



WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

On November 19th, we celebrate the first *World Day of the Poor*, established by Pope Francis. The following are a few excerpts from the letter by Pope Francis (from the Vatican, June 13, 2017) entitled '**Let us love, not with words but with deeds**'. May the words of Pope Francis touch our hearts to be compassionate doers of God's Word.

"We know how hard it is for our contemporary world to see poverty clearly for what it is. Yet in myriad ways poverty challenges us daily, in faces marked by suffering, marginalization, oppression, violence, torture and imprisonment, war, deprivation of freedom and dignity, ignorance and illiteracy, medical emergencies and shortage of work, trafficking and slavery, exile, extreme poverty and forced migration. Poverty has the face of women, men and children exploited by base interests, crushed by the machinations of power and money. What a bitter and endless list we would have to compile were we to add the poverty born of social injustice, more degeneration, the greed of a chosen few, and generalized indifference!

Tragically, in our own time, even as ostentatious wealth accumulates in the hands of the privileged few, often in connection with illegal activities and the appalling exploitation of human dignity, there is a scandalous growth of poverty in broad

sectors of society throughout our world. Faced with this scenario, we cannot remain passive, much less resigned. There is a poverty that stifles the spirit of initiative of so many young people by keeping them from finding work. There is a poverty that dulls the sense of personal responsibility and leaves others to do the work while we go looking for favours. There is a poverty that poisons the wells of participation and allows little room for professionalism; in this way it demeans the merit of those who do work and are productive. To all these forms of poverty we must respond with a new vision of life and society ...

This new *World Day*, therefore, should become a powerful appeal to our consciences as believers, allowing us to grow in the conviction that sharing with the poor enables us to understand the deepest truth of the *Gospel*. The poor are not the problem; they are a resource from which to draw as we strive to accept and practice in our lives the essence of the *Gospel*."

(Resources for the *World Day of the Poor* are available on line)

United in prayer and action

Sr. Teresa Morrison, CPS

