

JPIC 72 FEBRUARY 2018

Health in the Lord and the blessing of the Holy Spirit (Rule of Saint Albert)
*Saudavel iha Maromak no grasa Spiritu Santo nian (Regula Sto Alberto)***IN SEARCH OF PEACE**

a reflection by Peter Clark

“We know that it is not enough to open our hearts to the suffering of others. Much more remains to be done before our sisters and brothers can once again live peacefully in a safe home.”

Pope Francis Message for the 51st World Day of Peace - January 1, 2018

The problems seem insurmountable: war, famine, corruption, the effects of climate change and many other issues all seem to conspire to make our efforts ineffectual. In fact, there appears to be a concerted campaign to increase our fear, to discourage or to make us feel incapable of action.

Our instant news is dominated by the exploitations of authoritarian and tyrannical government leaders holding each other and citizens of the world to ransom. In our own country refugees remain in indefinite detention, deliberately “out of sight-out of mind” while evil comments on South Sudanese refugees are aimed at creating fear, gaining political advantage and causing division in the community.



Are we embracing a new vision based on a radical inclusiveness that transforms domination into partnership and hierarchies into circles of collaboration, compassion, creativity and reverence.

“As the prophet Elijah criticised the misuse of power (1 Kings 21) as well as the religious decadence in Israel, so are we as Carmelites called to criticise

what is unjust in society in the light of the Word of God, evangelising the everyday lives and values of the members of society.” (Contemplative Dimension of Carmelite Charism, Franciscus Kosasih, O.Carm.)

Do we recognise God at work in the many good activists such as Canadian author Naomi Klein in her recent book *No is Not Enough* (2017) which explores the first year of the Trump presidency and proposes that so many of our issues are interconnected and mutually reinforcing.

Weapons development, war, terrorism fears, the widening gap between rich and poor, loss of social fabric, unrestrained capitalism, consumerism, environmental vandalism and climate change. Klein believes that we cannot save the world if we simply protest single issues.

We must be aware of this interconnected tapestry and combat it on the broad front. Simply objecting is not sufficient we must take action!

It is easy to isolate ourselves in our remote part of the world, but are we being challenged to be the eyes, hands and feet of the passionate, justice-seeking Jesus of the Gospels?

In his message, Pope Francis outlines this need. “Welcoming others requires concrete commitment, a network of assistance and goodwill, vigilant and sympathetic attention, the responsible management of new and complex situations that at times compound existing problems, to say nothing of resources, which are always limited.” This is clearly not the work of an individual.

Can we start with the words of Carlos Mesters: *“Based on the experience of the prophet Elijah, the Carmelite should face the situation of injustice through three different approaches that are closely related: the path of justice (struggling for the transformation of society), the path of solidarity (struggling for the renewal of community) and the path of mysticism (struggling to restore the awareness that God is with us).”* Carlos Mesters, General Chapter 1983.

Pope Francis says we are a family, a community. We do not see strangers. There is no stranger danger. We look to "...sisters and brothers .." who can live peacefully in a safe home. All the time we identify differences, then war, ethnic cleansing and fear of the stranger is possible.

When we identify a world community, peace and support becomes possible. Nature and the world environment is not restricted by national or religious borders. Frankly, if we do not solve our environmental problems as a world community, then we will all face the catastrophic penalty! There is no magic shield over America, Australia or any other recalcitrant country that prevents us sharing the consequences. We are being offered the opportunity to take part in transforming society and mending our broken world.

"A prophetic community means more than sharing the value of love, more than simply understanding the Church and the world; it also means to demand change and to be changed by those prophetic voices around us. It means to be a leaven for others, which could raise a challenge to transforming systems and structures of sin into those of grace." (Contemplative Dimension of Carmelite Charism, Franciscus Kosasih, O.Carm).

Within our communities we may be called as individuals to whatever healing action we might feel passionate about.

- Perhaps we are drawn to act on refugee policy, to protest the detention of innocents (not illegals) on Manus and Nauru; or
- is welcoming the stranger into our community our strength? Or,
- do we support petitions, rallies or letters to our politicians to prevent the opening of another coal mine, for example?

Whatever we do, take action; vote for candidates that support responsible policies, become involved and take heart that we are a community, knowing that many others are passionate about creating change too, and are doing what we cannot do. Take heart that as a community we have impact. That together we are, and we can change the world! As a Christian community, as the body of Christ, we can and must "...: feed the hungry, clothe the poor and welcome the stranger." This is one of the ways to Peace in our World. For two thousand years, since Christ himself was a refugee in Egypt, this gospel (good news) must be our refugee policy.

One of the profound statements of the Carmelite Order which refers to the ability to read the signs of the times as a result of contact with the Word is the statement found in the assembly of the Council of Provinces of 1991:

*"A conviction welled up within us: if we are able to listen and to receive the Word of God in silence and in solitude, and if the Word can live abundantly in our hearts and on our lips, it will truly come alive in us, it will teach us to look at the world with the eyes of God and it will lead us to be true contemplatives. **Our actions will be from a contemplative source.**"*

FOR YOUR CALENDAR - FEBRUARY

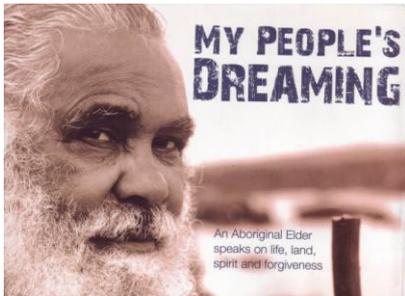


8 Feb - The Feast of St Josephine Bakhita. This day has been designated by Pope Francis as a day of prayer, reflection and action to end the injustice of human trafficking in the world. ACRATH contact for more information and resources: <http://acrath.org.au/world-day-of-prayer/>

13 Feb - 10th Anniversary of the apology to Stolen Generations by the Australian Government (2008)

AUSTRALIA DAY - 26 January is not a day of celebration for many Australians, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It marks the beginning of the invasion, the dispossession of their land, violence, massacres and genocide - 26 January is an opportunity to celebrate the survival of their culture and people. Let us walk with them in their struggle for recognition; let us *pray that our Australian Government will listen to the voice of Aboriginal Australians, as they determine a way forward; for a just Treaty, and Constitutional change.*

"For indigenous cultures, 'the land is not a commodity, but rather a gift from God and from their ancestors who rest there, a sacred space with which they need to interact if they are to maintain their identity and values. When they remain on their land, they themselves care for it best. Pope Francis, Laudato Si #146



*In Memory of those
gone by*

Max Dulumunmun Harrison

*Where are the faces that once smiled with pride
Or they sometimes just talked of respect.
They would feed you and give you a bed for the night
Or they told you to never neglect.*

*To never abandon your duties to teach
or never let go of your laws.
Never to think that today became hard
or life's full of some difficult chores.*

*I reflect to the Forties and Fifties, then more
To the Sixties when folks used to meet
In the paddocks while picking the peas and the beans
Or sometimes we would meet on the street.*

*But something went wrong when they opened the doors
of the gambling clubs and the bars
The grog and the gambling soon took its toll Leaving
loved ones with spiritual scars*

*Not only spiritual scars did they bear
There was mental and physical pain.
Some joined the ancients in that spiritual world
While some never recovered again.*

*So those faces that smiled
Or they held out their hands
To welcome you into the fold
They are no longer there in that physical form
But are there for our thoughts to behold.*

**MY PEOPLE'S DREAMING - An aboriginal elder
speaks on life, land, spirit and forgiveness.**
Harper Collins Publishing Australia 2013

SIX ways to stand in solidarity with Indigenous Australians this Survival Day:

http://www.erc.org.au/survival_day
*For the 30th Anniversary of the 1988 Long
March, Aboriginal and non-Indigenous
supporters will convoy from across the
country to Sydney and march in a public call
for **Justice and Treaty** on the 26th January
2018.*

Laudato Si' CURRICULUM AND ADULT STUDY GUIDE NOW AVAILABLE!!

The Carmelite NGO has also prepared an excellent *Laudato Si'* **Study Guide for adults**, ideal for parish groups, book clubs, and study courses as well as for individual study. The guides provide a structure to more deeply explore the Encyclical.

These booklets are available from the JPIC Team, Peter, Agedo or Paul or through Gabrielle Fogarty (gfogarty@exemail.com.au) at a cost of \$5 per copy. Sample copies will be sent to Lay Carmelite Communities; the Carmelite Centre and Carmelite Parishes. We encourage YOU to think about creating a small group discussion with friends, or fellow parishioners. Bringing a group together may be your commitment and healing action to help bring about a transformation in caring for the Earth. Our JPIC Team is here to support you in whatever way we can.

We invite you to take a look at the new Carmelite NGO Curriculum website:
<https://www.laudato-si-for-all.com/>