

We All Need Each Other

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LEADER: “TED Talks” are excellent, short, thought-provoking speeches that you can watch on video. In April, Pope Francis gave a powerful presentation on how we need each other — important words for all of us to think about and embrace. Let’s read excerpts from his talk in turns, dividing the congregation into Side 1 and Side 2.

SIDE 1: As I meet, or lend an ear to those who are sick, to the migrants who face terrible hardships in search of a brighter future, to prison inmates who carry a hell of pain inside their hearts, and to those, many of them young, who cannot find a job, I often find myself wondering: “Why them and not me?”

SIDE 2: We all need each other, none of us is an island, an autonomous and independent “I,” separated from the other, and we can only build the future by standing together, including everyone. We don’t think about it often, but everything is connected, and we need to restore our connections to a healthy state.

SIDE 1: How wonderful would it be if the growth of scientific and technological innovation would come along with more equality and social inclusion? How wonderful would it be, while we discover faraway planets, to rediscover the needs of the brothers and sisters orbiting around us?

SIDE 2: How wonderful would it be if solidarity were not simply reduced to social work, and became, instead, the default attitude in political, economic and scientific choices, as well as in the relationships among individuals, peoples and countries?

[Optional reading: *Parable of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10:25-37.*]

[Pause for silent reflection]

SIDE 1: The story of the Good Samaritan is the story of today’s humanity. People’s paths are riddled with suffering, as everything is centered around money and things, instead of people. And often there is this habit of not taking care of the others, thus leaving behind thousands of human beings, or entire populations, on the side of the road.

SIDE 2: Yes, love does require a creative, concrete and ingenious attitude. Good intentions and conventional formulas, so often used to appease our conscience, are not enough. Let us help each other, all together, to remember that the other is not a statistic or a number. The other has a face. The “you” is always a real presence, a person to take care of.

TOGETHER: We have so much to do, and we must do it together.

Strengthen us, O God, in our conviction that each and every one’s existence is deeply tied to that of others: Life is not time merely passing by, life is about interactions.

May we choose the path of tenderness — the path of solidarity, the path of humility.

Remind us daily that the future is in the hands of those people who recognize the other and themselves as part of an “us.” We need each other.

Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

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