

Valuing...



INTENTIONAL: deliberate, planned, intended

INCLUSIVITY: the quality of trying to include many different types of people and treat them all fairly and equally



If inclusion is to be meaningful, it must be based on the idea that everyone and everything is included from the beginning, not included in socially constructed hierarchies with allegiance to one political system or another, but included in a web of life, set forth from the foundations of the earth.

- Richard Rohr

INTENTIONAL INCLUSIVITY

The vision shared by Mary and Julian was to provide an education for all and they very intentionally went about making the vision a reality. They ventured to places where everyone did not look like them or think like them, to places where people did not believe precisely as they believed, places where thoughts, ideas and gestures were not exact echoes of their own. Their purpose was to include everyone and to stand in radical solidarity with everyone. Education didn't stop at the school house nor did it stop with children.

The belief in the miracle of each person – their uniqueness and quintessential goodness – is why we, like Mary and Julian, pursue justice and practice compassion to all. We are called to have a concerted and intelligent alignment with inclusivity and hospitality to all, and to be genuinely interested in others – in the great diversity of cultures, languages, times and experiences that can gift us each day.

In our roles within SOSJ Works, we are called to find the ways and means to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the prisoner, care for the sick, welcome the stranger. They will present in a variety of ways not always evident from the start.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- In our roles, where do we encounter “the hungry, the naked, the prisoner, the sick, the stranger?”
- How are we being intentionally inclusive?
- What can we do better?

When we reflect on these words from Mary:

It is not those who can pay us well that we should first seek, but rather the poor and neglected where we can find the means of supporting them - MM 1875

we receive a hint that we need to be proactive. Mary uses the word “seek” – intentionally look for or pursue. Julian expresses it this way:

Be kind to all, be gentle to all, be very, very gentle - JTW

In 1879, when the Sisters were forced to leave Brisbane, the following was written in the local newspaper - The Courier Mail:

'No distinction of creed has ever been made, the only passport to the favour of the Sisters of St Joseph being the need of assistance. Catholic or Protestant, Jew or Gentile, have been equally welcome to profit by the modest unpretending zeal that has worked the reclamation of many a little urchin whose other alternative must have been the reformatory'.

PRAYER

Living God, bless us with eyes that see goodness, mouths that speak love, ears that are discerning, hearts that are accommodating, hands that touch in kindness, feet that go the extra mile and smiles that show acceptance. Amen.