

Section 57: Spirituality of the Heart: A Spirituality of Mercy and Justice.

In "Hoog Tijd voor een Andere God" (It's about Time for Another God), Roger Burggraeve writes that today we rightly emphasize God's mercy and forgiveness, but in doing so we risk wronging the victims of injustice. They are denied justice. Biblical Spirituality of the Heart, however, invites us to be inspired by God's heart, the source of both God's mercy and justice.

God's mercy is unconditional. Pope Francis refers to the book of Genesis, where it is written, that even if *"the wickedness of people upon the earth increased still"* (Gen. 6: 5) the Lord in his mercy gave people the opportunity to begin again (see Gen. 9:11; LS 71).

However, referring to the biblical prophets and psalms, the Pope also emphasizes that *"if justice no longer dwells on earth, then the Bible tells us that all life is in danger"* (LS 70). The Pope lays blame for the fact that there is still so much injustice in the world on the arbitrariness of those in power, who control the natural wealth of the earth, among other things (LS 82).

Jesus has a clear message concerning those in power: *"You know that rulers oppress their peoples and leaders abuse their power. This is not how it should be among you. Whoever wants to be the most important among you must serve the other"* (Mat 20: 25-26; LS 82).

When we no longer strive to be of service to our neighbours, for whom we are responsible, the relationship with ourselves and others, with God and the earth will be disrupted, the Pope states (LS 70). And he adds: *"Sincere concern for our own lives and for our relationship with nature cannot be separated from solidarity, justice and fidelity toward others"* (LS 70).

REFLECTION

*"We must always strive
for balance and harmony
between justice and mercy.*

*With justice alone
we end up in a rock-hard world.
With mercy alone
the victim is left out in the cold.*

*Yahweh is not an indifferent God.
He is the just one,
who takes action against those who do evil;
but he is also the merciful one,
who shows compassion to those who acknowledge their error
and repent.*

*In the biblical tradition
the unconditional nature of
Yahweh's mercy
and his abundance of love
exceeds the sometimes too measured
demand for justice...."*

*"Rebelling against injustice
has the same source as compassion.
. You are touched ,
right down to your guts."*

Roger Burggraeve,
"Hoog tijd voor een andere God"
Uitgeverij Davidsfonds 2015, p. .125 en 138