

ANOTHER ONE?! DELETE!



I am tired.

Every day I receive another action alert asking me to raise my voice to support the rights of conscience and freedom of religion or immigration reform or protecting the hungry or the environment or the poor during budget negotiations. You might too. Do you reach a point where you just want to delete these?

Take the Farm Bill. My gosh, how many times must I voice support for the Farm Bill? I receive email alerts from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, National Catholic Rural Life Conference, Catholics Confront Global Poverty, Catholic Relief Services and Bread for the World.

I am not apathetic, I am tired. The moment I become apathetic is the moment I need to take pause and pray for a conversion from apathy to empathy.

I have learned that it is okay to be tired but it is not okay to quit working for justice. It is not written that working for justice would be easy, but it is written that we are called “[o]nly to do the right and to love goodness, and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8).

We don’t work on social justice in easy times; we work on social justice in difficult times. We don’t work for ourselves; we don’t work for this generation; we work for the next generation. And the one after that.

The battle for justice is not ours but the Lord’s. The victory is also the Lord’s. As disciples of Christ we continue Christ’s work to build God’s kingdom of justice here on Earth. (“Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”)

Yes our work benefits the next generation and the one after that and happily we take responsibility today for changing society and not leave it to the next generation. (“Give us *this day*.”)

As disciples of Christ our advocacy flows from the compassion we have for each other as our brothers and sisters in Christ. A compassionless advocacy, though it may be justly (attaining the right results), cannot be considered just. A compassionless advocacy is also susceptible to “is there anything good on television tonight?”

A legislative bill provides the tireless advocate [14 opportunities](#) – committee meetings, amendments, the floor vote – all these in the House and the Senate – and the reconciliation process when House and Senate bills differ. Fourteen opportunities mean at least 14 action alerts.

Or when today Congress postpones reauthorizing the Farm Bill for a year through a procedure called “continuing resolution”, the advocate is given another 14 opportunities to work for what is right!

How many citizens of other countries risk death for the chance to advocate (vote) just once? How many countries make voicing an opinion punishable by jail or death?

Advocacy begins with doing nothing and progresses to organizing friends and community to make their voices heard as one voice. In between all or nothing are tiny baby steps that fit your time, your commitment, and your abilities.

Clicking on an action alert link and sending an electronic message, or calling your representative’s office are two such steps. Clicking or calling with a heart for compassion and justice, knowing that it’s not tiring; it is invigorating because you are making a difference.



Office of Life, Justice, and Peace