

August 2, 2020

Good morning.

Thank you for allowing me to share with you today. I am a Jesuit of the Midwest USA Province, and I have been working in Nicaragua since 1986. A significant part of my ministry is with people with disabilities, whose faith has been an inspiring example to me.

I would like to ask for your prayers for and solidarity with this ministry. People with disabilities here are at a greater disadvantage than in the developed world, since there are practically no public-assistance programs for them, and unemployment (even for people who are fine physically) is widespread.

Through my Fund for the Disabled, I have been giving some financial support to 70 people, and my support for these folks is personal and individual as well as material. People feel known, respected, and cared for.

The Scripture readings for August 2 are very appropriate for the occasion of Mission Sunday. In the first reading, the prophet Isaiah gives voice to God's desire that people live in peace, having their material and spiritual needs met. God works through us to achieve this, calling us to reach out to the poor "that they may have life, and life in abundance," as Jesus said in the gospel of John.

In the Responsorial Psalm, we say: "The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our needs." Again, this depends in large part on our taking up our responsibility as God's stewards and working to meet the needs of the poor. The psalm continues: "The eyes of all look hopefully to you, and you give them their food in due season; you open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing."

In the second reading today, from the Letter to the Romans, St. Paul speaks of "the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." In the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians, he stated: "You are the body of Christ and individually members of it" (12:27). Each member has an important ministry. We are the Body of Christ, nourished by the Eucharist; and thus we are ministers of His love to people in need.

In the gospel reading, Jesus had "compassion" on the hungry, and He expressed that compassion by teaching them and by meeting their need for food; let us pray that we too be moved by true compassion, which expresses love in good works. He told the Apostles: "you feed them," and He helped them to do that. He gives that commission to us, too.

Please pray for the poor and hungry in Nicaragua, and especially for the disabled among them. Thank you for welcoming me here and for your kind attention.

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