

21st April 2020

## Justice

*"Di tibi, si qua pios respectant numina, si quid usquam iustitia est et mens sibi conscientia recti, praemia digna ferant."*

**"If the divine powers take note of the dutiful in any way,  
if there is any justice anywhere and a mind recognising in itself what is right,  
may the gods bring you your earned rewards."**

Virgil, Aeneid Book 1

My Latin teacher in Lochaber High School would be proud of me! So I could just stop there and let Mr McGregor's "blessed" Virgil's words speak for themselves. But it's worthwhile making a couple of comments.

It's been said during this crisis that, if there is any justice, those who work so hard on our behalf should be appreciated more than they have been. For too long there has been wide a divergence in the way our society rewards people for their contribution to our welfare. Those in our health-service and elsewhere, across the board, do not earn what they deserve. Some say they should get a medal. I say more: readjust our pay structures; redistribute our wealth; give greater value to those who keep us safe and well. *If there is any justice anywhere and a mind recognising in itself what is right ... may the gods bring them their earned rewards.* Clapping and cheering on our doorstep once a week just isn't enough.

But we also know that the Covid-19 crisis adversely affects those in the poorer echelons of our society. It serves to highlight the injustices of poverty and inequality: the burgeoning use of foodbanks; the debacle that has been the launch of Universal Credit; the number of children who live below the poverty line. If this crisis brings such issues into sharper focus, should they return to the shadows once normality returns?

Let the "new normal" everyone is talking about have justice as its watchword – justice that makes us *take note of the dutiful* and rewards them appropriately; and justice for the impoverished so that we build an equitable society. Is this not simply *recognising in itself what is right?*

### A prayer for today

*God who yearns for equity, let "justice flow like a mighty stream",  
and let us be part of the transformation it brings. Amen*

*An original reflection by © Tom Gordon*

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