

Justice and Peace and the Integrity of Creation

At a time when our media is filled with war, violence and the massive movements of peoples seeking a safe haven and home, it is heart warming to discover “What gives the Pope joy?”

On November 6th, Pope Francis shared the following in a morning homily:

“I tell you how much joy I have, what moves me, when in this Mass some priests come up and greet me: ‘O Father, I have come here to find my own people, because for 40 years I have been a missionary in the Amazon’. Or a sister who says, ‘I have worked for 30 years in a hospital in Africa’. Or when I find a little sister who for 30, 40 years is working in the department of the hospital with the disabled, always smiling. This is called ‘serving’, this is the joy of the Church: going out to others, always; going out to others and giving life. This is what Paul did: serving.”

“Jesus”, the Pope said, “makes us see this model in Paul, this Church that never stops that always goes forward and shows us the path.”

St. Paul “boasts of serving Him, of being chosen, of having the strength of the Holy Spirit.”

Paul was the servant who served, the Pope said, “he ministered, laying the foundation, that is, announcing Jesus Christ ... he never stopped to take advantage of his position, of his authority, of being served. He was a minister, a servant in order to serve, not to be served.”

“Instead” the Pope said, “when the Church is tepid, closed in on itself, businesslike, it cannot be said to be a Church that serves, that is at the service of others, but rather it must be said that it is using others. May the Lord give us the grace He gave to Paul, that point of pride of always going forward, always, renouncing, time and again, its own comfort; and may He save us from temptations, from those temptations which at their base are temptations to a double life: I see myself as a minister, as one who serves, but at the base I am served by others.”

Pope Francis’ words cause us to pause and reflect on our lives. As I write this I can’t help but wonder how many years of service have been offered to God’s people since our CPS foundation. And to add to this, how many smiles we have shared in our various ministries?

Perhaps today, I can ask myself ‘what gives me joy as I walk side by side with God’s people?’

