



Extraordinary Year of Mercy

Words of Wisdom - the Word made flesh

This series of quotations from Pope Francis and Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB highlight the importance of Mercy for us as a church community.

The quotes can be used in the following ways:

- Copies may be left in the entrance of your church for pilgrims to take and reflect on either in the church or take with them when they leave.
- Small groups of pilgrims may wish to reflect on a quote and then share their thoughts with each other.
- One of the quotes could be enlarged and placed in the entrance of the church for pilgrims to view.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ *Misericordiae Vultus*

“At times we are called to gaze even more attentively on mercy so that we may become a more effective sign of the Father’s action in our lives. For this reason, I have proclaimed an Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy as a special time for the Church, a time when the witness of believers might grow stronger and more effective”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ *Misericordiae Vultus*

“When faced with the gravity of sin, God responds with the fullness of mercy. Mercy will always be greater than any sin, and no one can place limits on the love of God who is ever ready to forgive”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ *Misericordiae Vultus*

“... the Holy Door will become a Door of Mercy through which anyone who enters will experience the love of God who consoles, pardons, and instills hope”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Misericordiae Vultus

“With these sentiments of gratitude for everything the Church has received, and with a sense of responsibility for the task that lies ahead, we shall cross the threshold of the Holy Door fully confident that the strength of the Risen Lord, who constantly supports us on our pilgrim way, will sustain us. May the Holy Spirit, who guides the steps of believers in cooperating with the work of salvation wrought by Christ, lead the way and support the People of God so that they may contemplate the face of mercy”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Misericordiae Vultus

“May the balm of mercy reach everyone”



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Misericordiae Vultus

“Patient and merciful. These words often go together in the Old Testament to describe God’s nature”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Misericordiae Vultus

. “He executes justice for the oppressed; He 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; the Lord loves the righteous.

The Lord watches over the sojourners, He upholds the widow and the fatherless; but the way of the wicked He brings to ruin” (Ps 146:7-9);



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Misericordiae Vultus

“... the mercy of God is not an abstract idea, but a concrete reality with which He reveals His love as of that of a father or a mother, moved to the very depths out of love for their child. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that this is a “visceral” love. It gushes forth from the depths naturally, full of tenderness and compassion, indulgence and mercy”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Misericordiae Vultus

“It is as if to say that not only in history, but for all eternity man will always be under the merciful gaze of the Father” .



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Misericordiae Vultus

“Knowing that Jesus himself prayed this psalm [Psalm 136] makes it even more important for us as Christians, challenging us to take up the refrain in our daily lives by praying these words of praise:
“for his mercy endures forever.”



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Misericordiae Vultus

“With our eyes fixed on Jesus and His merciful gaze, we experience the love of the Most Holy Trinity”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Misericordiae Vultus

“The mission Jesus received from the Father was that of revealing the mystery of divine love in its fullness. “God is love” (1 Jn 4:8,16), John affirms for the first and only time in all of Holy Scripture. This love has now been made visible and tangible in Jesus’ entire life”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Misericordiae Vultus

“The signs He works, especially in favour of sinners, the poor, the marginalised, the sick, and the suffering, are all meant to teach mercy. Everything in Him speaks of mercy. Nothing in Him is devoid of compassion”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Misericordiae Vultus

“Jesus, seeing the crowds of people who followed Him, realised that they were tired and exhausted, lost and without a guide, and He felt deep compassion for them (cf Mt 9:36). On the basis of this compassionate love, He healed the sick who were presented to Him (cf Mt 14:14), and with just a few loaves of bread and fish He satisfied the enormous crowd (cf Mt 15:37)”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Misericordiae Vultus

“From another parable, we cull an important teaching for our Christian lives. In reply to Peter’s question about how many times it is necessary to forgive, Jesus says: “I do not say seven times, but seventy times seven times” (Mt 18:22).



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ *Misericordiae Vultus*

“In the parables devoted to mercy, Jesus reveals the nature of God as that of a Father who never gives up until He has forgiven the wrong and overcome rejection with compassion and mercy. We know these parables well, three in particular: the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the father with two sons (cf Lk 15:1-32). In these parables, God is always presented as full of joy, especially when He pardons. In them, we find the core of the Gospel and of our faith, because mercy is presented as a force that overcomes everything, filling the heart with love and bringing consolation through pardon”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ *Misericordiae Vultus*

“Jesus affirms that mercy is not only an action of the Father, it becomes a criterion for ascertaining who His true children are. In short, we are called to show mercy because mercy has first been shown to us”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ *Misericordiae Vultus*

“Pardoning offences becomes the clearest expression of merciful love, and for us Christians it is an imperative from which we cannot excuse ourselves”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Misericordiae Vultus

“let us listen to the words of Jesus who made mercy an ideal of life and a criterion for the credibility of our faith: “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy” (Mt 5:7): the beatitude to which we should particularly aspire in this Holy Year”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Misericordiae Vultus

“As we can see in Sacred Scripture, mercy is a key word that indicates God’s action towards us. He does not limit Himself merely to affirming His love, but makes it visible and tangible. Love, after all, can never be just an abstraction. By its very nature, it indicates something concrete: intentions, attitudes, and behaviours that are shown in daily living”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Misericordiae Vultus

“The mercy of God is His loving concern for each one of us. He feels responsible; that is, He desires our wellbeing and He wants to see us happy, full of joy, and peaceful. This is the path which the merciful love of Christians must also travel. As the Father loves, so do His children. Just as He is merciful, so we are called to be merciful to each other.”



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Misericordiae Vultus

“Mercy is the very foundation of the Church’s life. All of Her pastoral activity should be caught up in the tenderness She makes present to believers; nothing in Her preaching and in Her witness to the world can be lacking in mercy. The Church’s very credibility is seen in how She shows merciful and compassionate love. The Church “has an endless desire to show mercy”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Misericordiae Vultus

“The time has come for the Church to take up the joyful call to mercy once more. It is time to return to the basics and to bear the weaknesses and struggles of our brothers and sisters”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Misericordiae Vultus

“Mercy is the force that reawakens us to new life and instils in us the courage to look to the future with hope”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Angelus

“In this Holy Year of Mercy, we are called to comfort those who feel they are sinners and unworthy and downhearted for their mistakes, repeating Jesus' words to them: 'Fear not'. The mercy of the Father is greater than your sins. It is greater, do not be afraid" .



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Angelus

“... true religion is receiving the revelation of a God Who is the Father and Who cares for every one of His creatures, even the smallest and least significant in the eyes of man”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Pope Francis ~ Angelus

“God goes out towards the men and women of all times and places in the concrete situations in which they find themselves. He also comes out towards us. He is always the one Who takes the first step”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

“Jesus is the face of the Father’s mercy... Jesus shows us what mercy looks like in practice” .



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

“If I had to sum it up in one word I would say that mercy is about being large-hearted” .



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

“Our God is a large-hearted God”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

“Mercy... is generous, and gentle, and forgiving, and encouraging and courageous. It is ready to believe that people can change, that they can be better. It is ready to let go of angry judgments, and a desire for payback and a determination to make people suffer for their mistakes”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

“Because we know the Gospel stories, we realise that when Simon Peter describes himself as a sinful man he is not simply displaying false humility. The story of Peter, as it comes to us in different ways through the four Gospels, will confirm that he is indeed a very sinful man. Perhaps the greatest example of Peter’s sinfulness is his denial and betrayal of Jesus at the time of Jesus’ arrest. We all remember that when Jesus was arrested Peter had followed Him from a distance into the city. When he was warming himself by the fire, he was identified three times as one of Jesus’ disciples. Three times he denied it: I don’t know what you are talking about, I have never heard of Him. He is nothing to do with me...the Gospel turns to the story of Jesus asking Peter three times, ‘Peter, do you love me?’ Three times, Peter responds: Yes Lord, I love you. Of course I love you. You know everything; you know that I love you. Three times, Peter is given a chance to express his love for Jesus, because Jesus knows that Peter needs three opportunities to redeem his earlier betrayals. There is a sensitivity in Jesus which knows that only one thing will enable Peter to move forward. He needs to be given a chance to turn around his betrayals. And, in His love, His compassion, and His sensitivity, Jesus gives Peter those three opportunities. This is what mercy looks like. “



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

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Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

“...we are invited by Jesus Himself to understand that God looks at us with mercy and compassion, not anger”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

“...our opening prayer of this First Sunday of Lent asks that we understand all the riches hidden in the mystery of Christ: not just His death but also His Resurrection. Fidelity, love, selflessness, generosity – these qualities which, in the story of the death of Jesus, initially look as if they are powerless in the face of evil, turn out to be much more powerful than evil. And why? They are the qualities of God Himself and can never be ultimately destroyed”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

“..there is one person who was everything that God wanted Him to be – and that person is Jesus. His life was a life of total fidelity to God and total self-giving to us” .



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

“... we are called – to act, to love, to serve, to walk – to be a light for others and a sign of hope... The first reading from the Prophet Isaiah takes up this theme with some of the most beautiful words to be found in the Scriptures: do not be afraid, I have called you by your name, you are mine, I will be with you”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

“... put Christ at the centre”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

“..there is one person who was everything that God wanted Him to be – and that person is Jesus. His life was a life of total fidelity to God and total self-giving to us” .



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

“Through His death and Resurrection, Jesus does not just win a victory over evil for Himself. He wins that same victory for every person who is willing to be drawn into the beauty and the mystery of Christ’s love for us. And this, of course, is exactly what we are doing as we celebrate the Eucharist. We are being invited to allow ourselves to be drawn into communion with Him so that, as St Paul would say, we no longer live but, rather, it is Christ who lives in us. And, if Christ lives in us – and this is the promise of the Eucharist – then our lives will gradually, day by day, do exactly what our opening prayer asks: reflect the mystery of the riches to be found in Christ and in His death and Resurrection”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

“Every baptised person is called to live in loving obedience to the will of God, constantly seeking to understand what God is asking of us and trying our best to respond with generosity and courage”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

“... every baptised person is invited by Jesus to accept His call to “Make your home in me as I make mine in you”. It is not only religious who are called to put Christ at the centre of their lives and to look to Him for strength and grace. But the radical, and total, giving of their lives to Christ in such a clear and unambiguous way makes religious a very powerful reminder that a life in which God is relegated to the margins or completely ignored is really only a life half lived. In this way, too, the life of religious is a precious gift to and for the whole Church – it is the way in which we religious really can “wake up the world”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

“As Christians, it is not enough for us to hold some truths just in an intellectual way. Our faith must engage all of us, not just our minds. It must, we might say, also engage our hearts if it is to be real”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

“From the standpoint of the Christian life as a whole, the vocation to the consecrated life is, despite its renunciations and trials, and indeed because of them, a path of light over which the Redeemer keeps constant watch: “Rise and have no fear”. These words of Jesus are important and I would like to invite each one of us to allow ourselves to hear Jesus say directly to us this evening: “Rise, and have no fear”. And perhaps, as we do so, we might also keep in mind the words of Pope Francis who, in his letter announcing the Year of Consecrated Life, has challenged us as religious to “wake up the world”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

“...in my day to day life, with all its challenges and its possibilities, are the eyes of both my mind and my heart fixed on Jesus? If He really is God's Son, as today's Gospel proclaims Him to be, isn't this precisely where my life should be centred? Am I really listening to His voice each day? And this leads to an even more challenging question: what am I doing to respond to this voice, to this call of the Lord in my life?”



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

“Our faith is not meant to be a set of dry academic teachings. It is meant to be a sincere, enthusiastic and ongoing response to the incredible truth that God, who is the creator and sustainer of everything that exists, has come among us as one of us in Jesus, so that, in Jesus, we might see the face of God, hear His voice, experience His love and mercy, and respond to Him in faith”.



Words of Wisdom - the Word made Flesh

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

“We are made by God, we are made for God and, no matter how determined we may sometimes be to ignore God or maintain a safe distance from Him, God never gives up on us” .