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THE HEART OF GOD GIVES US A HEART FOR ACTION

Pope Francis calls us to an inclusive politics of dialogue, "that gives people a say in the decisions that impact their lives.", to an economy "that can offer every person access to a dignified existence" and to "a culture of encounter". Politics of dialogue, economics of inclusion and a culture of encounter are all expressions of Gospel values. All are legitimate fields of proclamation of the Good News, the work of a Church whose nature is to evangelize.

not need? This can be food, clothing, furnishings, electronics, computer programmes and apps. Do we need it? Could I give the money to someone who needs it more?

This is a very big agenda and truly a mission for us to follow of which Francis advises, "When you think globally, you can be paralyzed." When we are paralyzed we cannot act and nothing happens. We can all say that it is too big for us to tackle; and it is! I try, but really don't understand all the issues or comprehend the world. Surely, the big picture is too big, too complex for all of us. An old saying might help us, "Think globally, act locally." How can we fulfill our mission to change the world, and bring about the Reign of God, at our own local level?



It is easy to waste so many things by throwing it in the rubbish, polluting the environment. When say we "throw it AWAY!" – where is AWAY? It is actually SOMEWHERE! in the bin, at the tip, ending up in landfill, rivers and oceans. We can easily follow trends, fashions and fads, spending needlessly on passing things. In an economy for everyone there should be enough for all to have a good standard of living with access to the goods of the earth. Many do not have enough water, clothing, medicine, schooling, food, shelter, travel or luxury items, while others have an abundance.



A culture of encounter is about meeting people, which can simply mean greeting others, socializing with a drink or a meal, meetings, conferences, assemblies of all sorts, at all levels. We meet others as daughters and sons of God, as sisters and brothers. It requires the quality of dialogue; to listen carefully and to speak truthfully, to see all as an equal, to come with mercy and compassion.

Politics is not just for the politicians and parliament. It is a very human activity and operates wherever humans organize themselves. We all know of the politics of the football club, or social club or even our parish. This is not a bad thing but reflects the differences of people, their opinions and ideas. There is often a battle to see who will be the leader or dominant character. Our involvement in politics is seen in our vote at many levels, we can attend meetings, rallies, demonstrations, join lobby groups, be involved in social media, having our say in various ways. In all these situations Francis reminds us of the need for dialogue, which requires us to listen attentively and speak the truth as best we know it. How often do we buy things we do



We may not be able to change the big picture, but we can change our own attitudes and outlooks. We can bring about change at our own level, and each small change builds the right values and attitudes, penetrates the structures of life creating movement in the direction God calls us.



However, all is not doom and gloom as many good things are happening with many good people working to bring about justice, equality; groups, movements, organizations, large and small, local, national and international concerned for refugees, women, children, violence, suicide, the environment and many more.



"The remedy in which gentleness mingles with effectiveness ... contains the quintessence of all that can quickly bring back to social life, nations that no longer have it. The Sacred Heart of Jesus, Remedy of the Evils of Society." Jules Chevalier



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