

## A Cry for Justice and Greater Peace in the World - MabuhayRadio

Written by Francis Fernandez  
Friday, 07 March 2008 22:21 -

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A loud clamor for justice can be heard throughout a large section of humanity, for a better-assured peace within an atmosphere of mutual respect between men, and between the peoples of the world (Paul VI, Apostolic Letter, Octogesima adveniens, 14 May 1971). This desire to construct a more just world in which greater respect is given to man, who has been created by God in his image and likeness, is a fundamental part of the hunger and thirst for justice (cf Matt 5:6) which must exist in the heart of a Christian.

All of Jesus' preaching is a call to justice (in its fullness and without diminution) and to mercy. Our Lord himself condemns the Pharisees, who devour widows' houses and for a pretence make long prayers (Mark 12:40). And it is the Apostle St James who addresses this harsh reproach to those who grow rich through fraud and injustice: Your riches have rotted ... Behold the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts (Jas 5:2-4).

The Church, in faithfulness to the teaching of Holy Scripture, urges us to unite ourselves to this clamor of the world and to turn it into a prayer that reaches our Father God. At the same time she impels and urges us to live the demands that justice makes on our personal lives at a professional and social level, and to defend those who — because they are weaker — cannot avail themselves of their rights. The Christian is not expected to make sterile lamentations. Instead of complaining, Our Lord wants us to atone for the acts of injustice which are daily committed throughout the world: He wants us to try to remedy as many injustices as we can, starting with those that occur closest to us, in the sphere in which we move, just there where we live: the mother in her home with all those around her; the businessman in his firm; the professor in his University.

It is in their relationship to sin that Scripture regards all the different calamities which oppress man in his personal and social existence (S.C.D.F., Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation, 22 March 1986, 38). That is why, as Christians, we cannot forget that, when through our personal apostolate we bring men closer to God, we are building a world which is more human and more just. Moreover, our faith urges us never to avoid our personal commitment to the defense of justice, particularly in those aspects more closely related to the fundamental rights of the person: the right to life, to work, to education, to good reputation ... We have to uphold the right of all men to live, to own what is necessary to lead a dignified existence, to work and to rest, to choose a particular state in life, to form a home, to bring children into the world within marriage and to be allowed to educate them, to pass peacefully through times of sickness and old age, to have access to culture, to join with other citizens to achieve legitimate ends, and, above all, to enjoy the right to know and love God in perfect liberty (J. Escrivá, Friends of God, 171).

Within our personal sphere of action we must ask our selves the following questions: Do we do perfectly the work for which we are remunerated? Do we fully pay what we owe people for services rendered? Are we responsible in the way we exercise those rights and duties that can

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influence the activities of the institutions to which we belong? Do we make good use of our time at work? Do we defend other people's good name? Do we stand up for those who are weakest? Do we quash defamatory criticisms which may sometimes spring up in our midst? ... This is how we show our love for justice.

With permission from Scepter UK. Short excerpt from IN CONVERSATION WITH GOD by Francis Fernandez.

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