Seeking Justice

This 2nd week of Advent 2022 already!!! Hundreds of shoppers and Christmas sale hunters are online, and window shopping for the item for this year’s Christmas. What is the item of choice this year? As we search for luxury items for ourselves or others, we pretend that we are not aware of the realities of our world. These are not the happiest of times. No material item you can buy will ease the pain of so many in our world today. Rest assured no material ‘gadget’ will ease the ache in the hearts of so many people around the world this year. What aches the heart of our world?

The ‘cry for justice’… for parents who lost their children through senseless violence, abuse, drugs, depression, and suicides, We have lost so many of our children in group homes, the prison system and the lure of the internet. Our losses continue to mount from road rage, accidents the culture of fading beauty and the reality of life through the eyes of our material world. There is no end to examples…… there is a ‘cry for justice’.

This week’s Old Testament reading is taken from the Prophet Isaiah. Just who is Isaiah? Biblical scholars, identify him as the prophet who lived some 700 years before the coming of Jesus and probably spoke most prophetically about the future coming of a Savior or Messiah. He is the prophet that learned Jewish men turned to and read his writings; when Herod asked them about a Messiah who was to be born in Bethlehem. Isaiah foretold that this Messiah will be
“A shoot... sprout from the stump of Jesse, and from his roots a bud shall blossom.” (Is.11:1)

Many of us may not be aware of the connection here… This shoot – Jesus was to come out of the stump of the family tree that began with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the ancestors of Jesse who was the father of the greatest Jewish King ever recorded-David. He was the last son of Jesse, who later killed Goliath, the Palestinian giant. King David was the ancestor of Jesus… He was a shoot from Jesse.

Isaiah spoke of Jesus as having the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which will be His attributes. He will be filled with this Spirit and given birth through the Virgin Mother.

“The spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him:

a spirit of wisdom and of understanding,

A spirit of counsel and of strength,

a spirit of knowledge and of fear of the LORD.” (Is. 11:2)

This Messiah will not follow the expectations of the present world…. He was born in a manger, fled as a political refugee, remain homeless throughout life, was betrayed by a friend and then died as a Roman criminal at 33. Is this to be our Heavenly King and earthly Messiah?

“Not by appearance shall he judge,

nor by hearsay shall he decide.” (Is. 11:3)

The focus of the future Messiah was not to fit into the expectations of the world in His times but to look beyond to seek the will of His Father.

“His delight shall be the fear of the LORD.” (Is 11:3)
The coming of Jesus will herald in the rule of justice…. Justice for those who suffer, for those who are victimized, for those who are undermined, for those who are forgotten, those hurting, for those who are abused. We know that ‘poor’ does not only refer to those without money…. It refers to those who suffer in our world today,

“But he shall judge the poor with justice,  
and decide fairly for the land’s afflicted.” (Is. 11:4)

The poor includes those whom society has impoverished through laws, systems, legalities, societal pressures, and restrictions. The judgement for those who hold others in systemic poverty, racism, violence and lies is clear, God will be their judge.

“Justice shall be the band around His waist,  
and faithfulness a belt upon His hips.” (Is.11:4)

We will remember that when Jesus, the Messiah comes there will be accountability for injustice, for those who support deception and hatred.

“He .... defends the oppressed among the people,  
save the children of the poor and crush the oppressor.” (Ps. 72:4)

Just as in the time when this psalm was penned, justice to this day is still elusive. So, it is no surprise, that injustices continue before our eyes, but there is vindication which will occur either in our times or the end of time; but it WILL happen!! Many will have to wait and fight for justice and know that it is coming, for what God has promised, He WILL deliver.

“Justice shall flourish in his time,  
and fullness of peace forever.” (Ps. 72)

Just wait and we will see!! In the meantime, we pray for God’s justice to

“...shows pity to the needy and the poor
and saves the lives of the poor.” (Ps. 72:13)