

Make 2020 a Clear Vision 20/20 Year

As we start a new year, it's ironic that our political, religious and moral vision is not 20/20.

Many of the seasoned veterans of the civil rights struggles of the 1950s and '60s have died or retired

from the scene. Their departures can lull newer generations into forgetting that in very practical ways, the crusade was a movement headed by religious leaders whose voices resonated because their message awakened consciences.

Strategically, those who are filled with zeal about the continued attacks on the right to life can bring their enthusiasm to broader fights without diluting their commitment to ending abortion. The stubborn cancers of racism, sexism and religious persecution cannot be allowed to relapse in our consciences.

For example, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops states unequivocally that "racism is a life issue," and Pope Francis has identified human trafficking as a crime against humanity.

Every day, Catholic Charities organizations around the country are engaged in right-to-life matters. Every day, we encounter those who share our Catholic beliefs and those who have other faith traditions, or no expressed belief at all.

And every day we remember we are part of a larger culture that seems to be inexorably edging its way toward snubbing others' consciences.

2020 can be the year we resolve to achieve a 20/20 focus on unjust laws — laws that mandate religious institutions to fund or facilitate actions or behaviors that are contrary to moral teaching; laws that deny individuals and religious institutions the right to define for themselves what to believe and how to faithfully observe those beliefs.

2020 can be the year we honor veterans of the civil rights movement of the mid-

Charitably Speaking



by Patrick Winn

Director, Rockford Diocese
Catholic Charities

pwinn@rockforddiocese.org

20th century who know their struggle will unfortunately never end. They know too, however, that their actions, protests, and willingness to endure rocks, spittle, jail and sometimes the deaths

of their colleagues, have changed the world significantly, albeit not completely. Successors to those activists need to know and remember, as St. Augustine said, "An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law." Think of how many of those codes are now being enacted.

2020 can be a year when we remove the cataracts impeding our moral vision.

It can be a year when we decide to work in solidarity with all people of good will in advocating for justice for the born and the unborn; justice for the poor and marginalized; justice under the

First Amendment so it does not become just an historic but irrelevant constitutional add-on.

2020 can be the year we defog our moral vision to achieve 20/20 clarity of what service and justice mean in this age of attack against the new generation of supporters of life.

2020 will be a year that Catholic Charities will continue the practical side of our mission to do and encourage good works and stand with other people of good will to advocate for justice.

Merry Christmas from your Catholic Charities. Let's make 2020 a year in which we achieve mission statement 20/20 clarity of vision.

'I would agree with St. Augustine that "an unjust law is no law at all."'

Martin Luther King, Jr.
