

THE AUDACITY OF HOPE

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•Presentation Abstract:

- Mercy and hope are gifts God bestows upon us. Mercy and hope must be experienced, cultivated, nurtured, and shared. Hope becomes a calling to walk with another toward their greatest good. This presentation focuses on learning from the Saints and identifying ways to live mercy and hope in social work.

WHEN IN LIFE DOES HOPE ERODE?

Distance from God
Attitudes that rob us of God
Disappointments
Failures; Losses; Illnesses
Hurricanes; Wars; Divisions

“The Spirit too helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself makes intercession for us with groaning's that cannot be expressed in speech.” (Romans 8: 26).

“Gentleness comes to him when he is most helpless and awakens him. Love takes him by the hand, and opens to him the doors of another life, another day.” (Thomas Merton)

“The Light shines in the darkness, a darkness that did not overcome” (John 1: 5)

The Virtue of Cultivating Hope

• HOPE IS GOD’S GIFT TO US

• Strengthen hope through:

–1. Prayer and Eucharist

- We remember His boundless love and faithfulness

–2. Gratitude and Faithfulness

- Open our eyes to the beauty and goodness of life

–3. Ministers of Hope

- Hope grows when it is shared and blooms when given away

“Mercy is the force that reawakens us to new life and instills in us the courage to look to the future with hope”
(Pope Francis, 2015. *Misericordiae Vultus*)

“God is both the object of our hope and the means to attain it. . . . We are pilgrims on a journey to God, making our way to God and helping others do so as well.” (Paul Wadell; 2016).

“In the evening of our life we will be judged on our love” (St. John of the Cross)

“They that hope in the Lord will renew their strength, they will soar as with eagles’ wings; They will run and not grow weary, walk and not grow faint.” (Isaiah 40; 31).

Cultivating and Practicing Hope

HOPE IS A GIFT AND A CALLING

Hope commissions us to bring God’s love, mercy, justice, compassion to others.

Aquinas stated that there is more reason to be hopeful - “When we have friends to rely on.”

“The one who has hope lives differently; the one who has hope has been granted the gift of a new life” (Pope Benedict XVI; 2007; *Saved in Hope*)

As Social Workers - Faith and Hope integrated with social work values

1. Service
2. Social Justice
3. Dignity and Worth of a Person
4. Importance of Human Relationships
5. Integrity
6. Competence

“It is never too late to touch the heart of another.” (Pope Benedict)