

PATHWAYS TO PEACE

In our fasting and prayer on Thursday, December 11, 2014 let us ponder the words of Pope Francis as he names the virtue of humility as an important step on the pathway to peace.

“So it is always with God’s love, that, in order to reach us, takes the way of humility... One can take no other road, if I do not lower myself, if you do not lower yourself, you are not a Christian, you are not on the pathway to peace.”
(Pope Francis: Homily.)

“Let us never forget that authentic power is service, and that the pope too, when exercising power, must enter ever more fully into that service which has its radiant culmination in the Cross. He must be inspired by the lowly, concrete and faithful service which marked St. Joseph and, like him, he must open his arms to protect all of God’s people and embrace with tender affection the whole humanity, especially the poorest, the weakest, the least important.”
(Pope Francis: Pathways to Peace.)

FOR REFLECTION: HOW WILL I RESPOND?

Catechism of the Catholic Church 520: In all of his life Jesus presents himself as our model. He is the “perfect man” who invites us to become his disciples and follow him. In humbling himself, he has given us an example to imitate through his prayer he draws us to pray, and by his poverty he calls us to accept freely the privation and persecutions that may come our way.

Consider: Where could I grow in the imitation of Christ’s humility? What elements of humility do I like to follow? What elements do I ignore or avoid?

Pope Francis: “Servant leadership is found in service. Just like Jesus, who didn’t come to be served but to serve. His service was on the Cross. He humbled himself unto death, He died on a cross for us, to serve us, to save us. It’s with this path that the Church moves forward. For the Christian, getting ahead, progress, means humbling oneself. If we do not learn this Christian rule, we will never be able to understand Jesus’ true message on power and peace.”

Consider: What are my views about power, service and peace? When have I had positions of leadership – in my family, my school, my workplace, my parish, or my community? How did I carry out those roles of servant leadership? Have I been a servant to those I lead?