

11<sup>th</sup> April 2022  
*Monday of Holy Week*

## Justice

**“Justice is the constant and perpetual wish to render to everyone his due.”**

*Justinian, Institutes, Book 1*

Justinian was Roman emperor from AD 527, and while we can't say that the empire under his governance and that of other rulers always had justice at its core, we know the truth of the above statement from his first century *Institutes*. Justice matters. Justice has to be fair and equitable if we call our society civilised. Everyone must have their due.

Today is the start of Holy Week in which the Christian Church, in a variety of ways, tracks the final drama of Jesus' life towards its culmination on Easter Day. I want to follow that drama too, and to do so, I'm going to pick a piece from one of the Lectionary readings for each day. Today, on the Monday of Holy Week, I turn to Isaiah 42, where we find this:

*Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or cry out or raise his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smouldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth.*

Isaiah is pointing to one of the fundamental principles of Jesus' life and teaching – justice. But this isn't some vague, namby-pamby concept Isaiah is highlighting, a principle, aim, or aspiration. This is about people, you and me, what might be expected from us all, and what you and I should seek to offer to others: the “bruised reed” that some might wish to discard, but “he will not break”; that “smouldering wick” that some might consider less than perfect, but this little flame “he will not snuff out”. And in all of this, Isaiah says, “he will not falter or be discouraged”. He doesn't have to shout about it, “raise his voice in the streets”. He just gets on with treating people fairly, especially the bruised and broken. He continues to care for the weak, those others might despise. And he keeps at it.

During this Holy Week, if keeping our attention on Jesus is to mean anything at all, let's do our bit to work for the Kingdom he came to establish. And let justice be *our* “constant and perpetual wish”.

### **A prayer for today**

*Loving God, may justice be at the heart of my thinking and acting,  
that love, peace and joy might follow. Amen*