

## Another Person's Shoes



You have probably heard the saying, “you do not really know a person until you walk in their shoes.” It is not as easy as playing dress up in your parent’s shoes when you were young. Being in another person’s shoes means working to see the world as they see it, understand their joys and sorrows, and feel as they feel about their lives and situation. It means truly feeling empathy for another person which is a good mix that includes an understanding of, sympathy for, compassion toward, responsiveness to, and identification with another person. Doing these things requires openness on our part. It requires a nonjudgmental spirit and a strong sense of the value of every human being as an equal regardless of differences. It is not by accident that human beings work hard at dehumanizing people they do not like; disagree with; want to use or abuse; or want to get rid of. Dehumanizing ‘the enemy’ is the way armies get soldiers to kill. It enables treating people as slaves. It facilitates taking land from native people, taking advantage of workers for profit, keeping people in prison cages, and all manner of other abuses. To walk in another’s shoes, is to know they are human. It is to see how much you have in common as well as what you may see differently.

Can we really walk in another’s shoes? We can get a taste of it. After soldiers from both sides shared Christmas together during World War I, officers had to move them to other battlefields because they would not shoot at each other. A flight attendant refused to work flights deporting children because he could not treat children as he saw them being treated. Children raise money to provide clean water in places without it when they understand there are children who do not have this necessity, they can take for granted.

Lord, remind us, loving our neighbor as ourselves means seeking to walk in their shoes. It requires accepting them as your children whether they see the world as we do or not. Such openness can bring understanding even when there is disagreement. Understanding can bring respect, and there can be community, even when different points of view remain. Community draws on the gifts and strengths of all to work for the good of all, and it can start with shoes.

### ***This week in your prayer time:***

- **Families and children seeking asylum** – their need to flee has not changed. Neither has the abuse they must endure when they seek help here.

- **Nigeria** – EYN (Nigerian Brethren) is distributing food to displaced people in camps around



Maiduguri (the largest city in northeast Nigeria & the site of the largest EYN congregation). Around 95% of these displaced people are from the Gwoza area which has been abandoned to Boko Haram so these people may never be able to go home. (*Newsline September 23, 2019*)

- **Those affected by gun violence & those affected by acts of terror.**
- **Hurricane Victims** – especially in the Bahamas & those still suffering in Puerto Rico. More people died after the Puerto Rico storm than during it because of the U.S. government emergency response was so bad.

There’s a small ‘safe area’ around Maiduguri, but most of Borno & some of Admawa State are not safe. The blue box = the original Brethren mission area. There are now EYN members in the larger boxed area & beyond as they seek safety & spread the gospel. See Maiduguri & Gwoza, upper right. Kulp Bible School & EYN headquarters middle right. Nigeria’s capital Abuja (left).

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