**Bishop’s Isle of Wight Lent Course 2017**

**Living the Marks of Mission**

The Five Marks of Mission

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom

2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers

3. To respond to human need by loving service

**4. To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation**

5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth

**A reminder, as every week**

* What in the life of our Church shows this Mark matters to us?
* How is this Mark reflected in our worship?
* What more could we do as a Church to live this Mark?
* Who else in our community does this? How can we help them?

**Where are we now?**

Introduce yourself to the group.

As you read the news, see it on television or read it on your phone – what is it that makes you most disturbed or angry?

**Visibility**

Share an example where the church or others have successfully worked against injustice. Why did it work?

What do we mean by ‘justice’?

**Reflection**

*“With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? 7Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” 8He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?* (Micah 6: 6-8)

*I hate, I despise your festivals,
   and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
22 Even though you offer me your burnt-offerings and grain-offerings,
   I will not accept them;
and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals
   I will not look upon.
23 Take away from me the noise of your songs;
   I will not listen to the melody of your harps.
24 But let justice roll down like waters,
   and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.*

(Amos 5: 21-24)

What are people offering to God and what does God value instead?

[For later reflection:

*58Shout out, do not hold back!
   Lift up your voice like a trumpet!
Announce to my people their rebellion,
   to the house of Jacob their sins.
2 Yet day after day they seek me
   and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that practised righteousness
   and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;
they ask of me righteous judgements,
   they delight to draw near to God.
3 ‘Why do we fast, but you do not see?
   Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?’
Look, you serve your own interest on your fast-day,
   and oppress all your workers.
4 Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight
   and to strike with a wicked fist.
Such fasting as you do today
   will not make your voice heard on high.
5 Is such the fast that I choose,
   a day to humble oneself?
Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,
   and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?
Will you call this a fast,
   a day acceptable to the Lord?*

 *6 Is not this the fast that I choose:
   to loose the bonds of injustice,
   to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
   and to break every yoke?
7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
   and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
   and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
8 Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
   and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator**\** *shall go before you,
   the glory of the Lord shall be your rearguard.
9 Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
   you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.*

 *If you remove the yoke from among you,
   the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
10 if you offer your food to the hungry
   and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
   and your gloom be like the noonday.]* (Isaiah 58:1-10)

Top of Form

**Today**

What injustices does God condemn in our world today?

How should these injustices shape our mission as a Church?

**Reflection**

*20He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered, “The Messiah of God.” 21He sternly ordered and commanded them not to tell anyone, 22saying, “The Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.” 23Then he said to them all, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. 24For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it. 25What does it profit them if they gain the whole world, but lose or forfeit themselves? 26Those who are ashamed of me and of my words, of them the Son of Man will be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.* (Luke 9:20-26)

This passage paints a picture of God’s upside-down values.

What do the contrasts teach us about what God values?

**Jesus’ teaching**

* appearance and substance (Matthew 23: 23-36)
* kingdom characteristics (Mark 10: 13-27)
* bias to the poor (Matthew 19: 17-27)

**Tough call?**

When is it right to ‘turn the other cheek’

**Concerning Retaliation**

‘*You have heard that it was said, “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” 39But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; 40and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; 41and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. 42Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.* (Matthew 5:38-42)

*For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.*

*22‘He committed no sin,
    and no deceit was found in his mouth.’*

*23When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly.*  (1 Peter 2:21-23)

**So,**

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