

Frederick students call attention to social justice

My Social Justice class at Saint John's Catholic Prep in Frederick is writing to tell you about our course of actions toward poverty and economic justice. We feel it's in the best interest to educate as many people as we can on the real issues as our first course of action, because knowledge is everything.

For example, many believe that the homeless put themselves in that predicament because they are lazy and don't want to try to become better, when in reality they could have lost everything they had at no fault of their own, or they could have been born into poverty, leaving them in a dark pit that they have to slowly climb their way out of through generations of fighting and hard work.

We want to instill the knowledge of unjust wages to people in all countries, keeping them below the poverty level on purpose and the big companies forcing debt on new developing countries but twisting the facts so as to look like they are merely helping them and providing them with good work to support their country.

Our main way to the solution is to just get people aware of the real issues and understand what they can really do besides give money to groups and foundations who hand select who they choose to give money to and how much. There are many other things that a person can do instead of directly donating a cow. For example, they can buy farm animals from Garden Harvest, an organization that will send animals to impoverished countries and teach them how to take care of the animals so they can continue to raise and use the animals to survive. Another way we plan to address the issues is to write to our legislators about improving minimum wage law so that companies and business owners purposefully hiring certain people so they can pay them as low a wage as possible don't have that option, and also to improve the welfare system.

We have studied many topics on Social Justice this semester but we see these as ones that aren't as controversial as others that everyone can be brought on the same page with, and by slowly ending issues such as poverty and labor problems or at

least minimizing them we believe it will have a snowball effect in that it will also cut back on crime and war by ending hostilities.

Tim Van Schaick is a teacher in the Social Studies/Theology Department at St. John's Catholic Prep in Frederick.