

WE ARE STRANGERS NO LONGER

January 28, 2019 – Blessed Trinity Catholic Community

Opening remarks, Fr. Ed Hislop



Last Sunday we heard these words, spoken by Jesus from the Hebrew text of the Prophet Isaiah:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me, to bring glad tidings to the poor,.. to proclaim liberty to captives....and to let the oppressed go free.”

Jesus announces this as his mission, it is therefore ours as well.

Catholic Social teaching begins with the Word of God in both the Hebrew and Christian scriptures.

Exodus reminds us: *“You shall not oppress or afflict a resident alien, for you were once aliens residing in the land of Egypt.”*

Leviticus challenges and invites even more: *“You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently that the natives born among you; you shall love the alien as yourself; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt. I, the Lord, am your God.”*

Hebrews also speaks: *“Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels.”*

And of course there is the Holy Family....fleeing into Egypt....refugees/immigrants, crossing a border for safety from a fearful king....

And Matthew, who reminds us, that at the last judgement, it will be the nations gathered before him, and he will separate them:

“Before him all the nations will be gathered, and he will separate them one from another...”

I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶

I was naked and you gave me clothing,

I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’ ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’

These are all not mere words, but endearing principles and values which those who claim faith in the Scriptures, must integrate into their lives, their attitudes and their ways of acting.

Of course the greatest commandment shapes every aspect of our believing life: *You shall love the Lord your God with you whole heart, mind and soul. And the second is the same: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*

Today, as is every Monday throughout the Church in the USA, is MIGRATION MONDAY.... Today as we gather here on this Migration Monday we remember these words of Pope Francis: *"The Church is a mother without borders and without frontiers. She is the mother of all and strives to foment a culture of welcome and solidarity, where no one is useless, out of place or disposable."*

Some claim we should not speak of such things because it puts us in the realm of "politics," which some believe has no place at the Lord's Table, but these words put that in proper perspective:

"If you don't want to hear about politics [at church], then don't ever read the Bible because the Bible is a political document. Don't ever look at a crucifix because Jesus died as a political prisoner. In other words, the Gospel is directed at the world, at the city. In Greek, the city is 'polis' and we get the word 'politic' and by its very nature the Bible requires application in order to change the world we live in, especially to change it for those who are suffering."



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