



Resolutions To Action

LCWR Global Concerns Committee

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We Are Made for These Times

Eileen Haynes, SCL

EXPERIENCE

We are in the midst of another summer that typically provides days to relax and enjoy time with our friends and family. This particular summer also seems to be flavored with a growing awareness of fear, division, tribalism, and disrespect. There is almost a daily experience of “breaking news” throughout our country and world that in one way or another demonstrates the urgency of remaining committed to mending the brokenness in our world.

Polarization continues to permeate the grassroots level in our country even as it is also felt throughout our world. It is encouraged by government leaders. Scripture is used to justify the separation of parents from their children. Violence is condoned under the guise of the right to bear arms. A person’s skin color influences and justifies actions made by law enforcement. The US Supreme Court upholds the travel ban against Muslims. Our government has announced its withdrawal from the United Nations Human Rights Council.

Individuals and non-profit organizations, who have sought to ensure that laws are written and implemented to protect the environment, are now experiencing sweeping rollbacks to programs designed to safeguard the environment and mitigate the effects of climate change. This comes on the heels of one of the most expensive years of natural disasters in modern US history.

Modern-day slavery has become a global market and continues to be a lucrative black market industry affecting millions of lives; enriching some at the expense of others, including children.

We strive to use our voices, influence, and energy to work towards justice and peace for all of God’s people and creation. And yet, it can feel as if we are on a path of insanity. It appears that the moral compass is becoming obsolete. We are challenged to remain steady in our commitment to justice and peace. Perhaps, at times, we find it quite challenging to know and trust that God’s presence is actively working within us as well as within those that carry differing perspectives. How do we continue onward faithfully working for the justice and peace that all of God’s people yearn for?

SOCIAL ANALYSIS

We find ourselves in unprecedented times in the local, national, and global arenas.

We are aware of what is happening around the world – economically, politically, socially – and there is, in many ways, an increasing awareness that isolation and self-preservation are the dominating themes upon which decisions and policies are formulated. People are seeking a way of life that will, in their minds, provide security and safety. They are writing laws and policies to help define the boundaries.

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LCWR
8808 Cameron Street
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301-588-4955
www.lcwr.org
fax: 301-587-4575
ascholz@lcwr.org

The discord and fear that are promoted by our elected government leaders, media, and sometimes even within our churches, begins to seep into our beings.

These attitudes and stances, by their very nature, bestow power upon a small sector of society while imposing negative consequences upon those who are deemed “the other.” Fear often begets fear.

REFLECTION

“My friends, do not lose heart. We were made for these times.” Are we willing to embrace this invitation from American poet, psychoanalyst, and post-trauma specialist Clarissa Pinkola Estes?

Brother Leonard Rego, OMI, director of the JPIC office of OMI Lacombe, Canada, observes that: “As we look at the world around us, it’s hard not to feel weighed down, fearful, and depressed. It sometimes seems that madmen lead us, and that greed, oppression, violence, and injustice are the norm.”

The late Dom Hélder Câmara, Archbishop of Olinda and Recife, shared these words of encouragement: “Do people weigh you down? Don’t carry them on your shoulders. Take them into your heart.”

While we continue in these summer days, it is time to take stock.

Brother Rego reminds us:

There are good people all around us; people filled with hope and determination, struggling to create a world of compassion and fairness. The amazing example of young people determined to change the gun culture in the USA must surely hearten us.

We need to place our trust in the Spirit and let go of our fears. Energized by God’s constant love and presence, let us joyfully deal with the demands and burdens of the world today from a heart vision perspective so we don’t become burned out and in despair.

Let us join our efforts with those of good people everywhere, to make this a world of compassion and fairness, whether we are working on a global stage or simply interacting with those who are part of our daily lives.

A beautifully simple example of this is a story of a six-year-old boy. Upon learning about the separation of families at the southern border, he decided that he wanted to help. With the assistance of his parents, he opened a lemonade stand and raised more than \$13,000.

Finally, Dom Hélder provides a healthy dose of encouragement and guidance: “Without justice and love, peace will always be a great illusion.”

ACTION

Recognizing that division, disappointment, and discord are always part of ebb and flow of life, we are reminded of basic action steps to maintain a healthy balance in our lives, for ourselves and those with whom we are called to journey.

1. Reflect on your inner strength. This is a time and opportunity to rely on daily prayer practices and contemplative resources that will sustain our Christian activism.
2. Gift yourself with a ‘media free’ day - closing down the TV and all other social media devices.
3. Send notes of gratitude to those you care about or to persons that you recognize as promoters of peace and justice.
4. Remember the Sabbath – Exodus 20: 8-11. If you have access to the June 2018 Sojourners magazine, grab a cool beverage and a comfortable chair as you read “Stepping Off the Merry-Go-Round”. Even if you do not have access to this Sojourners issue, enjoy the gifts of these summer days.
5. Take time to read “We Were Made for These Times” a reflection by Clarissa Pinkola Estes http://www.grahameb.com/pinkola_estes.htm.
6. Reflect on the question: What feeds and sustains you in these times?

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