

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
August 15, 2021
“Inequality and Inhumanity”

Rev 11:19...12:10
1 Cor 15:20-27
Lk 1:39-56

My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord –

There are such terrible inequalities in the world! There are people who have so much more wealth than even the most well-off of us – And there are those who have so little that they can barely keep alive. In fact, in 2020 it was estimated that 36% of the world’s people lived in extreme poverty. Moreover, half of the population in developing countries live on less than \$1.25 per day!

I suspect that the root cause of the great inequity in the world is our inhumanity toward one another. And beneath all inhumanity is evil – especially the evil of selfishness. Because from the dawn of the human race, some people have exploited others for their own benefit. The lust for power, control, wealth, and eros leads so many to serve only their own interests. They serve themselves no matter how much they cause others to suffer.

Thus, today, powerful leaders in the world want to control everything they can – While, at the same time, other leaders use their power to resist them. The result is the proliferation of evil and suffering throughout the world – And there never seems to be any solution or real end of this cause for human suffering!

The scriptures for the Feast of the Assumption can shed some wonderful light on the enormous problems of evil and inhumanity in the world.

In the Book of Revelation, the “Woman Clothed with the Sun” can be Mary, the Chosen People, or the Church that Jesus established. The “Dragon”, satan, will do everything in his power to defeat the plan of God and the will of God. In our mere humanness, we are no match for satan. But the Son born of Mary is the Son of God! And he has the personal power, ultimately, to vanquish satan. However, this is a conquest and a saga that is on-going. We are caught up in the midst of it. It started at our creation – and will continue until the End Time – the final victory of Christ and the judgment of God!

In the meantime, what can we do? How are we to live? How do we make sense of and deal with the politics of our own nation and state? How do we regard the poor in our midst – especially the homeless – many of whom are veterans who defended against the powerful in the past? What is our moral responsibility for all those who are part of suffering humanity? Have we, in our blessed abundance, ever considered what it would be like if we lived in the slums of Mumbai or Delhi in India – or in Capetown’s Nyanga in South Africa? There, abject poverty, hunger, disease, and violence are inescapable!

The Gospel of Luke provides us with the prayer of Mary as she recognized her blessedness as part of God’s marvelous plan – and how God will make right all that is wrong in the world. Mary was blessed despite her powerlessness and seeming nothingness – For she lived in an insignificant village – part of a tiny occupied nation under the control of the most powerful empire in the world! Nevertheless, Mary was chosen to bring the God-Man into the world. And that God-Man would save the world from evil and sin by being seemingly defeated and helpless on a cross!

Mary begins by praising God for what he has done for her, personally. Then she reflects upon what God can, does, and will do regarding the inequality and inhumanity in the world. – God has mercy on those who fear Him – who respect Him – who honor Him – who live in awe of Him – in every generation. – God will see to it that the proud, ultimately, will be embarrassed, speechless, and reduced to nothing! – That the mighty and the powerful will be at a total loss when they die, if not before. – That the rich will be divested and empty, at least in their hearts, souls, and spirits. – That the little ones will be lifted up – – That the hungry will have full hearts and souls. – And that God never forgets His promises – or withholds His mercy and love for those who truly love Him!

Finally, St. Paul reminds us that even though Adam sinned and brought death into the world – Jesus died and brought a whole new life instead. Moreover, as Jesus was raised up and completely raised his Mother, Mary – we also will be raised one day, if we abide in Jesus now.

Brothers and Sisters, we live in troubled times nationally and internationally. We live in whatever place we, presently, find ourselves. We can reach out only with the resources that God has given us. Nevertheless, we can make things and life less unequal by truly sharing whatever we do have. Moreover, we can heal wounded humanity all around us with our own care, concern, forgiveness, and love!

So, let us pray for resolve. Let us pray that we can respond wholeheartedly to whatever God asks of us during the time that we yet have to live!

Amen.

August 15, 2021

Msgr. Russell G. Terra