

Love your neighbour as yourself

Jesus commanded us “Love your neighbour as yourself”. Some interpret this scripture in line with the “[Golden Rule](#)” of treating others as you expect to be treated. An alternative interpretation is that you must initially love yourself so that you can in turn love others. Today we might call this self-care with a social purpose.

We have all experienced a time when we have given so greatly to others, that we have neglected ourselves. As we face the present challenges of isolation and distancing from family and friends, there is a real need to attend to our own mental health, so that we can hold the good health to support and offer hope to others. In this moment of reflection lets first pause for a minute simply to be calm and mindful to nature around us.

Jesus’s commandment is echoed in the advice of [Government](#) to “look after your mental wellbeing and look out for those around you as we tackle these challenges together”. Spend a moment to reflect on:

1. one action you can take to improve your own wellbeing and self-care; and
2. one action you can take to demonstrate compassion and kindness to a neighbour.

Each year the Catholic Church in Australia releases a Social Justice Statement. This year it released a statement on mental health called “[To Live Life to the Full](#)”. The Statement reminds us that “Throughout history we can see that people of strong faith and great holiness also experience mental health challenges”.

We pray together the [Social Justice Prayer 2020](#) adapted to our mission:



Jesus, you invite us all into the fullness of life. May we support one another to flourish in body, mind and spirit.

Strengthen our commitment to ensure that nobody falls through gaps in our systems of care. People called you mad.

Help us to recognise you in those who suffer mental ill-health today. Show us how to eliminate stigmatisation of mental ill-health from our families, workplaces, hospitals, colleges and community services.

You drew near to those who were suffering in body or mind. May we too feel your nearness when we struggle with mental health challenges. May we be one as members of Your Body.

You invite us to share in your ministry of love and true compassion.

May we be empowered by your Spirit to reach out to all people in need. May we build communities of welcome and inclusion.

Amen