

ADVENT REFLECTION 2010

Week 2: John the Baptist preaches repentance

In due course John the Baptist appeared: he preached in the wilderness of Judaea and this was his message: 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is close at hand.'

Matthew 3:1

He shall save the poor when they cry and the needy who are helpless. He will have pity on the weak and save the lives of the poor.

Psalm 71: 12-13



The gap between rich and poor is widening steadily. Some people have care-free lives of wealth and plenty whilst others are forced to borrow at exorbitant rates just to put food on the table.

Christmas time is especially tough for the poorest in our society. Many are forced to borrow from loan sharks to buy toys for their children.

Natural disasters and the ravages of war leave many destitute or homeless.

Lord, this cannot be the Kingdom as you planned it.

What can I do to bring about a fairer distribution of the world's riches?

Lord, I see injustice all around yet feel powerless to help: the problems seem too big to overcome.

For the times I have failed to act to help build a fairer society and thought only of myself, I ask your forgiveness.

For the times that my greed may have caused the gap between rich and poor to widen, I ask your forgiveness.

For the times I have mistaken superiority and self-righteousness for charity, I ask your forgiveness.

*Open my eyes, Lord,
to see how my actions may adversely affect those around me.*

*Open my ears, Lord,
to hear the cries of the poor and needy.*

*Open my heart, Lord,
that I may act in love and solidarity with my brothers and sisters throughout the world.*

Action Ideas

- Look on the CAFOD website (www.cafod.org.uk) and sign up for action campaigns and weekly prayer reflections
- Become a member of Church Action on Poverty (www.church-poverty.org.uk), find out more about poverty in the UK and take part in their latest campaigns
- Volunteer at a Drop-in Centre for homeless people or help at a Soup Kitchen

Activity

- Everyone is invited to take 2 paper leaves: one a green holly leaf on which to write a word or phrase that expresses personal regret or concern for an issue in the wider world, the second a red poinsettia leaf for their hopes and dreams
- Florist's wire is attached to the leaves and they are displayed in a vase for everyone to see