

World Day of Social Justice - February 2021

At the time of common prayer, on World Day for Social Justice, we meet in silence. In the middle of the prepared room is a poster with pictures of people from different countries around the world.

- After a silence and attunement

Prayer: *God, you are a God of justice and compassion, full of mercy and forgiveness, always on the side of the poor and oppressed. You are ever faithful urging us to seek justice for your people in action and advocacy. God, many people do not expect love as much as justice. Injustice hurts more than lovelessness. Because you, God, are a God of Justice, you have also put a strong sense of justice in our hearts. Move us beyond a sense of justice to act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with you. Let us not fail to hear the cry for justice from the person next to us. We ask this through Jesus, the Christ, our brother and Shepherd God. Amen*

Securing livelihoods for ALL people is anchored in human rights:

People must have their rights to food, water, housing, health, and social protection advocated for, implemented and upheld.

According to the right to an adequate standard of living, every person must have the opportunity to meet their basic needs under decent conditions in order to be able to participate in daily life. Nobody should have to rely on forced labor, prostitution or begging to meet their needs for food, water, shelter or health.

- Can this become a reality in the present situation

Two minutes of silent exchange, please note the following points:

- The whole world is currently affected by the Covid -19 pandemic. Many countries do not have the opportunity to get appropriate help. People around the world are starving because of the virus.
- Very often the aid deliveries do not reach the people they are meant to. People are living among war causing them to lose their living space, their home. Many are on the move and are losing everything they have due to natural disasters.
- Families are torn apart and children lose their parents.

- **SILENCE**

Prayer: *Gracious God! The opposites in the world accuse us. Wealth and poverty, hunger and abundance are irreconcilably opposed to one another. Help us and all Christians not to aggravate these contradictions, but instead to stand up for solidarity and justice through word and deed. We ask this of you through Jesus, the Christ, our brother and Shepherd God. Amen*

Encyclical: Fratelli tutti

On October 3th, 2020 Pope Francis signed the new encyclical "Fratelli tutti" in Assisi, which calls for solidarity. In this difficult world situation, in view of the COVID pandemic and the misery of refugees, Pope Francis reminds us in his encyclical of the need for solidarity among peoples, which he describes as sisterhood, and brotherhood and "social friendship".

Pope Francis writes:

“7. As I was writing this letter, the Covid-19 pandemic unexpectedly erupted, exposing our false securities. Aside from the different ways that various countries responded to the crisis, their inability to work together became quite evident. For all our hyper-connectivity, we witnessed a fragmentation that made it more difficult to resolve problems that affect us all. Anyone who thinks that the only lesson to be learned was the need to improve what we were already doing, or to refine existing systems and regulations, is denying reality.”

“8. It is my desire that, in this our time, by acknowledging the dignity of each human person, we can contribute to the rebirth of a universal aspiration to fraternity. Fraternity between all men and women. “Here we have a splendid secret that shows us how to dream and to turn our life into a wonderful adventure. No one can face life in isolation... We need a community that supports and helps us, in which we can help one another to keep looking ahead. How important it is to dream together... By ourselves, we risk seeing mirages, things that are not there. Dreams, on the other hand, are built together.”

- **Sing a hymn that aligns with the prayer.**

Gospel according to Matthew 25, 31; 34-40:

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory.”

“Then the king will say to those on his right hand, Come here, you who are blessed by my Father, receive as an inheritance the kingdom which has been yours since the creation of the world. for I was hungry and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger and you took me in. I was naked and you gave me clothes; I was sick and you visited me; I was in jail and you came to me. Then the righteous will answer him and say, Lord, when did we see you hungry and given you to eat, or thirsty and given you to drink? And when did we see you as a stranger and take you in or naked and give you clothes? And when did we see you sick or in prison and come to you? The king will answer them, `` Amen, I say to you, what you did to one of the least of my brothers or sisters, you did it to me.”

- **SILENCE**

Intercession

1. Shepherd God, you alone are just and good. We struggle for what is just and what serves the good of the people. Enlighten our minds to seek social justice.– Kyrie eleison
2. Shepherd God, we ask you that all people can live on the wages of their work. Open our eyes and ears to unjust employment and exploitation.- Kyrie eleison
3. Shepherd God, our earth is fertile, but the goods of the earth are unevenly distributed. Get ready to share the daily bread. - Kyrie eleison
4. Shepherd God, we sometimes discriminate against and judge people because they look different, think or believe differently, live differently or act differently from us. Help us accept one another as sisters and brothers. - Kyrie eleison
5. Shepherd God, sometimes we only see our own uprightness and fail to recognise and honour the dignity of the other person. We ask you for a watchful and attentive heart that can recognize our own egoism and put it in its place -. Kyrie eleison
6. Shepherd God, we ask you for justice with love so that our hearts do not become hard. Let your mercy be seen in our pursuit of justice. - Kyrie eleison

Shepherd God, you are Justice itself, a Justice that the world cannot give. Send us the spirit of justice and mercy. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

- **Prayer: The Lord's Prayer**

Prepared by Regina Hanko, Province Austria- Switzerland- Czech Republic