

## Info Alert 209

October 11, 2023

"Solidarity includes compassion, but it is more. Solidarity is not only a spontaneous movement of the heart that responds immediately, but also a decision to take action to join with, to form community with, those who are suffering.... Solidarity also includes a kind of mutuality that goes both ways in respect and accountability when the relationship grows. Solidarity becomes a two-way process because it becomes a relationship with both sides giving and receiving." - Marie J. Giblin

### Solidarity

Catholic Social Teaching tells us we belong to one human family regardless of our race, ethnicity, religion, economic status or ideological differences. Pope Francis in "Laudato Si" calls us citizens of one planet. This shared relationship with humanity is expressed in solidarity. Loving our neighbor which is at the heart of solidarity is biblical; but, today, it has global dimensions in a shrinking world. At the core of solidarity is the pursuit of justice and peace. It calls us to stand with and for our sisters and brothers in their pursuit of justice and in their desire for peace in a world of extremes, surrounded by violence and war. Solidarity is our focus for this year. When we stand with our sisters and brothers who are seeking higher wages, respect for life, voting rights, asylum in our country, we are practicing solidarity.

### Respect Life

October is typically designated as **Respect Life Month**. Bishop Burbidge in his statement on Respect Life Month uses a term first coined by Pope John Paul II, "radical solidarity," which means to stand firm with "mothers-to-be" through every step of their pregnancy, birth and afterward, providing whatever resources they need. This accompaniment is a pro-life stance. It can also be applied to incarceration, migration, human trafficking and war.

Read Bishop Burbidge's full statement: <https://www.usccb.org/resources/rlp-23-chairman-statement.pdf>

### Voting

Voting is a privilege and a right for most Americans, but not all. Some districts experience gerrymandering which means people of color living in these districts do not have a fair representation. Voter registrations in some districts have been purged so voters who have cast a ballot in previous elections find out they are not registered to vote on election day. Check your voter registration to make sure your name is in the book. On November 7<sup>th</sup>, be sure to vote. This election is for municipal offices which are growing in importance each year. For PA voters, everything you need to know is here:

<https://why.org/articles/pennsylvania-election-2023-voter-guide-deadlines-candidates/>

### "Restavek" Children in Haiti: A New Form of Modern-Day Slavery

"Restavek" is a Creole term stemming from the French expression "rester avec" which means "stay with." A restavek is a child in Haiti who is given away by their parents to work for a host household as a domestic servant because the parents lack the resources required to support the child. Restavek is a form of modern-day slavery that persists in Haiti, affecting one in every fifteen children.

*Restavek Freedom* is a movement to help bring an end to child slavery in Haiti within our lifetime.

Follow the link for further information. <https://restavekfreedom.org/>

### Prayer

In the light of "Laudate Deum," listen to this song and hear the prayer of the children: "SOS from the Kids."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z10XSWGstqA>

### Action:

1. Prepare to vote on November 7<sup>th</sup>
2. Read Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation: "Laudate Deum"

[https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/20231004-laudate-deum.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/20231004-laudate-deum.html)