



Lenten Reflection Week 2

Guideline 3: Meet people where they are; that is, always make an effort to understand people and their positions.

Guideline 4: Give people a chance to change. A change of mind, a change of heart is always a possibility if we believe that God is the source of newness of life.

At first glance, it may seem “meeting people where they are” and giving “people a chance to change” are among the easier of Sr. Ellen Joyce’s guidelines for bringing domestic justice forward in our Lenten practices of charity.

The guidelines are prayerful in themselves. They are the fruits of solitary reflection, the gathered harvest of tattered threads of not belonging, a solitude lost in the needing of others and the unexpected noises interrupting our planned for silences. Yet a newly sprouting willingness to share whatever is scary, burdensome or painful for others in their lives, begins to root in us.

No one expects a life without change and consequences. We cycle through four seasons each year and wonder about unrelenting changes in our physical environment. Floods, wildfires, drought and climate change. Today wars feel closer to our borders, global illnesses take hold where quarantine happens across continents. We have observed the disruptions in the lives of families where there is no hope for asylum. We experience in our civil discourse little that leaves us hopeful. This is the moment when we pray for the courage to share deeply with our neighborhood community, our family and those for whom we are committed to serve. We pledge to live these challenges as we find our way to Emmaus. We remember the proverb: *Two walking together shortens the road.*

“Jesus does not respond to our worry-filled way of living by saying that we should not be so busy with worldly affairs... **Nor does he tell us what we do is unimportant, valueless or useless. [Jesus] speaks about a change of heart.**” *Journey of the Heart*, Henri J.M. Nouwen, page 22.

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