

Scales of justice

Based on Amos 8:4-7

Our choice could
tip the balance
in favour of the poor
and lighten the load
of those weighed down

We could level inequality
And distribute warehouse mountains
Share out the wealth
that was never ours to hoard
Turn the tables
On those who play
the markets
We could stockpile generosity
And speculate in hope
Sell up our shares in selfishness
And settle for the dividends
of solidarity

For added value
build portfolios of justice
Or an ISA in the growth
of the kingdom of God
Buy shares in trust and act in faith
Risk our securities to find a richer life
May the percentage of our interest
In people rise,
And may we be the prophets
of hope

Sophie Stanes/CAFOD

Standing in solidarity

God of solidarity,
You entrusted the earth and its resources
to the stewardship of humankind.

Yet the goods of creation,
destined for the whole human race,
are enjoyed by a privileged few.

For the producers of our consumer goods
there are no privileges;
working long hours for little pay.

For us, who benefit from unfair trade,
we take for granted the toils of men and women
who maintain our standard of living.

Inspired by Jesus who brought good news to the poor,
show us how we may stand in solidarity with people
who suffer through unjust trading rules.

May they soon experience the joy of the vineyard workers
who were called to be the first among the last,
and were included as equal inheritors of your kingdom.

Tony Singleton/CAFOD

Everlasting riches

Living God, call to us,
For our altars are draped with cloth of gold
And silver grapes adorn our worship.

Creator God, awaken us,
For our hearts are cloaked with cloth of gold
And silver coins adorn our dreams.

Loving God, forgive us
For we trade our lives for cloth of gold
And silver coins that buy our silence.

Lord, open our hearts wide to your wisdom
And our lives to your splendour
As we walk towards the everlasting riches
Of your kingdom.

Linda Jones/CAFOD

For the benefit of all

As we enjoy our abundance of wealth
We pray for the hungry nations of the world.
May they be freed from the yoke of oppression.

Response: Hear your people's plea.

As we celebrate the joys of creation
We pray for the people who are denied their share.
May the earth and everything in it
Be for the benefit of all human beings.

Response: Hear your people's plea.

As we benefit from international trade,
We pray for the producers and workers
Who are deprived of their just reward.
May all created goods flow freely for all.

Response: Hear your people's plea.

Tony Singleton/CAFOD based on Populorum Progressio

The cost of free trade

God of Compassion,
You look down on the global marketplace
and see the scales tipped by subsidies and tariffs.
The unsold milk in Jamaica draining away wasted.
The maize in Mexico rotting on the stalk.
And while the rich feast on the proceeds of their sales,
the poor count the cost of free trade.

God of justice,
Call us to account.
Inspire us, so that we may cast off our complacency and apathy
and joining hands with people at home and abroad,
we may make a stand for justice and righteousness,
for all who dwell on the earth.

Sue Cooper/CAFOD

Cry justice!

The harvesters' cries echo hollow
In gold temples of power empty feast
Where rich banqueters dine on the profits
Cry justice!

Crumbs fall from the tables of wealth
Drops of wine from vast jars of excess
Pouring scorn
While rich banqueters feed on the profits
Cry justice!

Generous Lord, as the harvesters' cries
Reach, resound through the arches of heaven
Show us how to trade places to see
with the eyes of the prophets
your truth, and
Cry justice!

Linda Jones/CAFOD