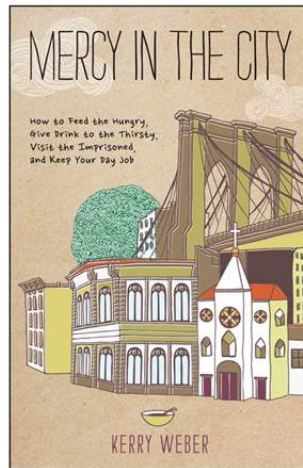


# **Mercy in the City:** **How to Feed the Hungry, Give Drink to the Thirsty, Visit the** **Imprisoned, and Keep Your Day Job** By Kerry Weber



## **Before you begin reading the book**

*The Corporal Works of Mercy are found in the teachings of Jesus and give us a model for how we should treat all others, as if they were Christ in disguise. They "are charitable actions by which we help our neighbors in their bodily needs." They respond to the basic needs of humanity as we journey together through this life. (usccb.org)*

Have you heard of the Corporal Works of Mercy? Look them up before you begin at [usccb.org: \(http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/new-evangelization/jubilee-of-mercy/the-corporal-works-of-mercy.cfm\)](http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/new-evangelization/jubilee-of-mercy/the-corporal-works-of-mercy.cfm)

And as Jesus teaches them in Matthew's Gospel Matt 25:31-46.

## **As you read the book**

Think about Kerry Weber's attempts to live the Corporal Works of Mercy. Consider these questions as you read.

What are some of the challenges she encounters?

As you read of her efforts, can you think of places where you might make similar efforts?

Where are there people in need in your area?

How could you respond to that need?

**When you finish the book,**

**answer the following questions in writing. Give complete and thoughtful answers. Your reflections should be handed in on the first day of classes to your Theology teacher. This assignment will be graded. Two pages, typed, double-spaced.**

1. On page 12, mercy is defined as: “the willingness to enter into the chaos of another.” What strikes you about that definition? Find three other definitions of mercy from well known people. Which one rings most true to you?
2. At one point (p. 30) Kerry finds herself annoyed and wonders if the Work of Mercy still counts if you're crabby about it. What do you think?
3. React to the Dorothy Day quote (from page 64): “I really only love God as much as the person I love the least.” What do you think she means?
4. What do you think of when you imagine a prisoner? What does he or she look like? What stereotypes of prisoners do you have? Have you ever visited a prison? Why is it important to remember that countless saints like St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Dismas, St. Thomas More, St. Maximilian Kolbe, and Jesus himself, were considered criminals and thrown in jail?
5. In the final chapter Kerry writes two beautiful and short insights (p. 138): “Mercy is a choice” and “to have mercy is to give mercy.” Which of those two sticks out most to you and why?
6. How are you personally and we (our school) as a community called to the Corporal Works of Mercy? What challenges do we face in living the works of mercy?

This work is due to your Theology teacher on the first day of classes.

**Long term challenge**

Choose one of the Corporal Works of Mercy to work on during the first semester. You might choose the one that seems most challenging to you. Try to make this work of mercy a part of your daily life. From time to time during the first semester your Theology teacher will ask you to discuss in class or in writing how you're doing with the challenge of living your work of mercy.

## **ENGLISH LITERATURE READING**

Students in Pre-AP, Honors, and CP classes will complete the following work over the summer (AP students will receive separate assignments). Each grade level has been assigned a book to read over the summer. Books and Google Classroom codes are listed below; scroll down to see the assignments for each class.

- On the first day of classes, students will submit responses to a series of short answer questions about the book. Questions may be found in the Google Classrooms listed below for sophomores, juniors and seniors.
- On the second day of classes, students will be assessed on their summer reading.
- Following these activities, class time will be spent working with the book that was assigned. Students will be expected to have a **physical copy** of the book (paperback or hardcover) and participate in class discussions and activities. Following the unit of study, an additional assessment will be given.
- Rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors can access a Google Classroom dedicated to Summer Reading 2021 resources for their grade.

### **FRESHMEN**

*All freshmen are encouraged to attend a **Summer Reading Review Session**. These sessions (approximately one hour long) are designed to help students review the book and understand the expectations for our Day Two Assessment. Registration is not required. This year's sessions will be held at **1:00 pm on Tuesday, August 10th, and Tuesday, August 17th.***

**Book:** *The Other Wes Moore* by Wes Moore

### **SOPHOMORES**

**Google Classroom Code:** sz5rwao

**Book:** *The Last Lecture* by Randy Pausch

### **JUNIORS**

**Google Classroom Code:** zm3yrtj

**Book:** *The Color of Water* by James McBride

### **SENIORS**

**Google Classroom Code:** fntobxc

**Book:** *When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi

## **SENIOR ASSIGNMENT**

After reading *When Breath Becomes Air*, please listen to the episode of the Everything Happens podcast with Lucy Kalanithi. Then, write a reflection (400-600 words) on the prompt below. Work should be posted in your English 12 Google Classroom on the first day of classes.

### **Prompt:**

While it can be easy to wish for a different life or different circumstances, Lucy suggests that sometimes a jolting experience can wake us up to the beauty of the life we have and lead us to recommit to what already exists. Do you agree with this or not? What experiences have you had that shapes this opinion?

## **JUNIOR ASSIGNMENT**

Your answers to the following questions are due on the first day of class in your assigned English Google Classroom. Make sure to support your answers with evidence from the text. Please remember that the printers may not be working on the first day of school; you need to bring a printed copy of your answers with you.

Discuss Ruth McBride Jordan's refusal to reveal her past and how that influenced her children's sense of themselves and their place in the world. How has your knowledge (or lack thereof) about your family background shaped your own self-image?

Several of the McBride children became involved in the civil rights movement. Do you think that this was a result of the times in which they lived, their need to belong to a group that lent them a solid identity, or a combination of these factors?

"It was in her sense of education, more than any other, that Mommy conveyed her Jewishness to us." Do you agree with this statement? Is it possible that Ruth McBride Jordan's unshakable devotion to her faith, even though she converted to Christianity from Judaism, stems from her Orthodox Jewish upbringing?

While reading the descriptions of the children's hunger, why do you think Ruth McBride Jordan did not seek out some kind of assistance?

Do you think it would be possible to achieve what Ruth McBride Jordan has achieved in today's society?

## **SOPHOMORE ASSIGNMENT**

If you had to put together a list of lessons you've learned from your life, something to pass on to another generation, what would they be?

What's your dream? What do you live to do every day even when the world around you isn't quite right? What would you do to be able to do it throughout your life?

What is a lesson that someone has taught you that you have taught to someone else? Describe being taught the lesson, teaching the lesson, and compare the differences between.

What is something in your life that inhibited you from doing something yet may have been the bigger opportunity you didn't know you needed?

In anything, your attitude about something will be the defining characteristic of the experience. Provide two examples: 1) a time you reacted negatively to something that happened to you in school and 2) a time when you reacted positively. Try to make them a similar "thing." To end, consider the following: which personal self (you as 1, or you as 2) do you like better? Who do you want the world to see?

Discuss a time when you "put in the work" and saw the results for it. Also describe a time in which you could have done a little more and how it can help you for the future. In the 2021-2022 school year, what are you going to put the work in for?

## **FRESHMAN SUMMER READING STUDY GUIDE**

- *Discussion Questions:* Consult the discussion questions provided at the back of the book. Think about how you would answer each question if you were asked to write a response to them on a test. **In particular, develop your thinking about Questions #2, 4, 5, 6, 10, and 11.**
- *Structure:* What does the author do to indicate which parts of the book are about himself, and which parts are about the Other Wes Moore? Why does the author decide to emphasize certain years in their life? Why does the author alternate their stories moment-by-moment?
- *Environment:* What are the environments that surround each Wes Moore like? How do these environments change and/or remain the same? How do these environments affect them?
- *Mothers:* What does each mother do for her son? Is one mother "better" or more successful than the other? What factors seem to influence each mother's ability to guide, protect, teach, and love her son?

- *Turning Points:* What seem to be the key moments in the life of each Wes Moore? What opportunities did they have to succeed or fail, and how did they respond to those opportunities?

**IDEAS FOR TAKING NOTES**

- List the names of the people important to each Wes Moore, along with a short description of how they are related to him, and/or what they mean to him.
- Construct a chart (like this) to keep track of what happens to each Wes Moore, and when. This exercise is helpful for seeing the similarities and differences in their experiences.

YEAR	AUTHOR WES MOORE	OTHER WES MOORE