



## Which side are we on?

*After Pope Francis has shown how little we think and act like brothers and sisters in many areas, he calls us to take a clear position on the side of "the poor, the suffering and wounded people". To show us what charity and fraternity mean in concrete terms, Fratelli Tutti offers in the 2nd chapter a profound meditation on the ancient and complex parable of the 'Good Samaritan'. The role of the various actors in the drama confronts us with the question on which side we ourselves are: Do we close our eyes to the suffering and misery in the world and pass by, or do we take the time to turn to the wounded people we encounter and stand by them as best we can? It is the old question of God to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" It is worth taking some time during Lent to meditate this second chapter of 'Fratelli Tutti'.*

### Quotes

- Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan in answer to the question: **Who is my neighbour?** The word "neighbour", in the society of Jesus' time, usually meant those nearest us... He asks us not to decide who is close enough to be our neighbour, but rather that we ourselves become neighbours to all. Fratelli tutti 80
- Several persons passed him by, but failed to stop. Only **one person stopped**, approached the man and cared for him personally, even spending his own money to provide for his needs. He also gave him something that in our frenetic world we cling to tightly: he **gave him his time**. Fratelli tutti 63
- Jesus chose to start when the robbery has already taken place, lest we dwell on the crime itself or the thieves who committed it. Yet we know them well... The real question is this: will we abandon the injured man and run to take refuge from the violence, or will we pursue the thieves?... The Samaritan who stopped along the way departed without expecting any recognition or gratitude. His effort to assist another person gave him great satisfaction in life and before his God... Fratelli tutti 72.79
- "Robbers" usually find secret allies in those who "pass by and look the other way". There is a certain interplay between those who manipulate and cheat society, and those who, while claiming to be detached and impartial critics, live off that system and its benefits. Fratelli tutti 75
- The parable asks us to take a closer look at **the passers-by**... They were religious, devoted to the worship of God: a priest and a Levite... Belief in God and the worship of God are not enough to ensure that we are actually living in a way pleasing to God... "Do you wish to honour the body of the Saviour? Do not despise it when it is naked. Do not honour it in church with silk vestments while outside it is naked and numb with cold". Do you wish to honour the body of the Saviour? Do not despise it when it is naked. Do not honour it in church with silk vestments while outside it is naked and numb with cold".  
(St John Chrysostom) Paradoxically, those who claim to be unbelievers can sometimes put God's will into practice better than believers. Fratelli tutti 74
- There are only **two kinds of people**: those who care for someone who is suffering and those who pass by; those who bend down to help and those who look the other way and hurry off. Fratelli tutti 70
- **Which of these persons do you identify with?** This question, blunt as it is, is direct and incisive. Which of these characters do you resemble? We need to acknowledge that we are constantly tempted to ignore others, especially the weak... We have become accustomed to looking the other way, passing by, ignoring situations until they affect us directly. Fratelli tutti 64 Fratelli tutti 64

***Grant that we Christians may live the Gospel, discovering Christ in each human being, recognizing him crucified in the sufferings of the abandoned and forgotten of our world, and risen in each brother or sister who makes a new start.*** Fratelli Tutti