

Social Justice Seminar

Last week we were blessed with Fr. Jon Pedigo's visit to our parish where he talked about Catholic Social Justice teaching on two different evenings.

He conducted a very engaging and dynamic seminar through question & answer sessions interspersed with his presentation.

The focal point was the need of each baptized person to bring to the world the Gospel-proclaimed Kingdom of God (just, peaceful, equal, joyful, free) through the biblical concept of **righteousness**. That righteousness makes us understand "the other" as an equal partner in fundamental, inalienable rights, created with the same dignity (given from God to each human being), and all creation and natural resources as belonging to and benefiting the common good.

To achieve this, each one of us needs to go through a profound internal conversion of heart towards righteousness. Only that spiritual personal transformation enables us to change the unjust economical, social and political structures and practices present today to those according to the Scriptures.

As our personal conversion takes time so does the needed social transformation. This transformation can only be done following the Gospel principles and never through violent means.

Although charity is a necessary emergency remedy towards the needy, the real work of Catholic Social Justice is to discover and eliminate the conditions that create the need for charity. In order to do this, we must also involve those we are helping, walking with them and seeing injustice through the eyes of those who live it – they are an active part of the solution. Justice is not "given" to them, it belongs to them.

We are also the stewards of creation and we must share all our natural resources in an equitable and sustainable way. All must benefit from them fairly and adequately. Technology and social development must take care and preserve the environment for the future generations and guarantee a just system of circular resource utilization and replenishment.

There are six basic principles of Catholic Social Justice: the dignity of life of the human person, the freedom to participate in family and community, preferential option for the poor, the dignity of work (right of workers), solidarity with others (including global solidarity), and stewardship of creation and environment.

Our parish's Social Justice committee wants to share this important reflection with all of you. We are working to bring these principles to our community. We need your help – we are all called to serve others.