LITURGICAL RESOURCES FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY 2013

"JUSTICE MATTERS"

*Prepared by the Revd Dr Elizabeth J. Smith for the NCCA*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Come, Holy Spirit, friend of the prophets,  
disturber of the complacent,  
 **come to us with overflowing compassion.**

Come, Holy Spirit, conscience of the powerful,  
voice of the outsiders,   
 **come to us with courage to work for change.**

Come, Holy Spirit, judge of our priorities,  
singer of freedom's songs,   
 **come to us with the heartbeat of hope.**

Come, Holy Spirit, breath of peace,  
weaver of faithful community,  
 **come and help us to pray.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION / WORDS OF ASSURANCE

God of justice,  
**we confess to you   
that we have not loved you with our whole heart,   
and we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.**

We have hoarded our good things.  
We have closed our eyes to the poor at our gate.

Lord, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

We have loved only those who love us.  
We have turned away from the weak and the needy.

Lord, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

We have been hungry for power and possessions.  
We have lost our appetite for justice.

Lord, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy**

We have sung of peace when there is no peace.  
We have not cried out for those are silenced in their suffering.

Lord, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

We are sorry for all our sins,  
**and we ask you to forgive us  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*The leader says*

With forgiveness comes freedom  
to make different choices:  
to do justice,  
to love kindness,  
to walk humbly with God.  
Receive the gift of forgiveness and life,  
and be merciful to others,   
just as God has been merciful to us,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*a selection may be made from the following paragraphs, or all paragraphs may be used in any appropriate sequence during an extended time of intercession.*

Let us pray for the world and for the Church.

God of justice, we pray for the First Peoples of this land,  
and for those who have come later.  
Show us how to work as companions, not competitors,  
collaborating to care for the land  
and to cherish culture, language and community.  
Prepare the way for Constitutional change  
to recognise and honour Australia's first peoples,  
and keep us walking together towards reconciliation.

God of justice, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the refugees fleeing from persecution and violence  
in troubled lands across the world,  
and for the asylum seekers imprisoned in Australia.  
Quench the fires of racism, greed and religious hatred  
that threaten the life and wellbeing of so many.  
Give back homes and hope to those who have lost everything,  
and soften the hearts of neighbours and strangers   
who meet them on their desperate journeys.

God of justice, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the people whose physical or intellectual abilities  
challenge our ideas of normal.   
Teach our hearts to see possibility rather than disability,  
to recognise people's gifts as well as their needs,  
to receive difference not as a threat, but as a blessing.  
Give us the will and the resources   
to change our streets and schools, our workplaces and churches  
until people with disabilities are fully at home among us.

God of justice, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the peacemakers and the prophets of justice   
within and beyond our churches.  
Speak through them to denounce, rebuke and reproach us,  
to challenge, provoke and inspire us.   
Raise up more and more people with Jesus' heart for justice,  
who will take the risks of advocacy  
and do the hard work of putting dreams into practice.

God of justice, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for courage to be different in the name of Jesus Christ.  
Speak to us above the clamour of advertisers   
who beguile us to consume beyond our means and the planet's capacity.  
Teach us to reject the fear-mongers   
who urge us to cling fiercely to our entitlements,  
depriving others of what they need to thrive.  
Humble us so that we can receive from those who have little to give  
the image of Christ himself taking flesh among us.

God of justice, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who are sick or in grief,  
especially the people whose poverty contributes to their sickness,  
and whose grief is for justice denied them.  
Banish every shadow of terror and torture,  
comfort the children who live behind barbed wire,  
heal the women raped by strangers or battered by family members,  
come with resurrection hope to all who long for light in their darkness.

God of justice, **hear our prayer.**

We thank you for your faithful people in every generation  
who have spoken and acted for justice,  
who have built and tended community,  
who have known and done the things that make for peace.   
Invite us, we pray, to come and feast with all the saints  
at the heavenly banquet   
where no one will be denied a place at your table.

God of justice, **hear our prayer.**

*This prayer may be used to conclude the intercessions*

Hear us and help us, loving God,  
**and do not let us rest  
until your just and gentle rule is established  
in this and all the nations of the earth,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

BLESSING

Just and merciful one, creator of all,   
 bless us with actions worthy of your beloved children. **Amen.**

Gentle and generous one, friend of all,  
 bless us with relationships fit for your chosen disciples. **Amen.**

Wise and inspiring one, teacher of all,  
 bless us with words true to your life-giving message. **Amen.**

Trinity of glory and grace, power made perfect in weakness,  
 bless us and keep us,  
 now and for ever. **Amen.**

SUGGESTED HYMNS AND SONGS  
(numbers from *Together in Song)*

168 For the fruits of all creation

263 The bright wind is blowing, the bright wind of heaven

629 When I needed a neighbour, were you there?

657 God of freedom, God of justice *(note: may be sung to the tune PICARDY)*

674 Inspired by love and anger

677 Christ’s is the world in which we move

679 God of Jeremiah, grieving with an aching heart

681 Lord, let me see, see more and more

689 Lord, hear my praying, listen to me

692 Sometimes a healing word is comfort *(note especially verses 3 and 4)*

697 All the sleepy should have a place to sleep

751 What does the Lord require of you? *(round)*