

Justice Corner

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July 5, 2015

The Call to Prophetic Living

Today's readings give us insight into the prophetic way of life. The book of Wisdom suggests that prophets should not be concerned about whether people heed their words or not. Rather, their actions will alert their audiences that a prophet has walked among them.

The prophetic way of life is about living according to God's vision of the world – a world where every person has dignity and worth. The Church's social teaching is filled with wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness in modern society. Learn more about the principles of Catholic social teaching at www.usccb.org (Type "Catholic social teaching" in the search bar on the website.)

The call to prophetic witness may seem daunting. Yet, St. Paul reminds us that when we are weak, the Lord makes us strong. The Gospel reading reminds us that we are not accountable for the results, only for the effort. Prophets may be rejected by their own people but the power of authentic prophetic witness cannot be silenced.

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July 12, 2015

Holiness Through Prophetic Living

God called the prophets and He calls us to holiness. As the Scriptures show, this call comes with risk – our message may be unpopular just like that of Amos. (In the first reading Amos, a strong prophet, was expelled because he boldly addressed those who "sell the just man for silver and the poor man for a pair of sandals....")

In the Gospel, Jesus sent the apostles to drive out evil spirits. Catholic social teaching helps us to see that our contemporary world also contains evil spirits such as: materialism, racism, militarism, violence, and greed.

Like the apostles, we must drive out evil spirits in our own lives. We can do this by simplifying our lifestyles, living frugally, and trying not to be attached to material possessions. In this way our service to others can remain pure and we will have more to share.

How can you simplify your life so you can live prophetically without the hindrance of material attachments?

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July 19, 2015

Caring for God's People

Today's scriptures reinforce the church's call to care for all God's people. Jeremiah speaks of shepherds working for the good of the people. Paul speaks of Christ who "broke down the dividing wall of enmity." Jesus "...was moved with pity for them." People and individuals matter.

God invites us to promote values that care for and respect all His people, especially those who are poor or struggling with special needs. People are more important than institutions, structures, and ideologies. Economics must take into account the needs of all individuals. Politics must empower people. Institutions must be people-centered.

How are the people of our world "like sheep without a shepherd?" What are the social issues that call for leadership and courage?

The world needs shepherds who can identify the critical social issues and can address these critical issues.

*Adapted from Lectionary Reflection by Fr. John Bucki, S.J. www.educationforjustice.org

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July 26, 2015

Miracles of Distribution

More than three billion people suffer "food insecurity" which means they go hungry each day or are at risk of going hungry. Today's scriptures remind us that God wants all people to share the gifts of His bounty. Both the Old Testament and New Testament readings highlight the fact that everyone had more than enough to eat.

Sadly, the food distribution systems in our world cause hunger. Food is abundant and wasted in the developed world while it is scarce in the developing world. As Christians, we are called to mitigate the effects of unjust distribution and waste.

Many Catholic churches and organizations support food pantries, soup kitchens, and provide food for hungry people around the world. However, we are also called to address the root causes of hunger like monetary policy, trade rules, sweatshops, the rights of farm workers, the role of large corporations and governments in food policies.

Visit www.bread.org to learn how you can work to end the root causes of hunger.

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