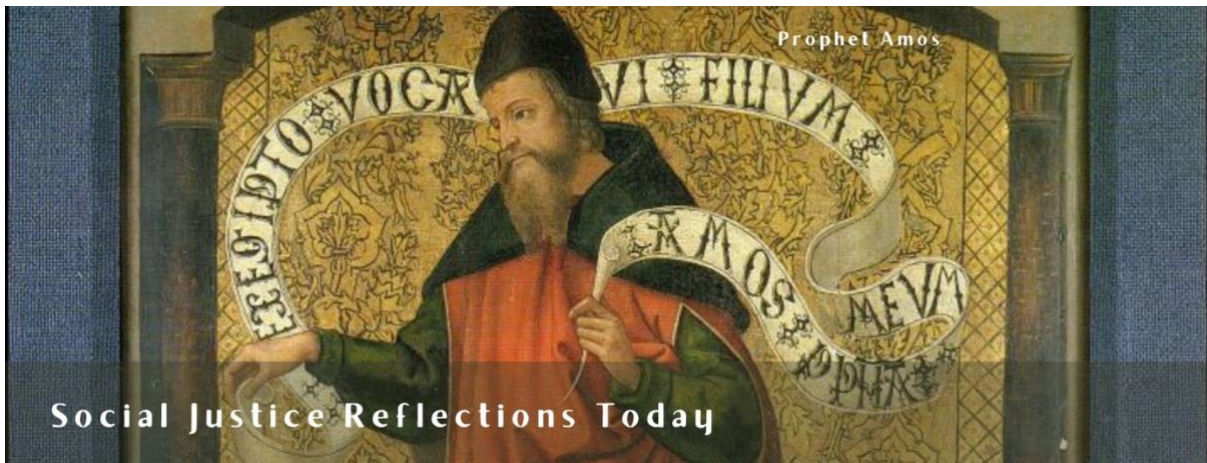


SOCIAL JUSTICE REFLECTIONS TODAY  
25<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME – 18 SEPTEMBER 2022



*The Prophet Amos by Juan de Borgoña*

### STUDY RENEWAL

It has been such a wonderful time for the three months study renewal – September and October 2021 and September 2022. Originally, it was study overseas, but the COVID Pandemic prevented that opportunity. Back to prayer and listening to God for direction.

### REFLECTIONS 2021

September and October 2022 became an opportunity to spend time reading works by St John of the Cross, and St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein) and sitting with their insights before God.

Both saints have spiritualities moved by the cross of Jesus in their lives. I received a few prompts in prayer to return to the Bible and reflect about the cross. On our webpage are *six reflections* from that special time last year. The reflections can be accessed at the [highlighted hyperlinks](#) below.

**1. [Social Justice and The Cross of Jesus](#)**

(quoting Chrism Mass Homily 2021 of Pope Francis, as I ask three questions

1. Do the joyful Good News of Jesus Christ and the Cross of Jesus Christ go together?
2. Could we say that the cross existed throughout the earthly life of Jesus?
3. Are we scandalised by the Cross and run away from it?)

**2. [Liberation and the Cross](#)**

(St Paul's Letter to the Galatians)

**3. [The Power of the Cross](#)**

(St Paul's Letter of 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians)

**4. [Carrying the Cross in love and solidarity](#)**

(Matthew's Gospel and Teresa of Avila)

5. [Steadfast in Hope](#)

(In the Catechism, and in St Paul's Letters 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians, 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians, Romans)

6. [Love, Justice and Hope in times of discrimination, persecution and systemic evil](#)

(in The Book of Daniel, The Book of Revelation, The Letters of John, and Catholic Social Teaching)

Carrying over from the time of study, this *Covid prayer* and the *homily* were an addition in January 2022.

PRAYER

[Covid Prayer for the Intercession of St Edith Stein in 2022](#)

HOMILY

[Sacred Moments of St Edith Stein as We Celebrate the Baptism of Jesus](#)

REFLECTIONS 2022

September this year is a time to read and read, and pray about Catholic social teaching and, in particular, social justice. Again, it is wonderful to have this time in isolation. In my time in the Seminary in the 1970s, we had a subject of Social Doctrine over two years, and a semester subject on The Bible and Social Justice.

When doing Biblical Studies, Theology, Spirituality, Philosophy, Liturgy, Church History, Canon Law, Counselling and other subjects, and in pastoral experiences, over six and a half years, the insights into social justice were appreciated.

Then in 1989, I was on an international Faith and Justice course for 5 months in Thailand. Most weeks, we had a dedicated unit on social justice, and time with a Spiritual Director and small group sessions with a Pastoral Director.

For example, one week we studied Christology.

The lecturer gave examples from his Latin American experiences, and the dangers that people experienced.

Near the end of that week's unit, he received word that his whole household had been assassinated.

We gathered in prayer and solidarity, with silence and symbol, Bible and hymns.

In 1997, there was the opportunity to study and network in social justice overseas.

Working for social justice is not only being familiar with the doctrine.

It is being in solidarity.

Overseas solidarity journeys have included South Africa, Timor Leste, Iraq and Papua New Guinea.

Each of my overseas solidarity journeys, from 1994 to 2019, followed on from being in solidarity with our sisters and brothers in Australia, and, especially, with First Nations Peoples.

Our Catholic Social teaching is founded on the Good News of our mission in Christ.  
Over this month, I reflect on eight topics.  
I find it helpful to use timelines as part of the reflections.

Reflection 1: Social Justice and Catholic Church Teachings

Reflection 2: The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church

Reflection 3: A Spirituality of Justice

Reflection 4: Social Justice Sources – Australia to 1979

Reflection 5: Social Justice Sources – Australia 1980-1999

Reflection 6: Social Justice Sources – Australia 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Reflection 7: Social Justice and the Earth, Our Common Home

Reflection 8: Church in Australia - Social Justice and the Earth, Our Common Home

I have begun work on each of them. Reading primary sources takes time.

#### FIRST READING - Amos 8:4-7

Today's first Reading is from the prophet Amos in the Old Testament.

He challenged dishonesty in business, and rebuked those

who trampled the dignity and rights of the needy and the poor of the land. He said:

*'Hear this, you that trample on the needy, and bring to ruin the poor of the land,  
saying, 'When will the new moon be over so that we may sell grain;  
and the sabbath, so that we may offer wheat for sale?  
We will make the ephah small and the shekel great,  
and practise deceit with false balances,  
buying the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals,  
and selling the sweepings of the wheat.'*

The Prophet Amos is one of the social justice prophets of the Old Testament.

He was not only concerned with individual cases of injustice,  
but, also, with systemic and structural injustice.

#### SECOND READING - 1st Letter of Paul to Timothy 2:1-8

The 2nd Reading implores us:

*'First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings  
should be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions,  
so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity.'*

This reading reminds us about the importance of several ways of praying.

On the parish website, are listed some of our parish prayer intentions over the past few years.

<https://www.stjosephsbrackenridge.com/prayers.html>

Pope Francis announces world-wide monthly prayer intentions.

He continues the tradition of the annual world day of prayer for peace.

He adds prayer intentions on some Sundays and Wednesdays.

He invites us to pray in his homilies and liturgies and special intentions.

Links to his major justice, ecology and peace teachings are at <https://www.stjosephsbrackenridge.com/pope-francis.html>

#### GOSPEL - Luke 16:1-13

In the Gospel today, Jesus tells us a parable about a dishonest manager.  
In verses 16:10-13 Jesus concludes with these words:

***'Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much;  
and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much.  
If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth,  
who will entrust to you the true riches?  
And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another,  
who will give you what is your own?  
No slave can serve two masters;  
for a slave will either hate the one and love the other,  
or be devoted to the one and despise the other.  
You cannot serve God and wealth.'***

May we continually serve God faithfully in our lives.

May we be people of social justice, in solidarity with others,  
as we journey together, needing each other.

In 1990, the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council presented an Issues Paper titled *Social Justice in Everyday Life*. It said:

*"A commitment to social justice is an essential characteristic  
of a life lived according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.  
It is not possible, in the Catholic tradition,  
to live out a full life of Faith in the absence of this commitment."*

Let us pray

Father Gerry

Readings: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/091822.cfm>