

## **A Justice Ministry IV**

21<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B)

August 22, 2021

Fr. Tony Davis

As we continue with our Justice Ministry homilies for the month of August, today we ask the question, ‘Who should be interested in this ministry?’ As with all parish ministries and activities, the first answer is ‘everyone.’ Everyone is invited to be part of this ministry. However, I do want to narrow the focus. ‘Who should be interested in this ministry, over and above the other parishioners?’ My answer is: the younger generations of parishioners.

At a parish, there should be something for everyone. Overall, the Catholic Church does a great job with care for the elderly, social groups for senior citizens, volunteer opportunities for those for those in their middle-ages, and education for children. Oftentimes, the group that is missing is the young adults. Admittedly, this is a hard group to attract. They are so busy starting careers and families that they do not consider opportunities for more involvement at Church. On top of that, their group of peers are not usually church goers. As a result, this group of Catholics are largely missing from parish life. Sadly, once they leave, many of them never come back.

In my opinion, a Justice Ministry could go a long way in attracting, retaining, and including the young adults of our parish. While many of their peers are not church goers, many of them are concerned about justice issues. Justice, therefore, could be a good connecting issue among the younger parishioners, their peers, and their faith. We want our younger parishioners to find something here so that when Jesus

askes them, 'do you want to leave also?,' they may respond like Peter in today's Gospel, 'master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.' It is my hope that our young adult parishioners, working alongside the other members of this ministry, would consider this opportunity.

While the Justice Ministry at St. Matthias would always be predominantly a Catholic ministry in the name of St. Matthias Church, hopefully led by our young adults, it is also open to non-parishioners and even non-Catholics. Anyone who hungers and thirsts for justice from a faith background can be part of this ministry, which could include your family members or friends. The goal is to build a network of people talking about the justice issues that directly or indirectly affect them. As we mentioned in previous weeks, justice is not a secular endeavor, but deeply religious one. Reread the verses of the psalm this weekend!

Next week, our final week of these homilies on the Justice Ministry, we will answer the question, 'What would a Justice Ministry look like here practically?' During that homily, I will explain the various levels of involvement, the time commitment, and the financial investment.

For today, as we prepare to receive the Bread of Life, let us pray for the courage to embrace the hard teachings of Christ. May we not walk away from the demands of discipleship, especially in regards to justice, but like Joshua say, "as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."