

A Process for Reflection: World Day of the Poor

Consider

In his 2018 message for the World Day of the Poor, Pope Francis reminds us of the Lord's loving attention and calls us to mimic this same intimate attention and relationship with those who are poor in our world today,

God's answer to the poor is always a saving act that heals wounds of body and soul, restores justice and helps to live life anew in dignity. God's answer is also a summons to those who believe in him to do likewise, within the limits of what is humanly possible.

The poor do not need intermediaries, but the personal involvement of all those who hear their cry. The concern of believers in their regard cannot be limited to a kind of assistance – as useful and as providential as this may be in the beginning – but requires a “loving attentiveness” that honours the person as such and seeks out his or her best interests.

To truly hear the cry of the poor we must practice silence and listen. We must place ourselves in the way of the poor and seek encounters that humanize rather than shame, that enhance our common humanity rather than our economic differences.

Reflect

- *Saint Teresa of Avila paradoxically writes, “Poverty comprises many virtues.” What lessons or virtues has poverty taught you?*
- *How do you listen to the poor?*
- *Consider the quote from *Food for the Journey*, “The healthcare facility can never be isolated from the community of people in which it exists, since that community is a major reason for its existence.” How can we strengthen our connections to the communities we serve, particularly paying attention to those members who are vulnerable or voiceless.*



World Day of the Poor

Pray

God of Justice, open our ears to hear the cry of the poor and to seek them where they are. Let their cries for healing and wholeness move us to action. Open our hearts to deepened relationship with those in need that we may draw near in love and our shared identity as your children. Open our mouths to advocate for health care as a human right, not a privilege of the economically secure. Let us hear in the cry of the poor the hope of future liberation grounded in the love of a good God. Remind us that what we do to the least ones, we do to you. Amen.