of us striving to have our best Advent Ever helped ransom just one captive this Advent. That would be incredible. Let’s do something incredible.

PS I turn the big 60 tomorrow

In the light of eternity, we’re here for a very short time, really. We’re here for one thing, ultimately: to learn how to love, because God is love. - James Finley

Sincerely,
Fr. Jim Kaptein