

St. Isidore Parish Social Justice Committee

Reflection

January, 2020

These are turbulent times in our country. We are dealing with violence, racism, the corona virus and its impact on so many people, distrust in our democratic processes, wounded relationships in our Church, our community and our families. What can we Catholics do to make a difference?

As members of the St. Isidore Parish Social Justice Committee, we want you to know that we care about you and we want to offer you some suggestions to help you grow in your faith during these trying times.

First we might strive to recognize our failure at times, as individuals and as a church community, to promote harmony and justice. So often many of us have stood silently in the face of so much poverty, homelessness, racism and social injustice. We must recognize social evil in our midst, and denounce it unequivocally. In Luke 17: 1-3, Christ spoke of the grave consequence of our complicity in the evil actions of others.

“Things that cause sin will inevitably occur, but woe to the person through whom they occur. It would be better for him if a millstone were put around his neck and he be thrown into the sea than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin. Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.”

We could seek out opportunities to initiate healthy dialogue, listening to the pain and the struggles of those with whom we disagree, and speaking truth in a spirit of love.

We could explore ways to make a positive difference by helping individuals in need and/or organizations that reach out to the needy. For example if we don't personally need the latest government subsidy that has been sent to most Americans, we should give that money away to where it will do the most good. Such giving will make you feel good.

With more time in isolation, it might be a good time to study about social issues from a Catholic perspective. A good place to start might be Pope Francis's recent encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti* (On Fraternity and Social Friendship). It is available through Amazon or on the website Rome Reports.

As Christians, let us pray daily for peace in our country and justice for all. And as a Church, called upon to be a light to the world, we pray that we fulfill our obligation to shine our light brightly by proclaiming the gospel message of social justice for all. For starters we recommend the prayer written by Pope Francis and found in his recent encyclical:

*O God, Trinity of love,
from the profound communion of your divine life,
pour out upon us a torrent of fraternal love.
Grant us the love reflected in the actions of Jesus,
in his family of Nazareth,
and in the early Christian community.*

*Grant that we Christians may live the Gospel,
discovering Christ in each human being,
recognizing him crucified
in the sufferings of the abandoned
and forgotten of our world,
and risen in each brother or sister
who makes a new start.*

*Come, Holy Spirit, show us your beauty,
reflected in all the peoples of the earth,
so that we may discover anew
that all are important and all are necessary,
different faces of the one humanity
that God so loves. Amen.*