



September 25, 2016

Human Dignity

The West Side of Chicago has churches on almost every corner and Christians filling them each week.

Speaking as a Christian, it is our responsibility to remind the world through our actions that the dignity of each human person is a God-given gift. Our Christian faith demands that we always choose to protect the dignity of every human life.

Black lives, White lives, Brown lives, Female lives, Young lives, lives in poverty, lives with disease, lives filled with sin. We are not the judges; we are to be the keepers of our sisters and brothers in Christ Jesus. We cannot be like a high school clique that flocks to the popular kids and bullies the kids who are different.

Our faith requires that we "look beyond the fault and see the need". Our faith demands that we protect the human dignity of each individual in order to build the human dignity of our community. As a member of the Christian faith, we must be concerned about all that brought him to that situation when an unarmed black child is shot.

What church did the shooter belong to?

Or, why didn't the shooter belong to a church?

Who in this scenario had all of the food, clothing and shelter needed to survive?

Had we worked to ensure that all involved were mentally healthy?

Were the characteristics of personal well-being and community advocacy instilled as early as possible in the lives of both the man who was shot and the man who did the shooting?

To answer these questions is the work of Christians and all people of faith and all people of good will. Christian or non-Christian, believer or non-believer - all can follow Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in his fight for fairness: to look for and call out the human dignity that is shared by each person created by God.

It is only when we see, value and protect the human dignity of every old person, young person, rich person, poor person, weak person, strong person, little person, big person, famous person, unknown person that we realize that we are all just persons. And it is our privilege to be alive at this moment, and to work together during our time on this earth.

This is our faith - that all are created equal. Our job is to share this Good News with the rich and the poor because each has the same dignity granted by God.

We are people who continue to pray for peace and love.

But, we cannot pray or go to church or believe we are living as we should and not be mindful of the men, women and children in our community whose dignity is under assault every day. We know better than most that in the eye of God, your zip code does not matter more than your divine creation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L.S.F." followed by a stylized surname.

La Shawn K. Ford
State Representative-Eighth District