

International Team Installation Homily
July 10, 2010
Sister Barbara Kraemer

Today we welcome to leadership the four sisters of our International Team – our Sisters Kathleen, Rita, Francitta and Elsa Paul.

We call them to the service of leadership in our Congregation. That means, according to *Response in Faith: Rule of Life* (76), that their “primary concern (is) to focus the mission call of the sisters of our Congregation and animate them to live the radical claims of the Gospel.”

We call our new team to do this by helping us carry out the direction set by the 2010 General Assembly, which is:

We commit ourselves to be instruments of peace.

We live that peace within community

and in collaboration with others in a multicultural world.

This commitment calls us to constant personal conversion.

What does today’s Gospel say to us about this service of leadership?

At the beginning of the Gospel reading, a scholar of the law tests Jesus by asking: “What must I do to inherit eternal life?”

Jesus’ answer is a question—Don’t you already know what to do?

“What is written in the law? How do you read it?”

And when the scholar recites the law--love of God and love of neighbor--Jesus affirms him: “You have answered correctly; do this and you will live.”

Our leaders, our International Team, know that their service to our Congregation during these next four years is their way of living love of God and love of neighbor. Their service means being the Samaritan traveler and calling all of us to be the Samaritan traveler.

The Samaritan was moved with compassion in coming upon the person who was beaten by robbers and left half-dead. The Samaritan personally took action:

- going nearer to the victim, not passing by but approaching the one who was wounded
- pouring oil and wine over the wounds and bandaging them
- lifting the wounded one up on the Samaritan’s own animal
- taking the person to an inn
- staying and personally caring for this victim of violence.
- Then, the next day, leaving money with the innkeeper and promising to stop on the way back to pay more if more was needed for this person’s care.

This is love of God and love of neighbor in action. This is being an instrument of peace. The Samaritan was moved with compassion and stopped and approached and personally acted to care for someone in need.

We ask our International Leadership Team to be the Samaritan traveler, and call us to be the Samaritan traveler. We ask them to show us what it means to be instruments of peace in our multicultural world—a world of differences, also a world of divisions based on race, culture, gender, religion, and economic class.

For each of us to be the Samaritan traveler means: I am moved with compassion when I see a person or a group in need. I am led to personal conversion and thus enabled to take action, to personally use all the resources I have to be of assistance. I can cross the differences and divisions that do not matter because the other is my neighbor, and I reach out in love.

In the Gospel story the scholar comes back to Jesus with a second question: I don't understand. "Who is my neighbor?"

The Samaritan traveler didn't ask this question. In spite of differences, of the societal and religious and economic divisions of that time, the Samaritan recognized another human being in need and reached out in love. We ask our International Team to bring to our attention our neighbors in need, in case we don't see them on the roadside. Let us know how we can be instruments of peace, how we can live the radical claims of the Gospel where we are—in Europe, India, Latin America and the United States.

Bring to our attention ways we can live PEACE within our religious community, so as to be credible instruments of peace in our countries. Point out ways we can collaborate with others in a multicultural world. In doing so, you will challenge us to constant personal conversion, enabling us to be true instruments of peace.

Your question may not be: "Who is my neighbor?" but rather, "How do we do this?" The answer to that question is in what Moses said to the people (and what Jesus answered indirectly to the scholar of the law): The answer "is something very near to you, already in your mouths and in your hearts; you have only to carry it out."

Our dear Sisters Kathleen, Rita, Francitta and Elsa Paul, we pray that God will bestow special and abundant blessings on each one of you as you begin your term of leadership in our international congregation. We promise you our prayer and support along the way!