

YOU'RE SO GOLDEN

The Golden Rule, as lived by Jesus, has rarely been more important and relevant than in the reality of today's global humanitarian crises. According to data from the United Nations, approximately 300 million individuals across 72 countries will require humanitarian aid and protection in 2024. These individuals are not just statistics, but people of God uniquely and 'wonderfully made' with faces and stories, families and friends, joys and sorrows.

Our response should always be guided by principles of compassion, justice and mercy, resisting the temptation to discard or ignore those who present challenges, and instead remember the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (Mt:7:12).

Pope Francis explains:

This Rule points us in a clear direction. Let us treat others with the same passion and compassion with which we want to be treated. Let us seek for others the same possibilities which we seek for ourselves. Let us help others to grow, as we would like to be helped ourselves. In a word, if we want security, let us give security; if we want life, let us give life; if we want opportunities, let us provide opportunities. The yardstick we use for others will be the yardstick which time will use for us. The Golden Rule also reminds us of our responsibility to protect and defend human life at every stage of its development

(Address to U.S. Congress, Sept. 25, 2015).

The Golden Rule, present in various cultures, religions, ethical systems, secular philosophies and indigenous traditions, serves as a guide to fostering friendships and maintaining healthy relationships. It also serves as a means to promote human rights and global peace, transcending barriers such as religion, nationality, race, language, or any other status.

At the World Day of Prayer for Peace in Assisi, on 27 October 1986, Pope John Paul II underlined the fundamental unity of the human race, in its origin and its destiny, and the role of the Church as an effective sign of this unity. In 1991 the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and Congregation for the Evangelization of People created the following disciplines of dialogue:

1. **Dialogue of life:** In which people of different faiths and spiritual traditions strive to live in an open and neighbourly spirit – includes socialising and hospitality.
2. **Dialogue of action:** In which people of spiritual commitment and faith collaborate with others in building a just society – includes service and working for justice.
3. **Dialogue of religious experience:** In which people steeped in their spiritual traditions share their ways of searching for God or the Absolute – includes prayer, worship, celebration.
4. **Dialogue of theological exchange:** In which specialists seek to deepen their understanding of other spiritual heritages. (Summary from, Dialogue and Proclamation: Reflections and Orientations on Interreligious Dialogue and the Proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ).

With this backdrop, the Golden Rule offers a path to deep connection and healthy relationships that makes life feel more golden than ever. It is how Christ lived his life, and how we are called to live ours. It challenges us to think beyond our own needs and desires and consider the well-being of others reminding us to live our faith humbly, to find God in the simplicity of nature, the beauty of God's creation and in the face of each person we meet.

The Golden Rule poses a timeless challenge in a society plagued by hate speech, polarisation, prioritising politics over justice, and the tragic loss of innocent lives, particularly those of women and children, in times of war and violence. It prompts us to consider how we would feel if we were in the same situation.

An extract from Pope Francis' Prayer for Peace

Keep alive within us the flame of hope, so that with patience and perseverance we may opt for dialogue and reconciliation. In this way may peace triumph at last, and may the words "division", "hatred" and "war" be banished from the heart of every man and woman. Lord, defuse the violence of our tongues and our hands. Renew our hearts and minds, so that the word which always brings us together will be "brother [sister]", and our way of life will always be that of: Shalom, Peace, Salaam!
Amen.

(<https://www.usccb.org/prayers/pope-francis-prayer-peace>)

REFLECTION:

How will you ensure that you demonstrate the same level of passion and compassion towards others as you desire for yourself?

We acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional owners of the lands on which our ministries exist and the Elders both past and present on whose land we walk, work and live. We support the Uluru Statement from the Heart.