

Message

RT. Rev. Bishop David McGough Auxiliary Bishop of Birmingham and Lead Bishop to Pastoral Care Project.

In a recent letter Pope Francis reminded us that, far from standing above the poor, we are their debtors, since it is in reaching out to the poor that the gospel becomes more than words. It becomes a saving encounter with the Lord himself.

“Then he will answer them saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it also to me.

” We live in a society that has all the trappings of wealth, and yet still struggles to acknowledge the cries of the poor. Poverty has many faces, one of which is dementia in all its forms. Here that most precious possession, a sense of self and belonging, begins to crumble. To the onlooker it can sometimes seem that the sufferer is dispossessed of everything that makes us truly human. It is a poverty that cannot be contained. Husbands and wives, parents and children, must suffer the loss of so much that gave meaning to their mutual sharing.

As the Pastoral Care Project presents its annual report, I pay tribute to all involved with its work. In reaching out to those suffering with dementia, and to their families, they assert that all, regardless of wealth or poverty, need to be loved and included. I pray that in their work they will continue to meet Christ in those they serve. As Pope Francis has said, we are indeed their debtors. I encourage all both to join and support this service to the poor.

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