

FAITH CHAT

with James & John

Must I Tend To The Needs Of Others?

Know This...

Nothing is more challenging than living one's life for Christ. It's easy to say, "I love Jesus;" but, it's very difficult to put these words into actions that confirm one's love for Him. Faithful Christians must bear witness to Jesus by tending to the needs of others. God calls us to respect the dignity of each person: male or female, rich or poor, powerful or weak. We cannot profess faith in Jesus and at the same time ignore the physical and spiritual needs of others, the economic and social disparity among classes of people, and the freedom and justice given to all God's children.



John: When God brought us into the world, He did not equip us with everything we need to fend for ourselves. We need each other; so we must serve each other.

James: Jesus commands us to love our neighbor as ourselves and to love one another as He loves us. It is our love for others that demonstrates our true love for God.

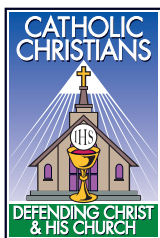


John: Our Lord does not call us to elevate our love of neighbor above our love of God. In fact, God calls us to love Him with every ounce of energy we have to give.

James: But, when our desire is to please God, our life is riveted on tending to the needs of all His children. Without second thoughts, we will clothe the naked, feed the hungry, assist the unemployed, befriend the lonely, and care for the sick and dying.

Deacon John Beckmann and Deacon James Russell are permanent deacons in the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

Please visit: www.catholicchristians.com for more insight into the teaching of Jesus Christ and His Church.

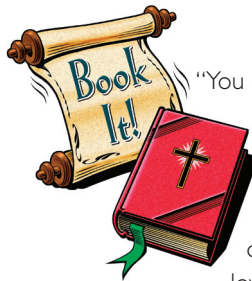


"Give to everyone who asks of you, and from the one who takes what is yours do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you. For if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do the same. If you lend money to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit (is) that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, and get back the same amount. But rather, love your enemies and do good to them, and lend expecting nothing back; then your reward will be great and you will be children of the Most High." Lk 6:30-35

"Do not turn away from the needy; rather, share everything with your brother." The Didache, 75 A.D. "If everyone would take only according to his needs and would leave the surplus to the needy, no one would be rich, no one poor; no one in misery." St. Basil the Great "The rich man is not one who is in possession of much, but one who gives much." St. John Chrysostom "Justice is that virtue that assigns to every man his due." St. Augustine



BE ATTITUDES "Be diligent in serving the poor. Love the poor. Honor them, as you would Christ Himself." St. Louise de Marillac "Make yourself a seller when you are buying, and a buyer when you are selling, and then you will sell and buy justly." St. Francis de Sales "Extend mercy toward others, so that there is no one in need whom we meet without helping. For what hope is there for us if God should withdraw His mercy from us?" St. Vincent de Paul



"You shall not take vengeance or bear any grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself." Lev 19:18 "He who despises his neighbor is a sinner; but happy is he who is kind to the poor." Prov 14:21 "Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God... If anyone says, 'I love God,' but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen." 1 Jn 4:7, 20

Lord God, You call us to love each other as You love us. You never withhold Your love from even the most wretched sinner; yet, we often make excuses for why we ignore the needs of the poor and the lonely, the unemployed and the downtrodden, even the sick and the elderly. Give me the grace—the strength and perseverance—I need to imitate Your infinite love and endless charity. I ask this in the Name of Jesus. Amen.

