

The bible and social and ecological justice

Justice is a key word in the Bible. All books speak of God's justice and mercy. God is just, a just judge and God is on the side of the poor who are treated unjustly. God demands the same from his people and from his children. They, too, should act justly and have a heart for the victims of injustice. The purpose of the Mosaic law is to maintain justice in society. Where injustice prevails, the prophets denounce unjust conditions in the name of God and demand justice for those treated unjustly. The Messiah is expected to restore a kingdom of justice. For Jesus, "the most important thing in the law... is justice, mercy and faithfulness. Mt 23:23

In today's world it is urgent to sharpen our sense for generational justice and accept our responsibility for the people who come after us. With our wasteful lifestyle we are destroying the basis of life for the future of mankind. We live at the expense of future generations.

Texts

- Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; steadfast love and faithfulness go before you. Ps 89:15
- Listening to the Scriptures to practice mercy: this is a great challenge for our lives. The Word of God is able to open our eyes so that we can get out of the individualism that leads to suffocation and sterility. To do this, it opens the way for us to live together and in solidarity. Motu Proprio, Aperuit Illis 13
- Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous... anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God. 1 John 3:7, 10
- What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?... Our contemporary lifestyle, unsustainable as it is, can only precipitate catastrophes. Laudato Si 160.161

Learning from Africa



One of the most beautiful representations of this responsibility for future generations are the Makonde trees of life in Tanzania. The generations are closely linked to each other. They express an awareness that what we are, we owe to our ancestors and that our most important task is to pass on what we have received to our children.

Christian communities in Africa ask spontaneously what relevance biblical texts have for their concrete lives. In many countries, human rights violations and political oppression, social inequality and corruption, exploitation and sexual violence are commonplace. The Bible offers an alternative vision of a society characterized by mutual respect, solidarity and peace.

Christians who have had traumatic experiences in ethnic conflicts and civil wars often find in the Bible comfort and strength in their struggle for survival. The bible gives them a vision of hope for a better tomorrow. Some Gospel texts inspired people, who have been victims of grave injustices, to find the strength to reconcile with their enemies.

Food for thought

- **What contribution do we make through a frugal lifestyle to leave to the next generation a world worth living in?**
- **Do we have the courage to stand up against injustices in society and in the Church?**