



JUST Love

MARCH 2023



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE OFFICE OF PEACE, JUSTICE AND
ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY OF THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF SAINT ELIZABETH

Toward a program for justice... Sister Ellen Joyce, SC

The Gospel teaches us that disciples are to be known by their love for one another. What this means for us has been brought into sharper focus by the Church's teaching that justice is a "constitutive dimension of the preaching of the gospel." There is a growing realization that this requirement expands our horizon of concern and our sense of responsibility to a global level. Not to be overlooked, however, since justice should characterize all relationships, is that justice is a matter of concern in how we treat one another. This modest proposal offers a few guidelines to bring us a step closer to the realization of justice at home. The guidelines are simple to state, demanding to live.

Guideline 1: Always treat people with dignity and reverence. A person does not have to earn respect but deserves respect as a unique reflection of the living God. It is this teaching that is at the heart of the Church's defense of human rights.

Guideline 2: Always include people. Never exclude. This is the message of the Kingdom - that all are invited.

Guideline 3: Meet people where they are; that is, always make an effort to understand people and their positions.

Guideline 4: Give people a chance to change. A change of mind, a change of heart is always a possibility if we believe that God is the source of newness of life.

Guideline 5: Always stand ready to forgive, to ask for forgiveness, and to accept forgiveness.

Guideline 6: When you don't know all the facts of a situation on all sides, assume the best until you find out otherwise.

Guideline 7: Scapegoating or blaming is a fundamental injustice to be avoided.



Guideline 8: Labeling diminishes a person's dignity. "Liberal," "conservative," "hypochondriac," "grandstander," "know-it-all," are examples of labels that facilitate our dismissing a person or her point of view. The only time labeling is justified is if it expands another's opportunities.

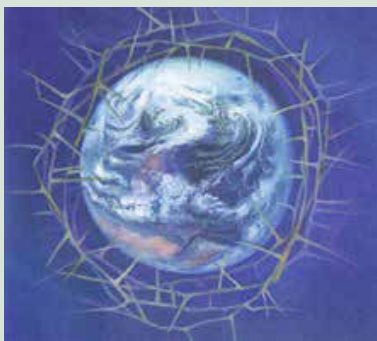
Guideline 9: Avoid making judgments too soon. When our minds are made up beforehand, the phenomenon is called prejudice.



Sister Ellen Joyce, SC served two four-year terms as General Superior: July 1, 1979-June 30, 1983 and July 1, 1983-June 30, 1987. She died on April 17, 2004.



Artist Sister Mary Southard, CSJ, provocatively places the crown of thorns that tortured the head of Jesus and stretches it to cover the planet. She calls our attention to the fact that the agony of Jesus is over but the agony of Earth is on-going and intensifying. Chose some ways this Lent to relieve the agony of Earth—reduce plastic use as much as you can; eat less meat; drive less and don't fly at all.



In her painting, Mater Dolorosa, Sister France White, SHCJ re-imagines the traditional Pieta image in which Mary holds the dead body of Jesus in her lap. Here Mary weeps bitter tears as she holds the dying body of Earth, wounded by human selfishness and excess.

Catholics of a certain generation will remember the Latin hymn Stabat Mater (At the Cross Her Station Keeping) which was always sung during Lenten celebrations of the Stations of the Cross. Dr. Joseph Byrne, a longtime peace activist who lived for many years at Jonah House in Baltimore, the resistance community founded by Philip Berrigan and Elizabeth McAlister, has composed some contemporary verses that can be sung to the traditional tune (if you need a reminder, it can be heard here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4US4PSZF278&t=12s> Consider making these words part of your Lenten prayer.

O dear Mother everywhere
Are the suffering who must bear
The cross of hate and bitter scorn.

Tortured, murdered disappeared
Facing powers to be feared
Seeming lost and so forlorn.

O dear Mother, all these broken
Bodies, souls, their fate unspoken
Those lost poor ones help us save.

War and swords will have no power
When we finally reach that hour
When Christ rises from the grave.

Calvary is God's high Mountain
Where God's peace flows like a fountain
And justice like a mighty stream!

In solidarity you meet us
With "Magnificat" you greet us
And tell us peace is not a dream.



Please continue to use our 2023 Lenten Calendar All My Relations: A Heart Open to the Whole World during the month of March
https://0e4f0307-8157-4c79-9229-37922dbe65e9.filesusr.com/ugd/a2bb32_7399c39287694fcdbae3be73b2426484.pdf?index=true