

Happy Monday to all.

On this date, June 9, 1650, the Harvard Corporation was established. It was the first legal corporation in the Americas.

Harvard is a private, non-profit university governed by its own Board of Overseers and the Harvard Corporation. The US executive branch does not directly control it. The US government does provide funding for research and other programs at Harvard. Today, as the University celebrates the 375th anniversary of its incorporation, it is embroiled in a battle with the government of the United States.

The Trump administration is freezing \$2.2 billion in multiyear federal grants and \$60 million in contracts to Harvard University. The action is based on Harvard's failure to eradicate antisemitism on campus and a refusal to change administrative policies selected by the federal Administration; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (D.E.I.) policies in particular.

As you have seen many times in my "Musings, the bedrock principle of Catholic social teaching is that every human being is created in the image of God. Every human person is invaluable and worthy of respect as a member of the human family, regardless of race, sex, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, employment or economic status, health, intelligence, achievement or any other differentiating characteristic. Each human person is created to be wonderfully unique, inherently equal, and unconditionally included.

When considering where diversity, equity and inclusion (D.E.I.) programs fit into Catholic Social Teaching, current Catholic social thought offers a slightly modified alternative. There are some moral concerns in D.E.I. initiatives regarding the potential for a disregard of the dignity and uniqueness of an individual for the sole purpose of meeting an administrative quota or benchmark. The respect of the dignity of each human person is always the end goal-never the means of achieving an end goal.

Catholic Social Thought advocates for "Dignity," "Equality," and "Solidarity (D.E.S.). Respect for the dignity of each unique individual addresses the concerns of Diversity, Equality of all individuals encompasses the concerns of Equity, and Solidarity the concerns of Inclusion.

In the scriptures, Jesus meets everyone with a sense of belonging and care. A perfect example is the parable of the Good Samaritan. This scripture reading highlights the concept of D.E.S., in which the kingdom of God is reflected through the actions of the Samaritan assisting the injured man without regard to any inherent characteristic or social standing. He respects the dignity of the injured man, treats him as an equal without regard to his status, and displays solidarity with the injured man in taking the time and extending the resources to ensure the full recovery of the individual.

As the world, our nation, and our communities struggle with the concepts of Dignity, Equality, and Solidarity, Catholic Charities mission and vision reflects our commitment to these principles. As I watch the evening news, hearing story after story about atrocities and

inhumanities that generate solely from a blatant disregard for respecting the dignity of every human person, the refusal to strive for the equality of all people, and a failure of joining together in solidarity as one human family of God... I so wish that just one news story would focus on the goodness, kindness, compassion and love that Catholic Charities demonstrates.

I thank God that I have the incredible perspective that comes from actually working with Catholic Charities staff, volunteers, partners and donors ... and personally witnessing all that D.E.S based programs and services can do.

Blessings,

Deacon Mike