

LOOKING TO JESUS

It is fair to say that the world that we live in is an unequal one where some have enough to thrive while others barely survive. It is our calling to live and walk with God and show and share God's love with others.

Jesus Christ showed his love for us in the most special way. By giving up his life for us on the cross. We need no other proof of our value than that we are worth dying for.

In response to that act of love, Scripture tells us in Matthew chapter 22 verses 37-39 that we are to love God with all our heart, soul and mind and love our neighbour.

It is not only in Jesus' death that we see his love for us and for others. In his life we see the perfect example to follow in loving our neighbour.

When Jesus healed the sick, he did not do it for personal gain or status. Scripture tells us that he was moved with compassion and that is the reason behind the miracles. He felt their pain and he was moved to act. It was not about spreading the news of those miracles as often Jesus told those he healed not to tell what happened.

In all the healing miracles we read about in the gospels, Jesus acted from and with compassion and showed respect for the dignity of the human person.

When Jesus called the first disciples, he did not look at their academic qualifications, their status in the community or their bank balance. He looked into their hearts and saw them as people created in God's image. Despite their lowly position as fishermen, he called them to follow him and used them powerfully.

Jesus is patient with his disciples when they get it wrong. When Peter denied him three times, Jesus forgave and restored him. Jesus showed solidarity and treated people with love and respect regardless of their physical appearance, their position in society, their nationality or whether they were male or female.

Jesus often told parables that condemned behaviour such as that of the priest and the official who walked past the man in need in the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

He met with, and showed an interest in, the lives of those usually ignored by society at that time. The Samaritan woman at the well was amazed that Jesus spoke with her and treated her with compassion as her neighbours treated her as an outcast because she had made some mistakes in her life. The man suffering from leprosy, who lived away from the city and led a lonely existence, also encountered the Son of God. Jesus spoke with him and treated him as a human being.

When a woman caught in the act of adultery was dragged in front of an angry mob, who were ready to stone her, Jesus stepped in. He told the crowd that if any of them were without sin, they could throw the first stone. No-one stepped forward!

God deplores injustice and his Son lived his life on earth standing up against oppression and injustice because he was doing his Father's will. It's a lasting example for us.

How will you live your life?

Will you follow Jesus' example?

You may fail sometimes, like the disciples did but if you allow God to help, you can live a life that mirrors Jesus' life and continues the fight against injustice, upholds the dignity of the human person and serves God.

Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund

SCIAF is the official overseas aid and development charity of the Catholic Church in Scotland and a proud member of the Caritas family. 19 Park Circus, Glasgow, G3 6BE Tel: 0141 354 5555. Scottish Charity No: SC012302 Company No: SC197327.