


“AT THE CORE OF THE VIRTUE OF SOLIDARITY IS THE PURSUIT OF JUSTICE AND PEACE”¹


3. Solidarity & the Common Good



In truth I tell you, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers or sisters of mine, you did it to me.
Matthew 25:40
You are not making a gift of your possessions to the poor person. You are handing over to them what is theirs.
Saint Ambrose.

“Solidarity is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people...it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good.”

St Pope John Paul II:
Sollicitudo Rei Socialis 1987 #38



Caritas
Diocese of Salford

Papal Quotes on what ‘solidarity’ is – or is not

“Solidarity is **NOT** a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. **ON THE CONTRARY**, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good;...to the good of all and each individual, because we are all really responsible for all.”

[Pope John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* no. 38]

“Solidarity **REFERS TO THE VIRTUE** enabling the human family to share fully the treasure of spiritual goods.”

[Pope Benedict XVI, *Address to Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences*, 2008]

“**THIS IS WHAT “SOLIDARITY” MEANS.** It is not merely a question of helping others...it is a **matter of justice** (cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1938 – 1949). Interdependence, to be in solidarity and to bear fruit, needs strong roots in human and in nature, created by God; it needs respect for faces and for the land.”

[Pope Francis, General Audience, 2 September 2020]

So, what is meant with human solidarity?

At the heart of human solidarity is the recognition that we are all created by God as His children. Hence differences of nationality, ethnicity, ideology, culture, gender, class, religious affiliation or non-affiliation, age, physical or mental impediments do not count at all. We are one interdependent and interconnected human family. With some attention to detail, Pope Francis explains HOW it is our responsibility our interdependence and interconnectedness to ‘transform into solidarity’.

“Solidarity...means much more than an occasional gesture of generosity.

¹ UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS [USCCB]

It means thinking and acting in terms of community. It means that the lives of all take priority over the appropriation of goods by a few.

It also means fighting against the structural causes of poverty and inequality; of the lack of work, land and housing; and of the denial of social and labour rights. It means confronting the destructive effects of the empire of money: forced dislocation, painful emigration, human trafficking, drugs, war, violence and all those realities that many of you suffer and that we are all called upon to transform.

Solidarity, understood in its deepest sense, is a way of making history....”

[Pope Francis, *World Meeting of Popular Movements*, 2014]

On a final note: the World Meeting of Popular Movements was founded by Pope Francis in 2014 with the purpose of creating an ‘encounter’ between Church leadership and the countless grassroots organisations that fight against various socio-political structures that are unjust. Hence, this quotation of Pope Francis can be of great help when discerning on which party or candidate to vote for.

The following link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXA7fFrNqeY> will lead you to a scriptural meditation and reflection on the virtue of **SOLIDARITY**.