“Justice will bring about peace; right will produce calm and security."
(Is 32;17)

"The spirit from on high is poured out on us. Then will the desert become an orchard and the orchard be regarded as a forest." Thus begins the section from which this month’s Word of Life is taken. In the second half of the 8th century B.C., the prophet Isaiah announces a future of hope for humanity, almost a new creation, a new garden or "orchard" inhabited by right and justice, which can produce peace and security.

This new era of peace (shalom) will be the work of the divine Spirit, a life force capable of renewing creation, and it will come about by respecting the pact between God and his people and among the people themselves, since communion with God and communion among people are inseparable.

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The words of Isaiah recall the need for serious and responsible commitment in following the shared norms of civil society, the norms that limit selfish individualism and blind judgment and favor harmonious coexistence and diligent works aimed at the common good.

Will it be possible to live according to justice and practice what is right? Yes, on the condition that we recognize all other people as brothers and sisters and see humanity as one family, in the spirit of universal brotherhood.

And how can we see it this way without the presence of a Father of all? He has already inscribed universal brotherhood, so to speak, in the DNA of each person. What a father wants most, in fact, is for his children to treat each other as brothers and sisters, that they choose what is best for each other, that they love each other.

This is why the model Son of the Father, brother of each of us, came on earth and left us the norm for social living: mutual love. And one expression of love is to respect the rules of living together and carry out one’s duties.

Love is the ultimate norm for every action. Love is what animates true justice and brings peace. Nations need laws that are increasingly suited to the needs of social and international life, but above all, they need men and women who order their own personal lives based on the rule of love. This order is justice, and only in this order do laws have value.

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How will we live the Word of Life this month? By devoting ourselves even more to our professional obligations with regard for ethics, honesty, legality.

We live it also by recognizing others as people who belong to the same family we belong to and who expect our attention, respect and close solidarity.

If you put mutual and constant love before everything else in your relationships with others, making it the foundation of your life and the fullest expression of your love for God, then your justice will truly be pleasing to God.

"Justice will bring about peace; right will produce calm and security."

A policeman in southern Italy decided to move with his family into one of the districts recently set aside for the most needy people in his city, wishing to share the lot of them. The roads were not yet paved; there were no street lights, running water or sewers, not to mention social services or public transportation.

He explained what they did. "We tried to create a relationship with each family and individual in the district. We tried to get to know one another and start a dialogue, in an effort to mend the divide between the citizens and the public administration. Through a committee expressly created for this purpose, the inhabitants of the district—about 3,000 of them—gradually became active advocates with the public institutions.

"We were able to obtain public funds from the regional administration for reorganizing that district. It has now become a pilot area that has given birth to formation programs for representatives of all the committees in other parts of the city."

Chiara Lubich