

# Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

## Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours



### Fratelli Tutti

### Who is my neighbor?

December, 2020

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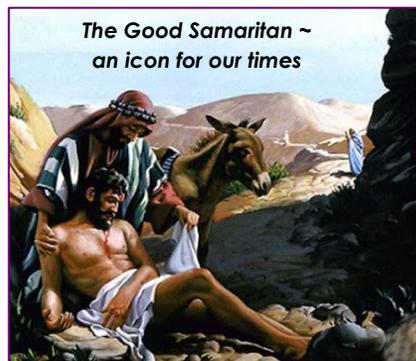
"Let us admit that, for all the progress we have made, we are still 'illiterate' when it comes to accompanying, caring for and supporting the most frail and vulnerable members of our developed societies. We have become accustomed to looking the other way, passing by, ignoring situations until they affect us directly." (Fratelli Tutti #64)

This past October, Pope Francis issued his third encyclical, "Fratelli Tutti" (On Fraternity and Social Friendship). Central to this encyclical is the familiar parable of The Good Samaritan that highlights the kind of neighbor we are called to be as followers of Jesus. The Samaritan, the outsider, the one considered detestable and dangerous to the Jews, is hailed as the hero of this story, and Pope Francis suggests that he is an icon for our times. He says, "The decision to include or exclude those lying wounded along the roadside can serve as a criterion for judging every project. Each day we have to decide whether to be Good Samaritans or indifferent bystanders."

As we enter this month of December, with spikes in COVID-19, continued restrictions and lockdowns, and fewer opportunities for personal encounters with any neighbors, perhaps we can choose this sacred space of Advent to notice our neighbors near and far who are suffering and to reflect deeply on the kind of global, national and local neighbor we desire to be. And when this pandemic is over, may our time spent in this reflection truly enable us to become "neighbors without borders." Blessings on your Advent journey!

"Jesus' parable summons us to rediscover our vocation as citizens of our respective nations and of the entire world builders of a new social bond."

Fratelli Tutti, #66



#### Reflection

As you reflect on this excerpt what feelings surface in you?

How have you been enriched over your lifetime because you stepped out of your comfort zone to encounter someone different than you?

### December JPIC Days of Remembrance



December 1  
World AIDS Day

December 2  
Anniversary of the Deaths of Maura Clark, Ita Ford, Dorothy Kazel and Jean Donovan

International Day  
for the Abolition of Slavery

December 10  
Human Rights Day

December 18  
International Migrants' Day

December 20  
International Human Solidarity Day

#### We must travel the ROAD OF CLOSENESS

"This is the road that we must travel into the future, a road marked by a **culture of dialogue and encounter** which is mutually enriching. When I reach out to the others **beyond my comfort zone**, I can be truly transformed by the other. I may begin by thinking I am bringing something to the other but I will conclude by realizing how I have been enriched. The road of closeness calls us to **embrace the stranger**, to **enter into the suffering of others**, to **identify with the vulnerable** and to **be open to be changed by people who are different to me.**" Sr. Pat Murray, IBVM, Secretary UISG reflecting on Fratelli Tutti



### Neighbors without Borders

Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan in answer to the question: Who is my neighbor? The word "neighbor", in the society of Jesus' time, usually meant those nearest us. It was felt that help should be given primarily to those of one's own group and race. For some Jews of that time, Samaritans were looked down upon, considered impure. They were not among those to be helped. Jesus, himself a Jew, completely transforms this approach. He asks us not to decide who is close enough to be our neighbor, but rather that we ourselves become neighbors to all. #80

#### Reflection

*Who has been a neighbor to you in a time of suffering?*

*Who needs you to be a neighbor to them during this Advent Season?*



Jesus asks us not to decide who is close enough to be our neighbor, but rather that we ourselves become neighbors to all. #80



#### Reflection

*In what ways does your faith guide your thinking on migration?*

*What are some of the obstacles that prevent us from creating a culture that is more welcoming and which seeks to protect, promote, and integrate migrants?*

"If every being possesses an inalienable dignity, if all people are my brothers and sisters, and if the world truly belongs to everyone, then it matters very little whether my neighbor was born in my country or elsewhere." #125



### Abandoned on the wayside

The parable eloquently presents the basic decision we need to make in order to rebuild our wounded world. In the face of so much pain and suffering, our only course is to imitate the Good Samaritan. Any other decision would make us either one of the robbers or one of those who walked by without showing compassion for the sufferings of the man on the roadside. The parable shows us how a community can be rebuilt by men and women who **identify with the vulnerability of others**, who reject the creation of a society of exclusion, and act instead as neighbors, **lifting up and rehabilitating the fallen** for the sake of common good. #67

#### Reflection

*As we prepare for Christmas enter into the vulnerability of Mary and Joseph as they sought "room at the inn".*

*Hold in prayer all those in our world who suffer from exclusion – migrants, LGBTQ people, disabled people, etc. Who else comes to mind? Try to identify with their vulnerability and pray for the grace to reject a society of exclusion.*



"I was a stranger and you welcomed me."



### A Prayer to Our Creator

*Pope Francis concludes Fratelli Tutti with this prayer.*

Father of our human family,  
you created all human beings equal in dignity:  
pour forth into our hearts a fraternal spirit  
and inspire in us a dream of renewed encounter,  
dialogue, justice and peace.  
Move us to create healthier societies  
and a more dignified world,  
a world without hunger, poverty, violence and war.  
May our hearts be open  
to all the peoples and nations of the earth.  
May we recognize the goodness and beauty  
that you have sown in each of us,  
and thus forge bonds of unity, common projects,  
and shared dreams.  
Amen.

### Fratelli Tutti

#### English:

[http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20201003\\_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html)

#### Spanish:

[http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/es/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20201003\\_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/es/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html)

#### French:

[http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/fr/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20201003\\_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/fr/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html)

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