

Justice Corner for January 1, 2012

Praying for Peace

For 45 years on January 1, our Popes have implored the faithful to observe a Day of Prayer for Peace. It is fitting that this call to action falls on the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Peace.

“In order to be true peacemakers, we must educate ourselves in compassion, solidarity, working together, fraternity, in being active within the community and concerned to raise awareness about national and international issues and the importance of seeking adequate mechanisms for the redistribution of wealth, the promotion of growth, cooperation for development and conflict resolution.”

-- Pope Benedict XVI, Message for World Day of Prayer for Peace 2012

Today's Scriptures offer us hope. God wants to bless us with peace. He longs to see us adore Him by serving each other! Peace is still possible.

St. Augustine reminds us to work as if everything depends on us, and pray as if everything depends on God.

Justice Corner for January 8, 2012

Feast of the Epiphany

Today's Scriptures reminds us that Jesus came to be a Light for ALL God's people, especially those who are poor, rejected, or mistreated. Imagine the kings' surprise when they found lowly shepherds adoring Jesus! In the Kingdom of God, the poor have a special place but there are many, like King Herod, who feel afraid. These fears manifest themselves in the form of racism, discrimination, economic injustice, and violence.

Jesus calls us to share His Light with others. January is Poverty Awareness Month and this week we observe National Migration Week. Both observances afford us the opportunity to shine the Light of Christ on injustices that impoverish God's people and cause human suffering.

Visit www.povertyusa.org to learn more about the structural causes of poverty in the United States and how you can work to end it. Visit www.justiceforimmigrants.org to learn more about the plight of immigrants.

Justice Corner for January 15, 2012

Here I am Lord!

God called Samuel until he heard Him. Each day God calls us to walk with Him and build His Kingdom on Earth. Answering God's call can be scary! He often takes us out of our comfort zones putting people like Eli, and John the Baptist in our paths, to help us.

To discern God's call we must listen to the events of life and the stories of real people, especially those who are poor or oppressed. People who seem different from us can help us broaden our perspective and understand His call.

God's call is not simply a call to go to church on Sunday, profess certain beliefs, or live up to the standards of personal morality. It is a call to engage in the social and political issues of our time, ask questions, search for answers, be part of the global human family, create structures of justice and peace, and have healthy relationships with all His people and creatures.

Jump in! Say, "Here I am Lord. Send me!"

***Adapted from Fr. John Bucki's Lectionary reflections at www.educationforjustice.org**

Justice Corner for January 22, 2012

Repentance & Reform

God loved the people of Nineveh so much that He sent Jonah to call them to repentance. They heeded Jonah's warning, repented, and God withheld his punishment.

Our contemporary world looks a lot like Nineveh:

- More than half the world's population lives in desperate poverty.
- Wars and violence force millions to live as refugees.
- Unjust economic systems impoverish billions while a few prosper.

We need prophets to lead us to repentance. Greed and insecurity threaten our existence!

The beginning of a new year brings hope. Reform and renewal are possible. Like Jonah and John the Baptist, we are called to live prophetic lives, speaking up for people who are oppressed, risking our personal security for the greater good of our society.

One small step you can take to lead a more prophetic life is learning more about Catholic Social Teaching – God’s blueprint for building a just society. Visit www.justfaith.org or www.educationforjustice.org for more information.

Justice Corner for January 29, 2012

Authority & Action

Today’s Gospel speaks of Jesus’ authority to teach. This authority continues through the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. Our Holy Father teaches us through speeches, and documents like Papal Encyclicals that provide wisdom on pressing issues of our times. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops helps us to understand moral and political issues by examining proposed legislation through the lens of Scripture and Catholic Social Teaching. USCCB advocacy alerts explain how proposed legislation will impact people who are poor or vulnerable and provide talking points for speaking with legislators.

Jesus calls each of us to act on His authority. We are His hands and feet. We, like Moses, are called to live prophetic lives to build God’s Kingdom here on earth. The Church equips us with the resources we need to speak eloquently on behalf of others.

Do you receive advocacy alerts and urge elected officials to build a just society? Join a Catholic Advocacy Alert list today. Visit <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/get-involved/> for more information.
