






Passages for reflection at a Justice & Peace meeting


 “People are crying out for justice. Yahweh said, “I have seen, I have indeed seen the affliction of my people in Egypt. I have heard their cry to be free of their slave drivers. Yes, I am aware of their sufferings. Therefore, I have gone down to deliver them out of the hands of the Egyptians.” Ex 3: 7 – 8

 “I hate, I spurn your feasts, I take no pleasure in your solemnities; your cereal offerings I will not accept, nor consider your stall fed peace offerings. Away with your noisy songs! I will not listen to the melodies of your harps. But if you would offer me holocausts, then let justice surge like water, and goodness like an unfailing stream.” Amos 5: 21 – 24

 “And the Lord said; will not God see justice done to his elect if they keep calling to him day and night even though he delays to help them? I promise you, he will see justice done to them, and done speedily. But when the Son of Man comes, will he find any faith on earth? Lk 18: 6 – 8

 “Our relationship to our neighbour is bound up with our relationship with God; our response to the love of God, saving us through Christ, is shown to be effective in his love and service of people. Christian love of neighbour and justice cannot be separated. For love implies an absolute demand for justice, namely recognition of the dignity and rights of one’s neighbour. Justice attains its inner fullness only in love.” Justice in the World, 1971, n 34

 “At the beginning of the Third Millennium, the poverty of billions of men and women is the one issue that most challenges our human and Christian consciences. Poverty poses a dramatic problem of justice, in its various forms and with its various effects, it is characterised by an unequal growth that does not recognise the equal rights of all people to take their seat at the table of the common banquet.” Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 2004, n 449

 “Peace is not merely the absence of war, nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of a balance of power between enemies. Rather it is founded on a correct understanding of the human person and requires the establishment of an order based on justice and charity.” Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 2004, n 494

Comment: However much Christians have failed to respond to the mandate to do justice, it is still central to our faith. Since Vatican II especially, the Church has emphasised the inseparable bond between being a Christian and doing justice. Not only does our personal salvation depend upon it, but also the lives of millions of our brothers and sisters in developing countries, and even the survival of life on this planet.

Questions for discussion:

1. Can you think of an occasion when you were treated unfairly – how did it make you feel and act? (*You needn’t mention the event, just how you felt in response.*)
2. Who are the people crying out for justice today – what injustices are they suffering?
3. Do we, like God, hear their cries and act to rescue them?
4. How can we try to bring about true and lasting peace?
5. Action – we are called to ‘do justice’ not just reflect and talk about it, so where does this lead us?