

Corporal Work to Clothe the Naked

"For I was naked and you clothed me." (Matthew 25:35)

Younger siblings know well the "blessings" of hand-me-downs. Even if not exact fits, at least they have clothes and shoes. Countless children and adults in the world would walk barefooted and have little to wear, except for donations of usable clothing. Nor would they have household items such as towels, blankets and bed linens. To them, the "pre-owned" goods are true blessings.

Catholic social teaching also considers the naked as "those stripped of human dignity and power . . . and necessary tools for work." (*The HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*.) The rights of human beings to dignity, the power to control their own lives, and even to work, are God given. Our moral responsibility is to preserve and protect those rights.

As God's hands on Earth, we can help to clothe and unburden the needy. Here are some suggestions:

- Support and donate to drives run by schools, parishes and other charitable organizations that collect clothes and bedding for the local needy.
- Act in solidarity to aid sister parishes in areas devastated by tornadoes, floods, earthquakes and hurricanes, leaving residents with virtually nothing. (*Give to the Catholic Relief Services collection this weekend some of this aid is going to Japan Relief.*)
- Reach out to neighbors who have lost their possessions in fires, floods or in other ways.
- Be charitable, but always remember that in giving it is most important to maintain a person's sense of dignity; no one ever should be made to feel like a "charity case."

Taken from Maryknoll Productions

Spiritual Work to Give Advice to Those Who Need It

Giving advice is a tricky business, sometimes it is wanted and other times it is not. We see in the story of the rich young man that Jesus advises the man to sell all his belongings and follow Jesus. This is too much for the man to handle so he walks away instead. The advice Jesus offers is critical to following His way. It is a challenge we all need to hear. Our faith tradition calls us to share wisdom and insights with others when it is needed. The soul searching comes in discerning whether the advice is needed and, if it is, how to share the information in a way that produces fruit and not contempt. We must call on the Spirit to give us the words to offer beneficial advice and to give the hearer an attitude of openness to take it in. Many of our parish boards and committees (Parish Pastoral Council, RF Committee, School Board, Finance Committee, Grounds Committee, and more) help to offer input when needed to guide the life of the parish. These groups are invaluable to the healthy growth of the parish.

Consider this week... How can I help clothe the naked? Who needs my prayerful advice? Whose advice do I need to heed?