



MISSION PEACE & JUSTICE

MPJ Monthly Newsletter "Hope in Action"

Volume 2, Issue 3

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Dear SJS Community,

Thank you for your generous participation in the MPJ Clothing Drive. We collected over 150 lbs. of clothing, which were entirely donated to the Ventura County Rescue Mission. On Friday, November 8, Mr. Chris Burgess, the Administrative Assistant to the Mission Director, picked them up and addressed the SJS Community during lunch, sharing with us the words of respect and appreciation for the great help and support of every member of our Seminary.



This is greatly appreciated by our staff, the hospitals and the patients in our community. You play a very important role in providing this critically needed "gift of life".



I believe no additional words are necessary to express how great and significant was the impact our Seminary made in the world and others' lives.



As we all participate in the archdiocesan Adopt-A-Family Christmas Program, all the classes are preparing the gifts that will be donated to those of the greatest needs in the Los Angeles area. Thank you all

for your generosity and cooperation with your respective MPJ Class Representatives.

May the upcoming Christ's Nativity bring you and your families peace and hope now and in the days to come. May the maternal love of Our Lady overflow you and protect you in the entire 2020.



Huge thanks to all those who donated their blood in the MPJ Blood Drive on Monday, November 18. I received the following message from the Donor recruitment

Representative, Taylor Testa,

one day after our Blood Drive: *We were able to collect 19 pints of lifesaving blood, equating to about 57 lives saved!*

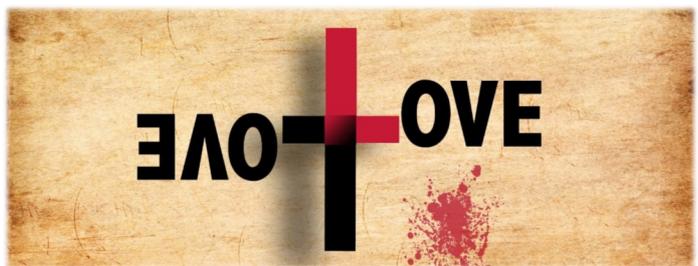
Kamil Ziolkowski

Love and Service

By Roberto Villablanca

We are created by God out of love. Although our first parents disobeyed God, He still brought us back to him. He gave everything that he has, in the person of Jesus Christ, to us. Christ's self-emptying for the sake of our salvation is the greatest example of genuine love. Love is unconditional. It does not seek any self-interests. Genuine love is concern, not on what the self can gain, but for the good of the other person. Jesus Christ exemplified genuine love by dying on the cross that we may have life. Christ is God and he did not profit anything from dying on the cross. He died on the cross for the sole reason that He loves us so much.

God is love, and we are created in the image and likeness of God. Hence, we have the desire to love and be loved. Pope John Paul II in his encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis*, states, "Man cannot live without love. He remains a being that is incomprehensible for himself, his life is senseless, if love is not revealed to him, if he does not encounter love, if he does not experience it and make it his own, if he does not participate intimately in it." In other words, Pope John Paul II is saying that our true identity is being beloved children of God. This fundamental reality is revealed in Jesus Christ, i.e., God's Love made flesh.



Pope John Paul II also states that we need to "participate intimately in it [love]" to make sense of our life. Participating in love is our vocation, and it brings us fulfillment. For this reason, God commands us to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and neighbor as yourself (Luke 10:27). Our reception of God's overflowing love should move us to respond in service.

As Catholics, we need to radiate God's love to other people. We need to see our neighbors as beloved children of God and as neighbors worthy to be served. Let us bring God's love to people who are thirsty for Him. We can actually imitate Jesus Christ, without literally being crucified, by being selfless and total in our service to the poor, the less fortunate, and the marginalized.



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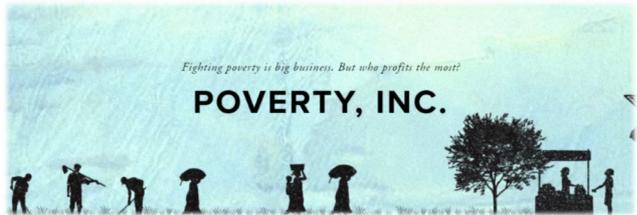
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Re-Thinking Poverty

By Dcn. Danny Garcia

We as a Christian community are obliged to commit ourselves to the common good of all people and to assist the poor who live on the margins of society. Catholic social teaching makes it clear that we are called to care for the poor, but it does not tell us exactly how we are to achieve it. The documentary film *Poverty Inc.* uncovers ineffective and even harmful approaches and points out effective ways of helping the poor.

Poverty Inc. directed by Michael Matheson Miller, is a documentary released in 2014 that examines the shortcomings in the modern global foreign aid system, which is ultimately a vast multibillion-dollar poverty industry. Featured in this documentary are interviews with community leaders, business people, farmers, local social entrepreneurs, and sociologists who believe that foreign aid by the West has harmed local economies, perpetuated dependency, and failed to give voice to people who are supposedly being helped. What exists today is paternalism, which leaves no room for partnership with those trying to rise out of poverty.



This foreign aid system that has been in place for over twenty years has proven to be ineffective and created structures of sin for failing to allow its recipients to fully achieve their fulfillment and by failing to integrate them as full and active members of society (CSDC 119). The system has situated the poor as "the other," as objects of charity rather than the subjects, in their own story of development. The Catholic Church wants an economy that is always oriented to the common good and to the integral development of each individual. In addition, it must take into account the human dignity of each individual, seeing each as a subject and not as an object.

This poverty industry can be effective if it turns its focus on how they can truly help the poor rise out of poverty, instead of making them dependent on aid. To do this, they can work with the local governments to help establish rule of law, giving them legal protection from theft and violence, justice in the courts, the ability to get title to one's land, freedom to start and register a business, and give them links to wider circles of exchange.

THE POWER OF PURPOSE



The poverty industry has also failed the poor because they failed to look at the longer effects of their acts or policies as well as the consequences on all groups involved, the most fundamental lesson of economics as proposed by economist Henry Hazlitt in his *Economics in One Lesson*. The following are examples of how charitable initiatives failed the poor by not considering unseen effects:

A church donated eggs to a small village outside Kigali, Rwanda. This has a positive effect on the villagers because they received eggs. However, they failed to consider the immediate effect on the local egg farmer, which put him out of business. Furthermore, in the long-term effect the villagers became dependent of the free eggs, and when the parish decided to give to a different group the next year, they now have no local source for eggs because the local producer was put out of business. This desire to help the community had a long-term negative impact on that community. Another example was Blake Mycoskie's TOMS Shoes Company. For every pair of shoes, they sell a free pair is given to children who have no shoes. This had the immediate effect of putting the village shoemaker out of business because the shoes were free, and they do not have to purchase a pair. The long-term negative impact was that the truck with these free shoes did not show up regularly, and people had come to rely on it.



The people in these examples the parish donating eggs and TOMS Shoes had noble intentions and were trying to do a good thing for the poor. However, we need to shift our mindsets and start thinking about how we can truly help the poor and integrate them back into society.

Pope Benedict XVI reminds us that we must seek ways to create opportunities for participation for those on the margins (CV 36). The director of the film provided us with an example of how a woman helped other women in a community in Haiti open up a successful business. She trained women how to make different types of jewelry. The great thing about this is that these women were using their own resources and creativity to make jewelry. These women begin working and made an income from their product. This particular person who was helping these women was able to connect them with different designers who actually sold their products and made over \$100,000. This money went to these women and the families they were supporting. Now they were able to buy themselves property, buy food, and put their children in good schools. This opportunity allowed them to get back on their feet.



My intentions are not to discourage anyone from giving donations to existing organizations. Rather, the intention is to illustrate, with the help of this documentary, how the current paradigms, as you saw in the examples, are not the most effective. We are compassionate and so our immediate response is to give. However, we must stop, reflect, and use our intelligence when choosing to donate money to existing organizations. We do not want our act of giving to have a detrimental effect. On the contrary, we want to make sure that the organizations we donate to are exercising effective entrepreneurship and actually assisting the poor in getting back on their feet.