

Ministerial Minute

This Christmas break, I went down to Texas to work at a migrant shelter. The people there were refugees from Africa, mostly, who told stories too horrific to print here. I made beds, did dishes, taught them how to fill out forms and count money, and then I went home. My sister said she couldn't have done something like this, but I have always found it quite easy to do this kind of thing: go off to some distant place and fulfill a critical need. Seventy people fed, thirty beds made, two dozen people placed on a bus. Well done!

What's harder is being home, where I can refuse to look up from my phone long enough to see the homeless person sleeping in the doorway, grumble that the service I just received wasn't really worth the tip, and gloss over the news article about someone dying because they couldn't afford their medication. The need is there, right in front of my face, but ironically feels so distant. Since I'm not Bill Gates or Andrew Carnegie, I can't see how much of anything I do even matters.

But it does, because that dollar I donate isn't the only one. Together it adds up. And when I really think about it, God never asked us to do anything alone, he asked us to do things as his people. We as a people are asked to accompany our brothers and sisters, to provide for them, and to cry out on their behalf. He doesn't leave them alone, and he doesn't leave us alone, either. Jesus chose people to minister with him and spread the gospel, and the early Christian communities banded together to support each other. Solidarity.

This February 4, we at Ss Peter and Paul Jesuit, along with our local partners from Detroit Mercy, the Jesuits, the Capuchins, Mercy Corps, the Sisters of Mercy, Gesu and Christ the King parishes, Maryknoll Lay Missioners, and national sponsoring organizations like the Ignatian Solidarity Network will stand in solidarity with each other and the poor and marginalized of this city by sponsoring a bi-monthly speaker series, Solidarity on Tap. Our first event will take place at Traffic Jam and Snug at 6:30 and will feature Fr. Vic Clore of Christ the King parish, who will discuss "What Solidarity Looks Like in Detroit Today." As we come closer to the season of Lent, please consider joining us to see how we as people of faith can work together to build a more just and loving world here in metro Detroit.