

Justice, Holiness, & Cries from Prisoners Baking in Texas

Good morning.

Today we continue our meditation on holiness, and specifically on that dimension of holiness called justice. And even more specifically, around the issue of climate change in Texas, and how this week there have been days of triple number heat indexes--115 degrees, I think is the average--and 80% of the prisons in Texas have no air conditioning.

Yet the lower house in Texas Legislature passed a law wanting to put \$500 million into bringing air conditioning to the prisoners in this time of climate change, and it was ignored by the Senate in Texas. Therefore, it went nowhere.

And, this, when the state has \$32.7 billion in surplus.

So you could solve this problem with 1/60 of the billions of dollars that Texas actually has on hand. But politicians, including the governor, currently see no responsibility. They're so busy denying that there's climate change and buttressing the oil and gas forces in Texan politics, that they are instead establishing cruelty, I guess, against prisoners. When so many of these politicians are the loudest one in the street claiming to be Christian. Oh, they're Christians. Oh, they're Christians. Oh, they're Christians.

Really? What would Jesus do? Would Jesus vote to keep \$32.7 billion in the bank instead of spending 1/60 of that? 1/60 of that to ensure that human beings who happen to be in prison, most of them for a temporary sentence?

Cruelty. I'm not sure that the Jesus I know, or the Christ I know, was in favor of cruelty. So what kind of church are these people going to? What kind of Christianity are they pretending to practice? What kind of humanity are they pretending to put out there? What kind of politics? What is the purpose of institutionalized cruelty?

Ah, institutionalized violence! That's Susan Sontag's definition of fascism. I guess Fascism is alive and well and incarnated in the Texas legislature at this time.

Of course, there are dissenting voices there. People who actually know what Jesus was about, in the lineage of the Jewish process from which he derives and what the Jewish prophets taught.

Here's Isaiah: "Send justice like dew, you heavens, that the clouds rain it down, that the Earth open up so salvation will spring up. Let deliverance, too, bud forth, which I, Yahweh, shall create."

That's Isaiah 45, verse 8.

So instead of raining cruelty and control and institutional violence, which is fascism, maybe these so-called Christian legislators in Texas ought to read their beloved scriptures. Read Isaiah 45:8.

It's interesting that the images are about dew and rain and the earth opening up. Texas could use some dew and some rain these days, especially in the form of the wetness of justice and compassion and ceasing cruelty.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.