

# *To be or not to be Mercy*



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# Mercy as a Verb

Coined by Pope Francis, who when seeking to translate his motto from Latin to Spanish, used the word *misericordiando* which in English translates to the word 'Mercying'.

Expressing Mercy as a verb, captures the sense of movement inherent in the heart of Mercy, which includes hearing the cry of creation for mercy and responding.



# Story



So which story do you  
prefer?

The one with the tiger.  
That's the better story.

Thank you. And so it  
goes with God.

It's an amazing story.



# A framework for reflection

- Lived time
- Lived space
- Lived body
- Lived relation



# Three key features of embodying the Mercy value of hospitality

1. To embody the Mercy value of hospitality involves exceeding the carefully and socially programmed *how are you – fine* exchange. It involves going beyond the external and accepted (perhaps even conditioned) social pleasantries so as to foster in the other a genuine experience of being made to feel welcome.

2. To embody the Mercy value of hospitality involves an encounter (as opposed to the a socially conditioned conversational exchange) with the other – the stranger – in whom is to be found (theologically speaking) the person of Jesus Christ. In moving beyond the *how are you – fine* exchange, we come to know ourselves in relationship with the other. In such an encounter all participants are transformed change in some way for the better.



3. To embody the Mercy value of hospitality involves taking a risk. Pushing boundaries of communication so as to enter into relationship with the other is risky because it is contingent upon the responses, both verbal and non-verbal, of the participants. But willingness to take such a risk can result, as it did in the life expression described in this article, in a profound encounter.