

Overcoming Indifference: Responding to a World in Need

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LEADER: In his 2015 Lenten message, Pope Francis challenged the “globalization of indifference.” He calls us to care for our neighbors across the globe. As we listen to the words of Pope Francis, let us reflect on how we contribute to a globalization of indifference and how each of us is called to respond with a compassionate heart.

READER 1: (*Quotations from “Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for Lent 2015,” Oct. 4, 2014.*) “When we are healthy and comfortable, we forget about others, (something God the Father never does): we are unconcerned with their problems, their sufferings and the injustices they endure... Our heart grows cold. As long as I am relatively healthy and comfortable, I don’t think about those less well off. Today, this selfish attitude of indifference has taken on global proportions, to the extent that we can speak of a globalization of indifference.”

LEADER: To overcome our indifference, Pope Francis calls us to reflect on the Gospel message.

READER 2: “Whenever we hear the word of God and receive the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. ... We become what we receive: the Body of Christ. In this body there is no room for the indifference which so often seems to possess our hearts. For whoever is of Christ belongs to one body, and in him we cannot be indifferent to one another. ‘If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy.’”

LEADER: In a world rife with human suffering, Pope Francis calls us to not feel powerless, but instead to react as we are able.

READER 3: “We can pray in communion with the church on earth and in heaven. Let us not underestimate the power of so many voices united in prayer! ... We can help by acts of charity,

reaching out to both those near and far through the church’s many charitable organizations.”

LEADER: How are we actively responding to a world in need?

Time for silent reflection

LEADER: In a connected world, the church is called to serve all.

READER 4: “Every Christian community is called to go out of itself and to be engaged in the life of the greater society of which it is a part, especially with the poor and those who are far away. The church is missionary by her very nature; she is not self-enclosed but sent out to every nation and people. ... How greatly I desire that all those places where the church is present, especially our parishes and our communities, may become islands of mercy in the midst of the sea of indifference!”

LEADER: How do we contribute to the church’s missionary call?

Time for silent reflection

LEADER: That we may overcome indifference with love, let us pray for guidance and mercy.

ALL: God of all,
We are one body of Christ, brothers and sisters.
We know our efforts alone cannot save the world.
We humbly implore your grace as we recognize the infinite possibilities of your love.
Help us see the unseen neighbors and accept our limitations.
Help us build up the church to be “islands of mercy.”
In your name we pray,
Amen.