

Social Justice Sunday Liturgy Notes

September 26, 2010

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Social Justice Sunday Statement 2010

Violence in Australia: A Message of Peace

Overview:

The theme of this document emerged in response to an increase in the level of violent assaults and issues of intolerance in Australian society. The introduction relates one of these incidents and the response of the victim's mother: she chose compassion rather than vengeance. The document addresses violence at the personal level, in family and community and in social structures. It challenges us to respond to Jesus' invitation to be makers of peace.

Liturgy Notes

The following notes may be of use to link the 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time with Social Justice Sunday 2010.

Welcome

Today is Social Justice Sunday. The Australian Catholic Bishops have published a Social Justice Sunday Statement, titled *Violence in Australia: A Message of Peace*. The Statement challenges us to see the violence in our society and to address it on a day-to-day basis. As we celebrate Social Justice Sunday we are challenged to look first to ourselves, for example to reflect on our own response to anger. Violence and peacemaking "... are played out where people meet" (p. 5), so we are called to examine the extent to which violence exists in our families and communities and to use these basic social units as safe places for developing skills of peacemaking. The Statement recognises the violence in our history and the violence that often continues in social structures such as laws and policies.

We are reminded that Jesus shows us the way to peace and that this peace is not just the absence of violence but a challenge to "... build a robust, participatory and mature society that is respectful of human rights and the development of people as God intended." (p. 7)

Readings

The Readings for the 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C) relate strongly to the message of this year's Social Justice Sunday. Social Justice is about ensuring that all have a fair share of this world's goods, and that all are treated with respect and dignity. It is about reading the signs of the time already before us – and taking action for justice and for peace as individuals, as communities and as a nation.

Amos 6:1, 4-7

The Lord says this: "*Woe to those ensconced so snugly in Zion.*" Amos is berating those "sprawling" in their material comforts and ignoring the needs of the poor in the society.

Psalms 146

Response: My soul give praise to the Lord.

1 Timothy 6:11-16

St Paul exhorts the people to be faithful to their calling and to the commitment they made before many witnesses.

Gospel: Luke 16:19-31

Jesus tells the Pharisees the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. *“During your life good things came your way but bad things came the way of Lazarus. Now he is being comforted while you are in agony.”*

Homily Notes

Amos denounces those who are rich and “snug” with their material riches, but ignore the plight of those less well off.

The **Psalm** contrasts this with God’s faithfulness and **Paul** in his letter to Timothy reminds us of our call to be *“saintly and religious, filled with faith and love”* until the *“appearing of our Lord Jesus”* – which Paul thought would be soon! We are still waiting; and like the rich man in the Gospel can spend our time waiting for the big signs and miss all the small ones before our very eyes.

In the **Gospel**, Jesus tells the parable of the rich man and Lazarus to try to get the people to understand that they do not need any more signs – the message is clearly before them.

In the parable Abraham tells the rich man – who is suddenly concerned about his brothers! – that *“if they will not listen either to Moses or the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone should rise from the dead.”*

The Social Justice Sunday Statement also calls us to see what is before our very eyes: in ourselves, our family and communities and in our nation. It names the consumerist society in which we live as feeding our desire for material things, and deluding us that these possessions will make us happy. Our frustration when these ill-formed desires are not met is one source of the anger that we feel, and this can sometimes be expressed in violence. *“The key to acting in a peaceful way lies in shaping our desires and handling our anger creatively.”* (p. 4)

While violence and peacemaking begin in the human heart, *“they are played out where human beings meet.”* (p. 5). Just as violence occurs in family and community, these places are also the safe havens where wholesome relationships are developed and peacemaking is not only made possible but actively taught.

The statement gives examples of such peacemaking efforts in Australia and poses challenging questions for us to ponder and pursue.

Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction: We pray to the God of Peace who in Jesus calls us to be makers of peace.

That we be open to recognise all people as made in the image and likeness of God.

Let us pray: ***God of Peace, hear us.***

That those who enjoy the riches of this world use their resources for the common good.

Let us pray: ***God of Peace, hear us.***

That the leaders of our nation – politicians, scientists, economists, teachers, artists and poets – use their gifts to shape us as a community steeped in respect for all people.

Let us pray: ***God of Peace, hear us.***

That those who suffer the constant violation of their human rights may be respected, recover their dignity and experience in their lives justice, peace and love.

Let us pray: ***God of Peace, hear us.***

That all nations and groups within nations will strive to ensure that nonviolence will become the basis of conflict resolution.

Let us pray: ***God of Peace, hear us.***

That all families, communities and social agencies will work together to make all children feel secure in the knowledge that they will grow up healthy, educated and free of abuse.

Let us pray: ***God of Peace, hear us.***

That the Church may be an instrument of reconciliation and peace within its own structures and communities and a sign of peace to all people.

Let us pray: ***God of Peace, hear us.***

The Eucharistic Prayer

- Eucharistic Prayer 4
- For Masses for various needs and occasions
- For Reconciliation I or II

Suggested Music

City of God (St Louis Jesuits)

The Lord Hears the Cry of the Poor (St Louis Jesuits)

No Right to Crush God's People (Peter Kearney)

The Beatitudes (Peter Kearney)

Bread of life, Hope for the World (B. Farrell)

Christ Be Our Light (B. Farrell)

Harvest of Justice (D. Haas)

Voices That Challenge (D. Haas)

Christ Be Our Light (D. Haas)

We Are Called (D. Haas)

The God of Second Chances (D. Haas)

Abide O Spirit of Life (D. Haas)

Come to the Feast (M. Haugen)

Bring Forth the Kingdom (M. Haugen)

Peace

Make me Channel of your Peace (S. Temple)

Lord Make Me a Means of Your Peace (St Louis Jesuits)

Prayer For Peace (D. Haas)

The God of Second Chances (D. Haas)

Deep Peace (B. Douglas)

For the Parish Bulletin

We celebrate Social Justice Sunday on 26th September. This year's Social Justice Sunday Statement is titled *Violence in Australia: A Message of Peace*. The theme of this document emerged in response to an increase in the level of violent assaults and issues of intolerance in Australian society. The document addresses violence at the personal level, in family and

community and in social structures. It challenges us to respond to Jesus' invitation to be makers of peace.

Suggestion: The following Prayer, issued with the Statement as a Prayer card, could be given to parishioners or printed on the bulletin and said together.

A Prayer for Peacemakers

Spirit of God,

Give us the openness, deep within us.

To recognise, daily,

All people as made in your image and likeness.

Help us to learn from one another

the ways of being fully alive;

At peace with ourselves and with those around us.

Give us the courage to transform

those parts of ourselves and our world

That separate and create enmity.

Help us to take steps to stop the cycle of violence

in our homes, in our work-places,

in our neighborhoods, in our country,

in our world.

May we be open to our deepest yearning

for a world alive with your justice and truth,

to dream of a society

where all are treated with respect,

And, with the power of your Spirit,

to take steps to bring it about.

For further details about the Catholic Bishops' Statement, visit the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council website (www.acsjc.org.au) or call (02) 8306 3499