

ENCYCLICAL LETTER ~~ FRATELLI TUTTI

Chapter Two

A STRANGER ON THE ROAD

The Good Samaritan Parable told by Jesus Luke 10:25-37 Pope Francis gives his homily on the parable.

THE CONTEXT

60. “In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets” (Mt 7:12). This command is universal in scope, embracing everyone on the basis of our shared humanity, since the heavenly Father “makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good” (Mt 5:45). Hence the summons to “be merciful, just as your Father is merciful” (Lk 6:36).
63. Jesus tells the story of a man assaulted by thieves and lying injured on the wayside. Only one person stopped, approached the man and cared for him personally, even spending his own money to provide for his needs. He also gave him something that in our frenetic world we cling to tightly: he gave him his time.

A story constantly retold

70. It is remarkable how the various characters in the story change, once confronted by the painful sight of the poor man on the roadside. The distinctions between Judean and Samaritan, priest and merchant, fade into insignificance. Now there are only two kinds of people: those who care for someone who is hurting and those who pass by.
71. The story of the Good Samaritan is constantly being repeated. We can see this clearly as social and political inertia is turning many parts of our world into a desolate byway, even as domestic and international disputes and the robbing of opportunities are leaving great numbers of the marginalized stranded on the roadside.
76. Let us turn at last to the injured man. There are times when we feel like him, badly hurt and left on the side of the road. We can also feel helpless because our institutions are neglected and lack resources, or simply serve the interests of a few, without and within. Indeed, “globalized society often has an elegant way of shifting its gaze. Under the guise of being politically correct or ideologically fashionable, we look at those who suffer without touching them. We televise live pictures of them, even speaking about them with euphemisms and with apparent tolerance”.

Starting anew

77. Each day offers us a new opportunity, a new possibility. We should not expect everything from those who govern us, for that would be childish. We have the space we need for co-responsibility in creating and putting into place new processes and changes. Let us take an active part in renewing and supporting our troubled societies.

Neighbors without borders

81. Jesus asks us to be present to those in need of help, regardless of whether or not they belong to our social group. In this case, the Samaritan became a neighbor to the wounded Judean. By approaching and making himself present, he crossed all cultural and historical barriers. Jesus concludes the parable by saying: “Go and do likewise”