

A Call to Share

BY Margie Noonan

Our Church has always deemed Lent to be a time of sharing with those who are poor and with those denied the dignity and joy of an abundant life.

But what is it really we are being asked to share? Our money? Our time? Our talents? The quick answer to all of these, of course, is yes. But when we think of it, each of these gifts can wither to pleasant words or mere good deeds unless they are accompanied by a process of conversion, that is, taking on a new way of engaging and living with the world.

I consider how Jesus shared so much of himself with the people of his time, especially with those who were poor or in any way afflicted. What was he sharing? How did he engage them?

Then, as I read through the opening lines of the Second Vatican Council's document, *The Church in the Modern World*, *GAUDIUM ET SPES*, it hits me! Jesus was sharing life itself. Their joys and hopes were his joys and hopes. Their grief and anguish were his grief and anguish.

For the women, children and men of the Global South of our time their stories are those of a daily struggle for a dignified life, and – in some cases – for life itself in the face of unjust social, political and economic structures and natural disasters. I invite you to share in their stories and engage in their hopes and anguish.

Doing so will demonstrate just how crucial our Lenten financial contributions are in allowing them to continue their fight for justice. Doing so will also help us understand what it is, in the end, we are called to share.



Margie Noonan is the Development and Peace National Council President.