

Without Love There Is No Justice

Pope John Paul II delivered the following words at the general audience of Nov. 8.

During these first audiences in which I have the fortune to meet you ... I wish ... to continue to develop the subjects chosen by John Paul I, my predecessor. He wished to speak not only of the three theological virtues: faith, hope and charity, but also of the four cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance. He saw in them — all together — seven lamps, as it were, of sanctification. God called him to eternity, and he was able to speak only of the three principal ones: faith, hope and charity, which illuminate the Christian's whole life. His unworthy successor, in meeting with you to reflect, in the spirit of his late predecessor, on the cardinal virtues, wishes to light, in a certain sense, the other lamps at his tomb.



Today, it falls to me to speak of justice. It is perhaps well that this should be the subject of the first catechesis in the month of November. This month, in fact, induces us to fix our gaze on the life of every man, and at the same time on the life of the whole of mankind, in the perspective of final justice. We are all aware, somehow, that in this transitory world, it is not possible to achieve the full measure of justice. The words so often heard: "There is no justice in this world" are perhaps the fruit of an over simplification that is too facile. But they contain a principle of deep truth all the same.

Justice is, in a certain way, greater than man, than the dimensions of his earthly life, than the possibilities of establishing in this life fully just relations among men, environments, societies and social groups, nations, and so on. Every man lives and dies with a certain sense of an insatiable hunger for justice, since the world is not able to satisfy fully a being created in the image of God, either in the depths of his person or in the various aspects of his human life. And thus, by means of this hunger for justice, man turns to God who "is justice itself." Jesus expressed this very clearly and concisely in the Sermon on the Mount, when he said: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."

Having this evangelical sense of justice before our eyes, we must consider it at the same time a fundamental dimension of man's life on earth: the life of

man, of society, of humanity. This is the ethical dimension. Justice is the fundamental principle of the existence and coexistence of men, as well as of human communities, societies and peoples. Furthermore, justice is the principle of the existence of the Church, as the People of God, and the principle of the coexistence of the Church and the various social structures: in particular of the state, as well as of international organizations. In this wide and differentiated area, man and mankind are continually seeking justice: this is a perennial process and it is a task of supreme importance.

According to the different relationships and different aspects, justice has obtained more appropriate definitions throughout the centuries. Hence the concept of justice: communicative, distributive, legal and social. All this testifies what a fundamental significance justice has for the moral order among men, in social and international relations. It can be said that the very meaning of man's existence on earth is bound up with justice. To define correctly "how much is due" to each one from all and at the same time to all from each one, "what is due" (debitum) to man from man in different systems and relationships — to define, and above all to put into practice! — is a great thing, through which every man lives, and thanks to which his life has a meaning.

Therefore there remains, during the centuries of human existence on earth, a continual effort and a continuous struggle to organize in accordance with justice the whole of social life in its various aspects. It is necessary to view with respect the multiple programs and the activity, sometimes reformative, of various trends and systems. It is necessary, at the same time, to be aware that here it is not a question in the first place of systems, but of justice and of man. The system must be for man, not man for the system.

Therefore defense is necessary against the hardening of the system. I am thinking of the social, economic, political and cultural systems, which must be sensitive to man; to his complete good. They must be able to reform themselves, their own structures, according to what the full truth about man requires. The great effort of our times, which aims at defining and consolidating "human rights" in the life of present-day mankind, peoples, and states, must be evaluated from this point of view.

The Church of our century remains in continual dialogue on the great front of the modern world, as is testified to by many encyclicals of the popes and the doctrine of the Second Vatican Council. The present

pope will certainly have to return repeatedly to these matters. In today's brief exposition, all that can be done is to draw attention to this vast and differentiated area.

Each of us, then, must be able to live in a context of justice and, even more, each of us must be just and act justly with regard to those near us and those who are far away, with regard to the community, to the society of which one is a member ... and with regard to God.

Justice has many references and many forms. There is also a form of justice which regards what man "owes" God. This is a vast subject in itself. I will not develop it now, although I cannot abstain from indicating it.

Let us give our attention, meanwhile to men. Christ left us the commandment to love our neighbor. In this commandment, everything that concerns justice is also contained. There can be no love without justice. Love "surpasses" justice, but at the same time it finds its verification in justice. Even a father and a mother, loving their own child, must be just in this regard. If justice is uncertain, love, too, runs a risk.

To be just means giving each one what is due to him. This concerns temporal goods of a material nature. The best example here can be remuneration for work or the so-called right to the fruits of one's own labor or of one's own land. But to man is due also his good name, respect, consideration, the reputation he has deserved. The more we know a man, the more his personality, his character, his intellect and his heart are revealed to us. And the more we realize — and we must realize! — with what criterion to "measure him" and what it means to be just towards him.

It is necessary, therefore, to deepen our knowledge of justice continually. It is not a theoretical science. It is virtue, it is capacity of the human spirit, of the human will and also of the heart. It is also necessary to pray in order to be just and to know how to be just.

We cannot forget Our Lord's words: "The measure you give will be the measure you get."

A just man is a man of a "just measure."

May we all be so!

May we all strive constantly to become so!

My blessing to all.

Insights in Liturgy

We Are Advent People

By DAVID NOWAK
Part 1

What are the sounds of Advent? For residents of western New York Advent has the sound of wind, cold and crisp. Advent sounds like sleet slapping at our windows and doors, the ice that greets you on your windshield each morning.

Advent is the muffled sound of a house sealed up for the winter. It is the plastic sound of Christmas songs and commercial pitches or "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" sung once too often in Church.

Advent has a plaintive sound, empty, but with a faint hope still in the distance. The sound, the feeling of Advent is not depressing, but neither is it a time of fullness. Advent is a time of "not yet, but it better be soon!"

Advent is a time of longing and dissonance. Time is out of joint. Something or someone is missing. But our

hollowness becomes an access to anticipation and expectation, and finally, surprisingly, confident readiness.

At this time during the liturgical year we are reminded that we are Advent people. We remember we are pilgrims, daring to set forth on the great adventure of God's coming. We are the hope-filled poor of the Gospel who have tasted the joy that comes with our Advent journey. Advent reminds us once again to plunge ourselves unreservedly into the depths of God's love and be given over to our true selves in Him.

The greatest sound of Advent is the Baptist's call to be prepared to let it challenge our lives. God's Advent tears the ground under our feet. It shakes our instincts and our desires, our work and our ideals. Advent lives are not bound up by everyday attachments to power or prestige, but always prepared to hear the Word of God and do it. Then the sound of Advent is an invitation to true fulfillment which

penetrates and shatters our illusions.

"Our whole object is to acquire the habit of keeping our attention always on the Lord ... (to) entrust ourselves and all we have into the Lord's hands, and so give birth to a sense of His permanent protection and help." Theophan the Recluse, *The Art of Prayer*.

The Advent way is first a way of being attentive. Only someone who is capable of paying attention to what God has promised can allow his life to become empty enough to receive all he has been looking for.

As our Blessed Mother did, so too, we must bear Christ into the world. We, too, must attend to our time being reborn in God, full of hope and promise. We must keep watch for the moment when Christ will finally and astonishingly reveal His glory.

The coming of God into our world does not occur alongside the rest of our lives. The promise of Advent is simply the last depth and radical meaning

of all we experience and suffer in the process of realizing ourselves as a person.

To paraphrase Karl Rahner, like the coming of grace we find Advent where someone experiences laughter or tears, bears responsibility, or stands by the truth; when someone hopes against hope, faces the shallowness and stupidity of the daily rush and bustle with humor and patience, refusing to become embittered; where someone learns to be silent and in this inner silence lets the pain in their hearts die rather than spread outwardly; in a word, where someone lives as he would like to live, combatting his own egoism and the continued temptation to inner despair.

This is the Advent person, "the place that Jesus takes ... (and) shall never leave, without end; for in us is His homeliest home and the most pleasing to Him to dwell in ... Julian of Norwich, *A Shewing of God's love*."

Then the sounds of Advent swell with joyful longing and cry out even more confidently, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

Bazaar Scheduled at Newark

Newark — St. Michael's Christmas Bazaar will take place from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 2 at the parochial school gymnasium on South Main Street.

A biennial event, the bazaar is the most important fund-raising event of the parish. Two years ago netted more than \$10,000.

Advent Cantata Dec. 5

The Gregorian Chorale, directed by Father Benedict Ehmann, will present its Advent Cantata, *How Far Is It to Bethlehem?*, at St. Lawrence Church, North Greece Road, at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 5.

The program includes an ensemble of Scripture prophecies, Gregorian chants and Advent hymns which trace the journey to the Messiah from the beginning of time to the Holy Night. It is a ritualized service in which the congregation takes part.

The service is sponsored by the Religious Education Committee of St. Lawrence parish. The public is invited.

From knitted sweaters to food to cookbooks, almost everything sold at the bazaar is handmade. Thus the theme is "A Homespun Christmas."

The cookbook has hundreds of recipes, all donated by parishioners. Co-chairwomen Gail Davi and Sharon SanAngelo hope it becomes a bestseller — at \$3.50 a copy.

Many other booths are planned and free babysitting service will be available.

Italian Play A 'Casa' Benefit

Lux Theater Productions, a local group, will present the play, *L'Avvocato Diffensore*, in Italian on Saturday, Dec. 1, in the main auditorium of Nazareth Arts Center. Curtain time is 8 p.m.

The Mario Morais satire deals with a family of social climbers. Mary Tomassetti is the director. The cast includes Lorenzo Costa, Elena Loderer, Floriana Leone, Gianfranco Tripi, Antonio Notaraspasquale and Joseph Infantino. The price of admission is \$5 for adults, \$2.50 for students, for the benefit of Casa Italiana.