

## CCSJ calls on citizens to lend a helping hand this Christmas

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The Catholic Commission for Social Justice (CCSJ) calls on each person to lend a helping hand to those who are struggling this Christmas. Leela Ramdeen, Chair of CCSJ says:

“Christmas is a time of joy, anticipation and celebration as we wait for the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. It’s a time when the spirit of giving is alive and well in TT and around the world. As we give, let us not hold back; let us remember the words of Mother Teresa who said: ‘I must be willing to give whatever it takes to do good to others. This requires that I be willing to give until it hurts. Otherwise, there is no true love in me, and I bring injustice, not peace, to those around me.’ The writer Robert Louis Stevenson is correct; we can never love without giving.”

CCSJ calls on our Government, the business community, NGOs, FBOs, CBOs, and all citizens to give generously to those in need in our communities and in our country. You and I can make a difference to the life of others this Christmas. The inherent dignity of each of our brothers and sisters in need demands that we reach out in love, compassion and service to bring festive cheer to others in tangible ways. Look behind the tinsel and the glitter and see the needs of those who cannot even meet the basic needs of their families.

Many of us will recall the words in James 2:16: “If one of the brothers or one of the sisters is in need of clothes and has not enough food to live on, and one of you says to them, ‘I wish you well; keep yourself warm and eat plenty’, without giving them these bare necessities of life, then what good is that? Faith is like that: if good works do not go with it, it is quite dead.”

All that we have is gift from God, so let us share our gifts with the many vulnerable people who live on the margins of our society. Let us draw them to the table of life. What better time to do so than at Christmas time – when “LOVE” came down. The following poem by the 19<sup>th</sup> Century poet, Christina Rossetti, reminds us of the reason

for the season and of the need for us to let our love for our neighbour be a sign of our love for God:

“Love came down at Christmas,  
Love all lovely, Love Divine,  
Love was born at Christmas,  
Star and Angels gave the sign...

Love shall be our token,  
Love shall be yours and love be mine,  
Love to God and all men,  
Love for plea and gift and sign.”

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