



***SECOND YEAR  
MEETING FIVE***

***THE CALL TO JUSTICE***

***1. Introduction***

Justice is often used in the Scriptures as a synonym for sanctity. However, as a special virtue, it is the virtue which inclines us to render to God and to our neighbor exactly what is due.

***2. Exemplar: St. Joseph***

St. Joseph is the just man about whom so little is known in the Scriptural sources; only Matthew and Luke in their chapters one and two tell us much about him.

Joseph is of the royal descent of the house of David from the village of Bethlehem. Looking at the prophecies of the Messiah, Joseph has prepared the way for Jesus' entrance into to world. This preparation was important to protect Jesus' real identity from the evil one and to protect his pbirth from the appearance of illegitimacy, and so to place him within the natural surrounding in which He was to be raised.

Joseph had been betrothed to Mary in a ceremony that took place after he moved to Nazareth. Through this ceremony, he and Mary were regarded as husband and wife, though they did not yet live together.

Joseph, the just man, discovered that his betrothed was pregnant. He was overwhelmed and in that state was graced by a visit from an angel who told him, the pregnancy was by the action of the Holy Spirit.

These are the events we know from Scripture: the birth, the circumcision, the visit of the Magi, the escape to Egypt, again with a visit from and angel for Joseph's guidance, the return,

the presentation and the finding of Jesus in the temple. Those are the only times Joseph is mentioned except when Jesus is later mentioned as “being the son of Joseph the carpenter.”

If no more is heard of Joseph then why is he so highly venerated? We have to look at the time and the place. It was a small town, a tightly bound social-religious community. He was presented with many problems by the events that happened to Mary.

Joseph was just in rendering to Mary her due, for she was a good, pious woman whom he recognized as holy. He was, therefore just in his decision to put her quietly away. When he heard the Divine message, he lived the allied virtues of religion and piety and did what he was to do. God had asked him to do something (to give the rest of his life for His Son) and he fulfilled what he was asked to the fullest measure.

He rendered to Mary all that which was her due in justice and then rendered so much more: in showing his care, his concern for her as one chosen especially by God to have a special role in salvation, Joseph truly fulfills all the allied virtues of justice.

Joseph, the just man, fulfills all that he is asked to do: the journey to Bethlehem; later to Egypt and back, the ritual presentations in the temple and the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. In all this he showed a special veneration of and care for his wife and the Child, a veneration and care that was their due.

Joseph also possessed the Gift of piety. He entrusts, even abandons his whole life and the care of his wife and child to God’s protection and providence in a way that shows him acting under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Joseph is the silent one, the one who is there, does what is to be done and who keeps the Holy Family safe and sound and protected so that each can fulfill the Father’s will.

Joseph, then, personifies the virtue of justice, and shows forth the gift of piety, the deep love and trust in the Father's care, and, finally, shines forth in his meekness, always eager to carry out the Father’s will.. Joseph, the strong, silent, just one is the true exemplar of justice.

## ***5. Theology***

### ***JUSTICE***

The virtue of justice requires the constant disposition of the will to render to each his due. This virtue perfects the will enabling it to endeavor always to refer to another; to be aware of one’s strict obligation to the other, and to attempt to render exactly what is owed.

St. Thomas and St. Augustine put justice immediately after prudence in the order of excellence and both consider it the means to achieve true peace, or the tranquility of order, because where there is justice the obstacles to peace are overcome.

Justice implies refraining from doing harm to one's neighbor and also positively doing good. It is, in other words, both sides of the Golden Rule: Do to others as you would have them do unto you and don't do to others what you don't want them to do to you. Justice is also the foundation of charity.

***The parts of justice are:***

Legal - we are bound by the just laws of the society in which we live and legal justice inclines the members of the society to render to that society what is due in view of the common good of the society. The individual may have to give up some of his/her individual good for the common good of the society.

Distributive - this aspect of justice inclines the one distributing the goods, favors, etc, of society to distribute them according either to the needs of or to the merits or abilities of those to whom the distribution is made. It is not a question of mathematics division, but one of proportion.

Commutative- - this aspect concerns the rights and duties of individuals among themselves to render to another exactly what is due. Any transgression of commutative justice always involves the obligation to make restitution. Transgressions or violations include: homicide, calumny, injury, theft, damage, etc.

St. Thomas makes clear the ways to grow in justice and gives both the negative and positive means.

The negative ways are:

1. To avoid even the slightest injustice. Simply because something is of small import, does not mean that it can be overlooked. The habit of ignoring small concerns tends us to begin to overlook larger ones.
2. To avoid unnecessary debts and to pay any debts we incur promptly. To avoid non-necessities and to learn to do with just necessities.
3. To avoid injury to the good name of others by avoiding rash judgments, ridicule and defamation of character. To avoid repeating anything that injures the good name of another. "An intelligent person need never lie but need never tell the whole truth" especially when the statement affects the good of another.
4. To recognize that what belongs to the common good is not owned by anyone and must, therefore, be especially cared for. Others possessions must be as carefully treated as one's own, whether they're rented, loan, belong to the family or whatever.
5. To avoid the acceptance of persons, neither favoring them without sufficient reason or denying them their lawful rights: we must see what their merits or faults require in justice and, in other instances, we must see what capacities or talents a person has before bestowing a position and/or an honor.

The positive means are:

1. To give each person his/her due without consideration of like, dislike, or feelings, but simply doing what we ought to do in fulfilling commutative justice.
2. To have concern for the common good, valuing it more than our own good and/or friends, admirers, followers, etc. so that in fulfilling distributive justice, we look on ourselves as stewards of these goods which we are entitled to handle for the common good.
3. To obey the just laws, whether seen or not, so that the harmony of the common good is upheld, remembering our own obligation to society; if we are unhappy about a law or practice, work for its change. It is our obligation to fulfill conscientiously the just laws of our society or to seek an exemption within the civil society or a dispensation in the religious realm.

The Angelic Doctor lists the virtues allied to justice as:

1. Religion - that is, to give to God the Creator His due in all things. We exercise the virtue of religion by acts of religion such as devotion which means to subject ourselves to God and be available to give service to Him; prayer, adoration, sacrifice, offerings, vows, oaths and swearing in the name God (in a positive way). Opposite this virtue are superstition, idolatry, divination, observance (such as Friday the 13th aphorism), tempting God (for example, demanding God's help), perjury, sacrilege and simony.
2. Piety - that is, showing due recognition of indebtedness to those from whom one has received life and existence: parents, country and God. It also means a special reverence to those who belong to one's family tree or to those who share the same religious charism, such as, for us members of the Dominican Order. Piety is different from charity, because it is the giving of owed reverence and service. Opposite to piety is impiety, or the neglect of one's obligation or and exaggerated, excesses "overdoing" of this obligations which indicates an imbalance or lack of justice.

As we grow in piety we manifest respect, affection and veneration to family members and respects and love of our country, being willing to give service to it (which can be given in many different ways) and balance this respect in our own lives by avoiding envy and disdain of other countries.

3. Observance - This is the virtue by which relationships of inferiors to superiors who are those who hold some special dignity other than that given to God, parents and rulers. Examples are the relationship of servant to master, soldier to officer, young to old or student to teacher.
4. Gratitude - the recompense in sane way to a benefactor for a gift received.
5. Vengeance - only when it is used to protect the common good.
6. Veracity - speaking the truth and avoiding lying, simulation, hypocrisy, irony (false humility).
7. Affability - this virtue is marked by those whose words and actions are directed to the preservation of friendly and agreeable association with others, not just their friends but, with all. Under it is listed benignity, politeness, praise, gratitude, hospitality, patience, meekness, refinement in word and deed among other qualities.
8. Liberality - the use of one's own goods to benefit others. Opposed to liberality are the vices of avarice and prodigality.

9. Equity - this means the preservation of the common good and, in a general way, the laws of the society, presuming that they will always be obeyed and thus avoiding severity in dealing with a particular individual who has violated the letter of the law.

### ***PIETY***

The gift of Piety is an 'infused habit that renders the soul well disposed towards God as its kind Father, and makes it quickly responsive to the Holy Spirit when He moves it to acts of filial affection towards God.'

As with all gifts of the Holy Spirit, we act under the impulse of the Holy Spirit. With the Gift of piety, we look upon God as the Father who has shared his supernatural life with us and with all men and woman.

The gift of piety perfects the virtue of justice and the related virtues, especially those of religion and piety. Piety changes the aspects of worship from that of adoration due our Creator to that given to our Father.

Piety helps us look at the world, at all creation as part of our Father's house and see his infinite goodness in everyone and everything.

The effects of piety are:

1. The Soul has a filial tenderness toward our heavenly Father. "Now you have not received a spirit of bondage so as to be again in fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption of sons, by virtue of which we cry "Abba, Father". The Spirit himself gives testimony to our spirit that we are sons of God. (Rom. 8:15-16). .
2. We can grow in trust and abandonment to our Father, calmly and confidently living in His arms, seeking to please Him and desiring that everyone live as children of God. This trust and abandonment leads to spontaneous prayer, acts of adoration and service and expresses the true freedom of the children of God.
3. We grow in the ability to see others as children of God and brothers/sisters of Jesus Christ. This leads to tenderness and works of mercy (even heroic ones!) that seem easy and natural. We come to be able to see this recognition as the basis of all our love for family, friends and neighbors.
4. We grow in love for those persons and things that are related to the Fatherhood of God and also related to Christ. Thus we grow in love for Mary, Joseph, the angles and saints as closely related to the Father and the Son. We grow in love for our superiors, our country for law, for Sacred Scripture, the house of God and the things at the service of God.

All of these effects show growth in the gift of piety. Each one may develop one or another of the qualities at different rates or at different "depths" as the Holy Spirit leads each person to develop gift as he/she needs for salvation and therefore, for doing good while here on earth.

As Christians and especially as Dominicans, we can progress in our response to the gift of piety by cultivating the spirit of the adopted children of God, acting for the love of God in order to please the Father; cultivating universal good will and increasing our love toward all, seeing all things as part of God's plan and His love and growing in trust and abandonment to God's providence.

***BEATITUDE: "BLESSED ARE THE MEEK FOR THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH."***

This beatitude or "Blessed are they who hunger or thirst for justice" could be used since both are corollaries of the virtue of justice.

"Blessed are the meek": emphasizes the gentleness of spirit that is reflected in the gift of piety when we are meek and conform our wills to that of our Father in heaven.

What does it mean to be meek? A classic definition is to be free from self-will, piously humble and submissive, patient and unresentful. But, the definition of the beatitude, "Blessed are the meek," supernaturalizes the classic definition. If we are meek in the eyes of God, then we see our life, all we are and all we do very simply from God's point of view. We are part of God's plan. It does not matter however large or small a part. He knows and He values that part infinitely, with infinite love. Our goal is to help that plan come into reality.

Being meek means recognizing that the "show," the power, the status that the world values so highly, doesn't really matter. The meek seek to reflect God's will, seeking only to please Him and turn to Him as a child to its father, full of trust that everything, even the fears, the disaster, the mucking up of events will turn out all right. The meek know their own helplessness; they know that the world we think we are creating will pass away. They act in justice to render to each according to what is due. They do what they ought and don't do what they ought not to do. More than all this, the meek, by the gift of piety and the perfection of the virtue of justice in the virtues of religion and piety are truly the children of the Father. As children, they are heirs; heirs as brothers and sisters of God's Son, Jesus Christ, and so, they, too will inherit the earth, the new kingdom of God as He creates it. That new kingdom has been promised to those who follow the Son, in his life, death, and resurrection, and the meek are those who seek the vision of that promise and guide their lives in the surety of their inheritance.

**HOMEWORK  
YEAR TWO  
LESSON FIVE**

<b>DAYS</b>	<b>SCRIPTURE</b>	<b>CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH</b>	<b>DOMINICANA</b>
<b>FIRST WEEK</b>		Book of Job	Dialogue of St. Catherine of Sienna The Mystical Body of the Church pg.244-266
<b>MONDAY</b>	1-2	2302-2306	
<b>TUESDAY</b>	3-4	2307-2317	
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	5-6	2318-2330	
<b>THURSDAY</b>	7-8	2336-2345	
<b>FRIDAY</b>	9-10	2346-2350	
<b>SECOND WEEK</b>			The Mystical Body of the Church pg.266-276
<b>MONDAY</b>	11-12	2351-2356	
<b>TUESDAY</b>	13-14	2357-2363	
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	15-16	2364-2372	
<b>THURSDAY</b>	17-18	2373-2379	
<b>FRIDAY</b>	20-21	2380-2386	
<b>THIRD WEEK</b>			Divine Providence pg.277-296
<b>MONDAY</b>	22-23	2387-2391	
<b>TUESDAY</b>	24-26	2392-2400	
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	27-28	2401-2406	
<b>THURSDAY</b>	29-30	2407-2414	
<b>FRIDAY</b>	31	2415-2418	
<b>FOURTH WEEK</b>			Divine Providence pg.296-326
<b>MONDAY</b>	32-33	2419-2425	
<b>TUESDAY</b>	34-36:21	2426-2429	
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	36:22-27	2430-2436	
<b>THURSDAY</b>	28-40:5	2437-2442	
<b>FRIDAY</b>	40:6-42	2443-2449	

On a separate piece of paper briefly outline your thoughts or questions on the articles you have read for your homework, to be turned in next time we meet