

Homily for the Feast of St. Augustine Wednesday, August 28, 2019

James 3:18 - The harvest of justice is sown in peace for those who cultivate peace.

James, the leader of the Jerusalem community and known as the brother of the Lord provides in chapter 3, the best reflection on the damage of the tongue when it is not restrained by virtue. At the end, he exhorts the community to be led by wisdom and virtue and concludes the chapter praising wisdom who is innocent, peaceable, lenient, and docile, impartial and sincere. It is a call to holiness of life so that Christians may truly witness as light to the world and salt of the earth.

St. James concludes the chapter with the poetic saying the harvest of justice is sown in peace for those who cultivate peace.

For Augustin, justice without order and peace does not make sense. Justice exists always for promoting peace and order. He defines peace as the tranquility of order. He was aware how difficult is to make priorities. He discovered that justice comes from the Providential care of God. Expressed in one of the most

famous sayings of his: “Thou moves to delight in praising you for you have formed us to Yourself and our hearts are restless until they find rest in you.” (Confession 1, 1) For him, we needed to pray for heavenly peace. But in the present is never fully attainable. Our only difference as Christians in relation to others is we hold the heavenly peace through faith and hope which animates us to work for greater justice in this world. The Holy Spirit by means of faith and hope enables us to reach eternal peace. Thus his sincere prayer, breathe in me O Holy Spirit to make my work holy. Strengthen me O Holy Spirit to defend what is holy. (Cf taken from a Conference on Cardinal Virtues in 2007 at Viterbo University. La Cross, Wisconsin, April 13, 2007)

One of the most important inclusions in the last renovation of the Cathedral of St. Augustine, was to bring to this most beautiful Cathedral of the country, the presence of Our Lady of La Leche in a most prominent place of the assembly. This reminds me of one of the most Marian passages of St. Augustine when he affirms that in order to be conformed to the image of the Son of God all the predestinate, while in the world, are hidden in the womb of the Blessed Virgin where they are protected, nourished, cared for, and developed by this good Mother, until the day she brings them forth to a life of glory after death, which the Church calls the birthday of the just.