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Today is Social Justice Sunday. Social justice is based on the concepts of human rights and equality. Many people are trying to make our society to be a better place where every human being can be treated justly and equally. However, there are so many people in the world who are still exploited, discriminated, and marginalised due to their gender, religion, race, culture, or socio-economic status.

Nowadays the problem of human trafficking has been a huge part of the struggle for social justice in the world. Human trafficking is the trade of humans for forced labours, commercial sexual prostitution, or domestic servitude. It is a modern-day form of human slavery and a grave violation of human rights.

According to statistics, worldwide, there are between 21 million and 30 million men, women, and children enslaved today. At least 80% of those are female, and half are children. Human trafficking is the third most profitable criminal activity after drugs and arms trafficking, so it has been increasing rapidly. Traffickers target on those who dream of a better future like the poor, the marginalised, refugees, asylum seekers and so on.

James Kofi Annan was a victim of human trafficking. He was the youngest child of a poor family in Ghana and was kidnapped and sold into child slavery at the age of six. James was a child fisherman working more than 15 hours every day with being fed once a day and with no payment. He finally escaped and returned home at the age of thirteen. Now he is actively working on defending children against trafficking and stopping it through the Challenging Heights organisation he founded.

Pope Francis says, “Human trafficking is a crime against humanity. We must unite our efforts to free victims and stop this crime that’s become ever more aggressive, that threatens not just individuals but the foundational values of society.” I totally agree with what he said. Human trafficking is a crime against humanity, and against the character of God.

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Today’s first Bible reading, Exodus 16:2-15, is about the miracle of manna and quail. After crossing the Red Sea, in the desert the whole Israel people grumbled against Moses and Aaron because they were starving. They said, “If only we had died by the Lord’s hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you’ve brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death.”

It’s unbelievable to see this scene of their complaining because they just experienced God’s wonders by escaping from Egypt and crossing the Red Sea, and realised that God fought against the Egyptian army for them. They were amazed and praised God, but they too easily forgot it and grumbled because of hunger.

Then, God answered their complaining by offering quail in the evening and bread called manna in the morning. What’s remarkable is God’s instruction of how to collect them. Verse 16 says, “Each household should gather as much as it needs. Pick up two quarts for each person in your tent.”

God also ordered them not to keep any of it until next morning, which means that they shouldn’t gather more than their family needed. When the people of Israel did as they were told, everyone could eat enough. But when some of them gathered too much and kept some of it until next morning, it was full of maggots and had a terrible smell.

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The event of manna and quail isn’t just a story of miracle; it also contains a principle of God’s blessing. God has always provided human beings sufficiently, the way he offered the Israelites meat and bread in the desert, that every one of us can enjoy the divine blessing. However, we human beings are always greedy; this has created the problem of unfair distribution.

Some have too much and waste what they have, while others don’t have the necessities for survival. According to the book, *If the World Were a Village of 100 People*, 6 people would own 59% of the resource in the village, 74 people share 39%, and 20 people share only 2%; 1 person would be dying of starvation, 11 would be undernourished, and 22 would be overweight; 78 people would have a place to shelter them from the wind and the rain, but 22 wouldn’t.

Yes, this is inequality and injustice. People say, “The more, the merrier,” but God says, “The fairer, the merrier.” The philosophy, ‘The more, the merrier,’ has driven us to stick to accumulating as much as possible more than we need for being happier, but many factors of well-being show us that wealth cannot guarantee our happiness. Rather, our greed could make many maggots and a terrible smell in our lives.

What should we do then? We need to turn back to God’s philosophy, ‘The fairer, the merrier.’ As God ordered the Israelites, when we gather as much as we need and leave the rest for others, we can shape a better community and a happier life with no maggots and no terrible smell. I believe this is a transforming point for promoting justice and equality in our life context.

Martin Luther King says, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” This saying also means that justice anywhere is a threat to injustice everywhere. Yes, our just acts can stop injustice spreading, and help justice spread.

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Last Sunday we had another 4R worship based on the story of crossing the Red Sea. Many people in both congregations told me that they enjoyed sharing, listening, and learning together; some said that they were touched when they listened to the four voices sharing powerful reminders from the narrative, and others liked the short movie clip of ‘Bruce Almighty,’ the scene of parting tomato soup like the Red Sea.

Celine and Helen talked about the film after the service and wanted to watch the full movie, so my family watched the film together on Sunday night. Personally, I very much enjoyed watching the film again, and want to share with you a part that impressed me.

The film starts with the complaining of Bruce, a News reporter. He had failed whatever he tried, so became sarcastic more and more to God’s being. One day God appeared to him and asked him to manage the world, giving him divine power. At first, Bruce wasn’t sure what was going on but he started to use the power to make his life and career better. He was delighted, but then soon realised that he couldn’t change the world, he couldn’t even change a person’s

heart. There aren't many things to do even with the divine power. He came to God for help.

Then, God said to him, “Bruce, parting your soup isn't a miracle; it's a magic trick. A single mom who's working two jobs and still finds time to take her kid to soccer practice, that's a miracle. A teenager who says no to drugs and yes to an education, that's a miracle. People want me to do everything for them. But what they don't realise is that they have the power. You want to see a miracle, son? Be the miracle.”

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Sisters and brothers,

Yes, we have the power to transform the world; we have the power to spread the Good News to every corner of the society. Let us be the miracle. Let us be the miracle where justice is needed; let us be the miracle where equality should be proclaimed. Then, we could be a channel of God's miracle transforming our community. Amen.