

Where there is disdain, let me sow respect

REFLECTION FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

Sr. Marie Josée Seide, DW



Disdain impacts the dignity of the human being because it intends to diminish the value of the person. However, the truth of the matter is that it diminishes as much those who practice it. They disobey the greatest commandment given us by God, "LOVE". Their attitude could be read as proving God wrong for seeing all his children as equal with no preference of culture, race, wealth, education, or condition of life.

"A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so also you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." ... (John 13: 34-35).

Many can find different ways to explain their attitude of being in disdain or in contempt. However, one thing is sure- it is harmful to oneself and to others. Discussing disdain from the point of view of the dignity of life is a very broad subject,

I could go on and on, but I'll narrow it down here to a specific aspect.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING (SLAVERY)

At Martin De Porres Schools, my current place of ministry, I had the opportunity to learn a lot about a very sad reality which many people know about, but which many people, too many people, are still unaware of or are not calling it what it is: **HUMAN TRAFFICKING**. It is an indignant business, a degrading and awful source of wealth for a lot of people around the world, including the United States and, often times it is happening right under our noses.

I discovered more in depth about the negative impact of this business on our society. It destroys the life of so many, from those as young as infants to children, adolescents, young adults and adults. Their financial vulnerability seems to feed the vicious desires and appetite of these traffickers.

In countries known as poor or underdeveloped, they easily exploit the vulnerable financial condition of parents with all kinds of offers for "a better life or future" abroad for their children, but it is often only for the sole purpose of sex, labor, and even organ trafficking. Women are being tricked into marrying men who have been in the business of marrying and remarrying women, promising a better life abroad which turns into a life of prostitution, labor slavery or both. They confiscate their passports, threaten them and mistreat them continuously beyond imagination.

Traffickers are specialists in the business of grooming kids and youth to win their trust and teach them how to run away from home. They operate in person or on social media.

These situations continue to exist because too many people have lived and continue to live in disdain of the dignity of life including their own.

The Samaritan woman (John 4: 5-42) went to the well at a time when she knew she would encounter nobody because she was rejected by society. She met Jesus, he restored her dignity and she began her life anew. Energized by God's love she drew her entire village to the path of salvation she had just experienced.

Simon the Pharisee was in contempt seeing the woman, whom he considered unworthy pouring perfume on the feet of Jesus. But, Jesus acknowledged her and restored her dignity.

God always sees beyond appearances because he knows us more than we could ever know ourselves.

Often times, you and I take our life for granted and we are not always accountable for it as we should be. And we are not always accountable properly for the life of those around us, for we have the responsibility to help our brothers and sisters to be good stewards of their lives.

As we continue to walk the narrow path daily and more particularly during this Lenten season we remain hopeful in God's loving grace for continuous growth. "Hope does not disappoint" (Romans 5:5).

Let us also pray for the conversion of those who have no respect for the dignity of the life of their brothers and sisters, nor do they respect their own life. Let us commit to do whatever we can to prevent more people from being victimized by the system and to also try our best to help, in every way we can, those who are already under the system.

Last but not least, we also pray for the victims, that they find the strength to live in hope of a better tomorrow. Many of them did see better days in freedom and dignity, like Ms. Hubbard who will be sharing her testimony on April 1st at St John's University, Queens, NY.

BLESSED LENT!



Donna Hubbard the Keynote Presenter at **2020 Vision: End Human Trafficking** is a survivor of seven years of trafficking and is now a flight attendant and certified trainer in the fight against human trafficking with [Airline Ambassadors International](#), an organization that advocates and educates on child protection and human trafficking awareness. Hear her speak on **Saturday, April 1, 2017, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. at St. John's University, D' Angelo Center, Room 416**. Find out more: <http://www.stjohns.edu/faith/mission/2020-vision-end-human-trafficking>