

BLESSED TRINITY: LIVING OUT GOD'S COMMAND TO WELCOME THE STRANGER

Blessed Trinity has a strong history of welcoming all people – especially those on the fringes of society including all refugees that are allowed to be among us, all migrant or farm workers whether they can show proof of legal documents or not, including all homeless regardless of their history, etc.

The teaching of the Church and the clear message of the Bible one hundred percent supports our approach. Church documents have called upon all Christians to make a “preferential option for the poor” by standing in solidarity with them and taking up their cause in struggles for justice.



Blessed Pope Paul VI in “Populorum Progressio” restated that Vatican Council II truth “God intended the earth and everything in it for the use of all human beings and peoples. Thus...created goods should flow fairly to all.”



More recently, in their joint pastoral letter on migration the Catholic Bishops of Mexico and the United States stated that “the Church in our two countries is constantly challenged to see the face of Christ crucified and risen in the stranger.”

All through the Old Testament, along with widows and orphans, “strangers” (aliens and foreigners) are part of a protected class of God’s “little ones”. The righteous Hebrews (God’s special people – us too) must imitate God’s special love for the stranger by caring for the foreigner as one of their own.

Ezekiel 47:21 says “...you are to give the alien his share of what ever tribe he is a resident. [*Note: no papers needed!*] This is the Word of the Lord God.”

The parable of the Good Samaritan packs this punch because the audience does not recognize Samaritans as neighbors – and Jesus tells them (and us!) to go and do as the Samaritan did.



Here at Blessed Trinity we have made a persistent effort to follow the clear teaching of the Bible and of the Church down through the ages. We have reached out to farm workers and migrants (regardless of where they came from); to the poor and homeless (regardless of their history); to foreigners including Haitians, Venezuelans, Vietnamese,

Kosovars, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and others (regardless of the presence of, or the absence of, legal documents).

The Christ Child, born in a manger, and the flight of his parents to Egypt, has joined the ranks of all the strangers and aliens exiled from a warm and safe home life. He begins life among the homeless, the legions of poor, oppressed, and abandoned unable to find safe, secure and humane shelter. He is a member of all those living in tent cities, homeless shelters, and refugee and relocation camps. He is born into the ranks of those who sleep in cardboard boxes, on park benches or slum derelict shelters.



The only way we might manage to have an “untroubled” conscience is to join the growing ranks of those who systematically put down as undeserving - as somewhat less than human - those who are “strangers” in our midst. That seems to give “permission” to many people to exclude the “stranger” from our care.

Blessed Trinity does not subscribe to that unchristian attitude.