



Reflection from Deacon Ross Beaudoin

Ever heard of the Resilience Corps? Don't feel bad. I don't think many have heard of the Resilience Corps. I had not heard of it, either, until recently. Resilience isn't a word that is often heard in everyday conversation. "Hi, I'm feeling a lot of resilience today." Uh?

Resilience indicates a flexibility, a certain spirit of agility, strength and buoyancy. Hmm. Lots of challenges there!

Well, in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina 17 years ago, crews of people spontaneously banded together to help deal with repairing the personal and community devastation. Over time, the name "Resilience Force" came to be used to identify some of these individuals and groups who stepped up to help. The name stuck and the reality of these people has developed further over time.

Now in the wake of the recent Hurricane Ina many people with the spirit of Resilience have shown up in Florida. They are putting their skills and personal gifts at the service of the people affected by the hurricane. These Resilience workers are from many States and from many personal backgrounds. A significant number of them are immigrants – people who themselves have known loss and homelessness.

But a strange thing is happening in some places in Florida. These immigrants are not welcomed or are looked at suspiciously. In fact, in a few places they are threatened with jail or deportation. How can that be? People who have come to this country and are seeking employment and a stable home for themselves and their families; people who offer their time and their skills to those who have lost everything in the hurricane – are rejected by some who consider them unworthy of a place in this nation.

In the time of Jesus and the disciples there were people unwelcome and banned: the Samaritans. In the time of Elisha the prophet there were those who suffered from leprosy or similar diseases and were totally banned from society. Jesus welcomed them all.

Thousands of years later we still find ourselves excluding, even banning, people who "don't fit" our culture or ideas, no matter how worthy they or their needs may be.

Let us pray and work to live according to the message of today's Psalm 98. "The Lord has made his salvation known: in the sight of the nations he has revealed his justice. He has remembered his kindness and his faithfulness.... All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. The Lord... will govern the world with justice and the peoples with fairness."

*Blessings,
Deacon Ross*