



As we shed the restrictions of this pandemic, I hope we don't shed along with them the lessons this disease has offered to us. Our world is threatened by a lot more than this one virus, as awful as that is. If we want a future for our children and their children, we need to pay attention to what we are doing before it's too late.

I don't want to sound like Chicken Little crying the sky is falling, but we do live in a *global* world now, like it or not. Our economy is international; to pretend otherwise denies reality. The pandemic taught us that many of the supplies we needed to fight the pandemic were made in China! A closer look at that economic relationship will show us how intertwined our two economies are. And check the labels on practically anything we buy and they will tell us the nation where it was made. Most of it is not in the USA.

A global economy has ramifications. Historians tell us politics follows the money, i.e., those who have money can shape government policy. The absolute power of kings was, in part, drained away by their need for money to accomplish their goals. As middle-class entrepreneurs grew in wealth, the kings, knowing they couldn't keep raising taxes, borrowed from them. That left the kings more indebted to these men who became power brokers. Today, look at our political system. More and more our politicians, whether state or national, are indebted to those who have the money to contribute to their campaigns. Money buys influence.

Covid-19 has taught us more than economics. We hear of millions of people sickened by this virus and thousands more who have died of it. Half a million people have died in our country alone. Thousands more are dying in Brazil and India today. But folks from all nations have become victims of the pandemic and people around the globe are dying from it. Sadly, the poor, as usual, suffer the most. But the point is that ALL peoples from ALL cultures, languages, parts of the globe, of all faiths or no faith at all, ALL human beings are victims of this one virus. Can we not see that all people on this planet are of *one race*? And most of the people of the planet want the same thing: a life with love and children living in peace which can bring prosperity.

Global thinking brings us face to face with global issues: global warming; proliferation of nuclear weapons and nations seemingly willing to use them; ethnic divisions; international hacking threatening war; economic wars; growing population; rise in gun violence and, surprisingly, plastic refuse. Each of these by itself is bad enough, but when we line them up together, the result is overwhelming. Anyone of these issues could ignite the end of the world as we know it. Again, these are *global* problems, not national, which brings us back to the reality that we are one globe with one and only one human race.

This is our world today; this is the world we are to proclaim the Gospel to. It feels like we're facing a Tsunami with only an umbrella. Where is our hope? If we listen to Christ speaking to us through the Scriptures, he lets us know he is the answer. I know that sounds simplistic and "churchy," but either that's true or it's not.

Pontius Pilate, when he accused the revolutionary Jesus of Nazareth stood before him, asked him “what is truth?” In an earlier part of the Gospel of John Jesus said, “I am the way, *the truth* and the life.” Which one do we believe: the man of the world, the politician pressured by religious leaders or Jesus?

Unfortunately, Jesus has come to be thought of as some mealy-mouthed do-gooder. We are uncomfortable hearing the tougher side of Christ, the side that tells us to “turn the other cheek, walk the extra mile, give more that has been forced from you”; “forgive and it will be forgiven you”; “give and it will be given to you....” Christian life is not easy; it’s tough. It means going against the grain, being different, perhaps even being counter cultural. And if the culture now is competition to the death, our call is to be better than that. As one spiritual writer has put it “*the best criticism of the bad is the practice of the better.*” That’s our call to action.

Christians, praying the OUR Father, are called to be better as *one people*. If all the members of the Catholic Church around the globe chose to practice “the better,” imagine the impact. If ALL Christians did the same thing, the world would definitely change. While we can’t eliminate all those who choose evil in the world, we can do our part by choosing the better. It may not seem like much, but remember what the Lord did with a couple of fish and several loaves of bread. Do we believe he can pull that off for us with today’s problems? Our future may depend on how we answer and what we plan to do about it.

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