



Justice, Only Justice, you Shall Pursue –  
Dt.16:18-20

January 18 – 25, 2019

This year began with challenging exhortations by Pope Francis. He told us that, “Today more than ever, our societies need ‘artisans of peace’. In his January 1<sup>st</sup> message, Pope Francis focused on *Good Politics at the Service of Peace*. He stated that, “Instead of indifference, cynicism or thinking our voices do not matter, we believe the Gospel calls us to raise our voices for the common good, knowing that political life can indeed become an outstanding form of charity.” The following prayer shares Pope Francis’ deep desire for lasting peace.

We have tried so many times and over so many years to resolve our conflicts by our own powers and by the force of our arms. How many moments of hostility and darkness have we experienced; how much blood has been shed; how many lives have been shattered; how many hopes have been buried... Now, Lord, come to our aid! Grant us peace, teach us peace; guide our steps in the way of peace. Open our eyes and our hearts and give us the courage to say: ‘Never again war!’... Instill in our hearts the courage to take concrete steps to achieve peace. Keep alive within us the flame of hope, so that with patience and perseverance we may opt for dialogue and reconciliation. In this way may peace triumph at last.

From our focus on peace, we move into the *World Day of Prayer for Christian Unity* with the theme of ‘*Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue.*’ This year’s prayer was prepared by Christians in Indonesia. After reflection and discussion, the organizing *World Day of Prayer* committee decided on taking the core theme from Deuteronomy 16: 18-20. This passage is very clear, demanding and challenges us today to examine our own actions and decisions that foster justice and life for all.

Each of the eight days of the *Week for Christian Unity* has separate Scripture passages for us to ponder, share and live.

Day 1 **Amos 5: 24**

Day 2 **Matthew 5: 37**

Day 2 **Psalm 145: 8**

Day 2 **Hebrews 13: 5**

Day 5 **Luke 4: 18**

Day 6 **Jeremiah 10: 16**

Day 7 **Matthew 15: 28**

Day 8 **Psalm 27: 1**

**“ Everyone can be an  
artisan of peace. ”**

—Pope Francis

The Scripture passages lend a fitting backdrop to the two main elements of the week’s worship – *Prayer of Repentance and Commitment to Unity through Justice and Mercy*. Please take advantage of this special week of prayer and reach out to our brothers and sisters from our own and other backgrounds. You may even make some new friends. Your heart will, hopefully, be widened to embrace migrants, refugees, the poor and the most vulnerable. May we also try to understand more deeply what motivates women, children and men to flee oppression, gangs, unemployment, hunger and religious persecution to find hope, possibilities and security. And may we not close the door to them. As humanity, we have much for which to beg forgiveness and to renew our commitments to be ambassadors for unity, justice and peace.

I need to begin with myself and make a daily decision to be a kinder and more compassionate person - an ‘artisan of peace.’ What can I be or do right now to help change a situation that may be volatile or demeaning to another person?

With God’s help, all good things are possible!

Walking this challenging road with you;

*Sr. Teresa Morrison, CPS*

