**The Good Samaritan.** Homily: Fr. Andy

My dear Brothers and Sisters.

Today’s Gospel is about the Good Samaritan. It is about our much needed care for each other placed into the image of a parable, teaching us something very important. Since this teaching is conveyed in the form of an image, let us try to visualize what happened there on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. A traveler on the road was attacked by robbers. They beat him badly, took all his possessions, and left him on the roadside dying. Some people walk by, a priest and a Levite, but they walk on the opposite side of the road, avoiding any involvement. Not so the Samaritan. He takes care of the man lavishly, with love and care and genuine concern, sparing no effort and no expense.

Without going into the political and religious implications of the parable that the one who did the good deed was a Samaritan, let us travel in time 2000 years into any of the large cities in the United States. This is what we may find on occasions. (Show photo and keep it on for the rest of the homily).

What is different here, however, is that ALL walk on the opposite side. No one seems to even see the man lying on the pavement. Is he sleeping there because he has nowhere to go? Or did he die during the night? Where is the Good Samaritan to help him? No one seems to care.

And I would go even further. This photo tells me much more than just an isolated incident in the life of a city in our time. In so many ways, it is about the global humanity in the XXIst century. A humanity deeply wounded by greed and the desire for infinite growth in a finite world, creating extremes of riches and poverty, and many are wounded while others just walk by, not seeing and not caring.

My Sisters and Brothers. To build the Kingdom of God today means to see and to stop on the roadside for the wounded world, and to take care of the immediate needs in terms of social and economic justice. Here in our church, we do that a great deal. But we must go a bit further, beyond the symptoms of our plight, and go all the way to the causes. Think for a moment. The good Samaritan took care of the immediate needs of the traveler. He provided healing for the symptoms of a dire situation. But what are the causes? Why are there robbers on the way from Jerusalem to Jericho? Should they not be all in jail? Or what would be even better, should not everyone have a way of life where to rob and destroy will be no more a needed choice?

My dear Sisters and Brothers. In these matters of symptoms and causes, some people live in a world of denial, in a world of “business as usual”. Others become prophets of doom, saying “We know what we should do, but we will not do it. Therefore live it up, and go out in an unavoidable misery”. But there is a third group of people who look at matters with open eyes and with understanding, and follow a plan of healing in terms of both, symptoms and causes.

There is hope in this matter. In the section of The Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes), the second Vatican Council stated clearly in § 62: “Let it be recognized that all the faithful, clerical and lay, possess a lawful freedom of inquiry and of though, and the freedom to express their minds humbly and courageously about those matters in which they enjoy competence”. We should all listen to them with open minds and hearts.

I recommend for you to download from the Internet an expert and clear understanding about the ways we can heal both, symptoms and causes in matters of our global survival in our century: Download without charge two excellent resources: Plan B 3.0 and/or Plan B 4.0 by Lester Brown. The simplest way to do this is by typing into Google search the words: plan b 3.0 online, or plan b 4.0 online. Plan B 3.0 is a better starter. Or use

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