

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. 1 Corinthians 15:58

Bishop Curry talks about hospitality and reaching out either across the street or across the world.

Many years ago, my family went on a mission trip to Piedras Negras. I was looking through the mission trip material recently. One of the announcements proclaimed “One of the beauties of traveling out of the country on a mission trip is to experience firsthand poverty, to see how blessed we are in the USA and how much work needs to be done to overcome the social injustice that is so prevalent in other countries. The ‘have’ and ‘the have not’ is obvious.” What an obnoxious statement! Anyone who has ever gone a mission trip will tell you that the person who goes on the trip is the person that is transformed.

One day on this trip to Piedras Negras, we were walking around a neighbor doing odd jobs. I noticed that an older woman was talking to Dylan (about 4 years old at the time) outside her home. I saw her clasp his hand and begin walking to her house. Melissa, Elizabeth, and I quickly caught up and followed them in the house. The woman made him a plate of food, showed him all the birds she had in her house, gave Elizabeth a hand-made purse, and entertained Elizabeth and Dylan non-stop.

When we left her home (Dylan crying because we had to leave), my children were loaded with trinkets and snacks.

My thought was “we are the ones who are supposed to be helping people, not the reverse.” The world is not filled with the ‘haves’ and the ‘have-nots’, the world is filled with human beings in many different cultures, political situations, and economic environments.

Whether it is your neighbor across the street or a new friend in Mexico, we must strive to continue to reach out to people where they live. When we do so, we realize that we have a lot more in common than we thought.

Some of the barriers that existed in our minds begin to disappear. We realize that it is not about the “haves” and “the have nots”. It’s about loving your neighbor as yourself.

So much of the anger and the hatred that exists in our world is because we don’t really know each other.

I met a woman in Honduras who proudly took me on a tour of her one-room house – dirt floor, no air conditioning, no running water – but a view of the rain forest as beautiful as any spot in the world.

I met a man in Mexico we lived next to the dump with horrible dirt roads leading to his home. He invited me to eat with his family even though they didn't have much money.

Although he didn't have many material possessions, the love within his family was amazing.

I met a priest in Mexico who was paid \$40 a month to be a clergy-person. He frequently walked ten miles to one of his churches for services. He never once complained about hardships rather he was always giving thanks to God for his congregation.

So often we think that we are going to save the world but we are the ones actually saved. We reach out to one another to better understand one another; to cast away our prejudices and pre-conceived notions; and to find ways to respect each other. If we can strive to break bread with our neighbor across the street or across the world, Christ will do the rest.