



# *A Group Reflection and Sharing Process for Minority Health Month*

## **Seeing with Compassion**

**Leader:** What does it mean to “see” another person? Beyond looking, beyond noticing, what does it mean to “see” another human being? Consider the question as you listen to the familiar passage of The Good Samaritan.

**Reader:** Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him.

**Leader:** (*Slowly*)

Each person in the story saw something different in the traveler. The robbers saw vulnerable, easy prey. They saw an opportunity, a person to be used.

The priest and the Levite saw inconvenience, illness, death, someone easy to ignore. Perhaps they saw a trap and feared being the next victim.

The Samaritan saw a human being in need, someone he could help. The Samaritan saw with eyes of compassion, a brother, a father, a friend.

Many things keep us from seeing others as brothers and sisters. Busy schedules, large patient loads, our own fear, exhaustion, unconscious biases and preconceived notions of others keep us from seeing others with compassion.

Take a few moments to reflect on those times you didn’t act with compassion toward another. (*Pause*)

What kept you from seeing with the compassion of the Good Samaritan?



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*If there is time, invite participants to share their thoughts as a group or in diads/triads.*

Reader: In his Message to the Participants in the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on the theme “Addressing Global Health Inequalities,” Pope Francis reflects on the Good Samaritan’s actions:

*First, the Samaritan “sees.” He notices and “is moved with compassion” at the sight of a person left stripped and wounded along the way. This compassion is much more than mere pity or sorrow; it shows a readiness to become personally involved in the other’s situation. Even if we can never equal God’s own compassion, which fills and renews the heart by its presence, nonetheless we can imitate that compassion by “drawing near,” “binding wounds,” “lifting up” and “caring for” our neighbor (cf. Lk 10:33-34). ... Compassion is a privileged way to promote justice, since empathizing with the others allows us not only to understand their struggles, difficulties and fears, but also to discover, in the frailness of every human being, his or her unique worth and dignity. Indeed, human dignity is the basis of justice, while the recognition of every person’s inestimable worth is the force that impels us to work, with enthusiasm and self-sacrifice, to overcome all disparities.”*

Let us pray together,

**All: God of all compassion, we are grateful for the call to care for the sick and suffering. We ask your blessing on our work and your forgiveness for those times we do not fully live out the love you share with us. Soften our hearts with the compassion and benevolent spirit of the Good Samaritan that we might see and respond generously to the needs of those in their care. Help us to transcend our biases, fears, preconceived ideas and negative past experiences to be your healing presence in the world. Amen.**