



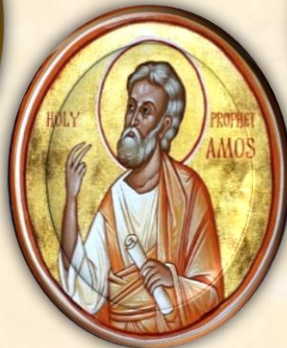
Rooted in the Word,
Committed to His Mission

THE PROPHETIC DENUNCIATION OF CORRUPTION

Psalms 53:2b

שחַת

(Shaw-khath')
ACT CORRUPTLY



Prayer Against Corruption

*Father in heaven,
You always provide for all your creatures,
so that they may live
as you have always willed.
You have blessed our country Kenya,
with rich human and natural resources
to be used in honour, glory and for the well-being
of every Kenyan.*

*We are deeply sorrowful
for the abuse of these your gifts and blessings
through acts of corruption.*

*As a result of this crime many of our people are hungry,
sick, homeless and displaced, ignorant and defenceless.*

*Father, You alone can heal us of this sickness
which leads to death.*

*We humbly beg you,
touch our lives and those of our leaders
so that we may realise the evil of corruption and work hard
to eliminate it.*

*For any citizen who has acquired anything
through corrupt means,*

*Lord, give him or her the spirit of courage
to make a restitution and come back to you.*

*Raise up for us God-fearing citizens and leaders
who care for us, who will lead us
in the path of peace, justice, prosperity,
progress and above all, Love.*

We make our prayer through Christ our Lord.

Lord graciously hear us.

Prepared by the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops.

***“THEY ACT CORRUPTLY AND PRACTICE INJUSTICE;
THERE IS NONE THAT DOES GOOD”***

PSALM 53: 2b

THEMES (LECTIO DIVINA)

JEREMIAH 7:1-15 – *WORSHIP WITHOUT TRUTH AND JUSTICE, IS CORRUPTION*

PSALM 12:1-[8]9 – *CONDEMNATION OF CORRUPTED TONGUES & LIPS*

MICAH 2:1-9; 3:1-4, 9-12 – *SOCIAL INJUSTICES & GOD’S JUDGEMENT AGAINST CORRUPTED LEADERS AND GOVERNORS.*

1 KINGNS 21: 1-24; 2 KINGS 9:30-37 – *CORRUPTION LEADS TO DEATH*

AMOS 5:7-14b; 6:4; 8:4-6 – *THE ROTTENNESS & HYPOCRISY OF CORRUPTION*

PROVERBS 16 – *THE COMMITMENT TO THE PRACTICE OF JUSTICE DESIRED BY GOD*

METHODOLOGY

LOVE OF CHRIST	See	Reality, Experience
ROOTED IN THE WORD	Judge	Discernment
COMMITTED TO HIS MISSION	Act Evaluate Celebrate	Commitment/ Renewal Witness Transformation

I – LOVE OF CHRIST

Letting the love of Christ to impel us (2 Cor 5:14), we open our hearts and minds to see our own weakness and sins related to **corruption** in its different forms and realities. We share our joys and wounds, lights and shadows.

In this first step of our methodology entitled, “The Love of Christ”, we will be bringing up some situations in the Country of Kenya collected from online media, and also an analytic reflection about **corruption** in the time of the prophets and kings in Israel, extracted from the Holy Scriptures.

The aim of this step is not to make any judgements, but rather to open one’s mind to be aware and see the situations of God’s people in today’s reality and in the past during biblical times. Doing this, we will be able to reflect on our own realities and experiences as individuals as well as a community (home, church, school work or any social group).



1 – REALITIES OF CORRUPTION IN ISRAEL DURING THE TIME OF THE PROPHETS AND KINGS

Psalm 53:1-3

1 *The fool has said in his heart,
“There is no God.”*

*They **act corruptly**, and practice injustice;
There is none who does good.*

2 *God looks down from heaven upon the children of Adam,
To see if there are any who understand, who seek God.*

3 *Every one of them has turned aside;
They have together **become corrupt**;
There is none who does good,
No, not one.*



Psalm 14:1-3

*1The fool has said in his heart,
"There is no God."
They **are corrupt**,
They have done abominable works,
There is none who does good.*

*2God looks down from heaven upon the children of Adam,
To see if there are any who understand, who seek God.*

*3Every one of them has turned aside;
They have together **become corrupt**;
There is none who does good,
No, not one.*

Among 150 Psalms in the Scriptures, Psalms 14 and 53 are a part of the group of 13 called by the scholars the hymns of prophetic exhortation against the corrupters and the unjust.

Through the Word of God and the Love of Christ we are invited to look at these Psalms with prophetic eyes. In a world full of injustices, **corruption**, sufferings, wars, famine, exploitation, abuse, lies, crimes, violence and any sort of evil, we are called to act prophetically against the causes of **corruption** and its structures of evil. These are hidden in various forms of power in our society, involving different levels such as: moral, social, political, economic, religious, and institutional.

WHAT IS **CORRUPTION** IN THE BIBLE?

In Psalm 53:1b and 14:1b, the word *act corruptly* translates the Hebrew verb (*shachath* שָׁחַת) which has a double meaning *to destroy* in a sense of go to ruin, and to *act corruptly, be corrupted*, which also carries a sense of depriving or bringing to ruin something or somebody. Thus, the verb refers to several act and can have a range of meanings. It can

mean “to ruin” or to deprave the relationship with God through disrespect of his Word, namely the Book of the Covenant and its Commandments also called the Torah/Law (Ex 20:1-19; Ex 34:1-28). It can refer to doing acts of depravation such as: to *slain* and to *slaughter* the people, “ruin the country and the land” (Is 14:20); making *wilderness desolation* and *slaving* the God’s people “ruined the vineyard” (Jer 12:10).

The verb *shachath* - שָׁחַת occurs 147 times in the Old Testament with approximately 80% of its occurrences being related simply to the verb to destroy and destruction itself, but no more than 30 times it is related to the **act of corruption** itself.

In the Prophet Ezekiel the verb *shachath/act corruptly* is used 4 times; only 1 time in the prophet Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Malachi and Hosea.

“Not only did you walk in their ways and act as abominably as they did, but in a very short time you became more (שָׁחַת) corrupt in all your ways than they were.” (Ez 16:47);

“Then you shall know that I am the Lord, when I have dealt with you for My name’s sake, not according to your wicked ways nor according to your (שָׁחַת) corrupt doings, O house of Israel, says the Lord God.” (Ez 20:44);

“Now although her sister Oholibah saw this, she became more (שָׁחַת) corrupt in her lust than she, and in her harlotry more (שָׁחַת) corrupt than her sister’s harlotry.” (Ez 23:11) - It means that Judah during Manasseh’s reign (2Kgs 21:1-16; 2Chr 33:1-9) became more corrupted in harlotry than her sister Israel;

“Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You (שָׁחַת) corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendour;” (Ez 28:17);

“Ah sinful nation a people laden with iniquity a seed of evil-doers children that are (שָׁחַת) corrupters they have forsaken, the LORD they have provoked, the Holy One of Israel unto anger they are gone away backward” (Is 1:4);

"They are all grievous revolters walking with slanders they are brass and iron they are all (תִּשְׁחָת) corrupters" (Jer 6:28);

"I said Surely thou wilt fear me thou wilt receive instruction so their dwelling should not be cut off howsoever, I punished them but they rose early and (תִּשְׁחָת) corrupted all their doings." (Zep 28:17);

"But you are departed out of the way you have caused many to stumble at the law you have (תִּשְׁחָת) corrupted the covenant of Levi said the LORD of hosts." (Mal 2:8).

"They have deeply (תִּשְׁחָת) corrupted themselves as in the days of Gibeah therefore he will remember their iniquity he will visit their sins." (Hos 9:9)

So far, what we have in The Old Testament is the Hebrew verb *shachath* - תִּשְׁחָת which represents the action of **being corrupt** or **acting corruptly**. For a better understanding of **corruption** itself in the Holy Scriptures, is necessary to identify the **acts of corruption - corrupt doings and deeds**.

Based on a semantic analysis of the Scriptures and its words, the verb, **act corruptly** or the noun **corruption** can be identified and described as:

- ACT OF CONSPIRACY
- ACT OF FORGERY
- ACT OF FALSIFICATION
- ACT OF ABUSING AND MISUSING POWER
- ACT OF CAMPAIGN WITH FALSITY
- ACT OF SUBORN (BRIBERY)
- ACT OF GRABBING
- ACT OF DECEIVING
- ACT OF VIOLATION
- ACT OF EXPLOITING
- ACT OF EXTORTION (STEALING)

CORRUPT ACTS, DEEDS & DOINGS

(Zep 28:17; Ez 20:44)

1Kgs 16:15-20; 2Sm 15: 7-12 2Kgs 9:14; 2Kgs 10:1-36 Jer 11:9	The act of conspiracy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (to gain power and high position in the society). - Absalom conspiring against king David - Here the conspiracy of Jehu has led to war and genocide.
1Kgs 21:1-16	The act of forgery and falsification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jezebel forges and falsify a letter of royal court using king's signature and the royal seal to grab a land.
2 Sm 11:2-27 2Sm 13:1-19	The act of abusing and misusing power (leadership) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - King David's misuse his authority to satisfy his own desires, (The King commits adultery and murder). - David's son, Prince Amon, satisfy his own desires (The Prince plans evil together with his friend Jonadab, rapes his brother's sister).
2Sm 15:1-6	The act of campaign with falsity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Absalom campaigns along the road which leads to the king's palace with false promises
Dt 27:25; 1Sm 8:3; Is 1:23; 5:23; Mi 3:5-12, 7:3; Am 2:6,5:12 Am 7:12, 8:6 Ez 16: 33-34; Ez 22:12; Prv 17:23 Prv 21:14	The act of suborn (bribery) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - False prophets exercise their ministry for money, gifts or payment - Princes and kings seek for gifts, recompense and make demands - Judges render judgements for a bribe - Priest teach for pay - Rulers and leaders abhor justice
Mi 2: 1-2, 9 Jb 24:2-10	The act of grabbing (land, house, property) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Driving out women from their houses - Covet and greedy inheritors, houses and fields sized and taken by them
Mi 6:12; 7:2b Ez 13:1-9; Jer 9:1-8 Jer 23:25-32	The act of deceiving (lies and cheating) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Speaks falsehood, deceitful tongues and lips - Prophesizing lies, false divinations, spoken falsehood
Mi 6:11; Am 8:5b Ez 45:10-12	The act of violation (falsifying the scales) Crooked scales, false bags and weights (corruption in the business and dishonesty in the market of grains)



Am 2:7; 4:1; 8:4 Ez 18:12; 34:4 Jer 7:6 Is 10:1-4	The act of exploiting (oppressing) The needy, the poor and the widow The weak, the sick and injured are ruled brutally by the leaders
Am 6:4; Hos 7:1 Jer 7:9-11 Ez 18:18 Jb 23:14-16	The act of stealing (robbery, extortion) Stealing lambs from the flock and cows from the stall Bandits and thieves

WHO ARE THE **CORRUPT** IN THE BIBLE?

Somehow, it has been partially answered before, when it was said that each one who breaks the God's commandment and seeks for evil depraving and ruining the relationship with God through the disrespect of his Commandments (Law), can be called corrupt.

The clear answer lies in the Scriptures itself, as we grasp it profoundly and precisely. For example, in the parallel Psalms 14 and 53, **the corrupt one** is:

- *the one who does not do good (vv.1b.3b);*
- *the one who does not understand or seek God (v.2);*
- *the one who does abominable works and practice injustice (v.1b);*
- *the one who is called the fool, because in his heart has no God (v.1a).*

In fact, **the corrupt one** can be called a fool in a small passage in the Book of Isaiah, as he describes and portrays the real picture of a foolish person.

*"For a fool speaks foolishness
and his heart plans evil.
He lives in a godless way
and speaks falsely about the Lord.
He leaves the hungry empty
and deprives the thirsty of drink.
The deceits of the deceiver are evil,
he plans devious schemes:*



*To ruin the poor with lies,
even when the needy says what is right.” (Is 32: 6-7).*

This picture of a fool in Isaiah is an irony of the unjust ones, who were described by him in the similar way as fools.

*“Ah! Those who enact unjust statutes,
who write oppressive decrees,
Depriving the needy of justice,
robbing my people’s poor of justice,
Making widows their plunder,
and orphans their prey!” (Is 10:1-2)*

Thus, it is easy to see the oppression and deprivation of the needy, either by the one called the fool or another who is acting unjustly, which normally is called the unjust. In other words, they are the **corrupted** people. But it is in the chapter 18 of Ezekiel’s book, that the real description of just and unjust is presented.

As Ezekiel is qualifying and describing who is the just one, he also is defining who is the unjust one. In this text, we have one of the best texts describing who is the **corrupt** one in the scriptures.

*“But if a man is just
And does what is lawful and right;
If he has not eaten on the mountains,
Nor lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel,
Nor defiled his neighbour’s wife,
Nor approached a woman during her impurity;
If he has not oppressed anyone,
But has restored to the debtor his pledge;
Has robbed no one by violence,
But has given his bread to the hungry
And covered the naked with clothing;
If he has not exacted usury
Nor taken any increase,
But has withdrawn his hand from iniquity
And executed true judgment between man and man;
If he has walked in My statutes
And kept My judgments faithfully—
He is just;
He shall surely live!’*

Says the Lord God.” (Ez 18:5-9).

This definition of unjust ones as **corrupters** will be better understood if we enter ever deeper into the Scriptures.

For example, the situation in *Psalms 14 and 53* is easily found also in many prophets in the Scriptures as, Amos, Hosea, Micah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Zephaniah, Malachi and so forth...

In *Amos 3:10*, the Prophet says that Israel (Northern Kingdom), does not know how to practice justice, to do what is right. The goods and wealth that are stored up in the palaces and enjoyed by the aristocrats or governors of the citadel are the fruit of **corruption** and the practice of violence, robbery, extortion, pillage, plunder or sacking. The prophet also goes beyond denouncing a vast reality of **corruption**. He points out to the way the poor has been mistreated by the wealthy (*Am 2:6-8; 3:9-10; 4:1*), and the means allowing businessmen and merchants to conduct their business dishonestly (*Am 8: 4-6*). She discloses how the landlords grabbed the land and drove people into slavery by exacting exorbitant taxes and heavy rents (*Am 2:6-7; 5:11; 8:4,6*), how the courts, judges, lawyers and governors operated on the basis of suborn and bribes instead of justice and integrity (*Am 5:10,12,15*), how the priests and religious leaders of the Israel's nation were **corrupted** and perverted. For *Isaiah (1:10-14; 48:1; 58:1-5)* in the Southern Israel worship, songs, sacrifices and tithes became transgressions and proud demonstration of false piety - (*Am 4:4-5; 5:4-6,21-23*), leading them to be drinkers and eaters in exorbitant banquets (*Am 6: 4-6; Is 5:11-12, 22; 28:7-8*). In summary, wealth, luxury, greed, great palace-fortress, mansion, smart and beautiful houses both summer and winter time, (*3:9a,10b,11,15; 5:11; 6:1,4a,6-8,11*) all were fruits of **corruption** covered by crimes (*Am 2:6; 3:14a; 5:12a*).

The uprightness and righteousness were cast to the ground, justice and righteousness have been perverted, distorted and disfigured, in other words they have turned

bitter like a gall and wormwood ending to a poison to the righteous and honest (*Am 5:7; 6:12*).

Also, in the Northern part of the country, Hosea concludes that the alliance with God is not anymore respected, the relationship with God is broken. There is not any more truth, mercy, fidelity or loyalty to God, there is neither knowledge nor intimacy with God (*Hos 4:1-2*). Here we have a similarity with *Psalms 14:2 and 53:2*.

*"God looks down from heaven upon the children of Adam,
To see if there are any who understand, who seek God." (v.2).*

In the Southern Israel, *Micah* denounces the infidelity and injustice (*7:1-6*), stating that people are adept to malice with aptitude and ability to do evil.

*"Their hands adept at evil;
the prince makes demands (asks for gift, reward,
recompense);
The judge is bought for a price (gives judgement for a
bribe);
The man in power pronounces as he pleases." (v.3).*

Among the 7th "Ah!", or curses of the Prophet *Isaiah* (*5:8-24. 10:1-4*) against the aristocracy of Judah (Southern Israel), the 3rd "Ah!" endorses *Psalms 53 and 14*. Applied to our times, this text condemns the hypocrisy of those who worship God and the leaders of the Church. They go to Church praise God, sing to God as a community, praying to God they bow down, kneeling down before the Holy Eucharist, bring their offerings, pay tithing, do their fasting, but outside the church **act corruptly**, making all that celebration (mass), **to be corrupted** and false before God (*Is 1:10-20; 58:1-12*).

"There is none who does good." (v.1, v.3).

*"Ah! Those call evil good, and good evil,
who changes darkness to light, and light to darkness,
who change bitter to sweet, and sweet to bitter!" (Is 5: 20).*

*"Wash yourselves clean!
Put away your misdeeds from before my eyes;*

*cease doing evil;
learn to do good.
Make Justice your aim: redress the wronged,
hear the orphan's plea, defend the widow.” (Is 1:16-17).*

Amos, Hosea, Micah and Isaiah were all living in the 8th Century BC. But Jeremiah came later, in the 7th Century BC and the **corruption** was still rampant among the leaders and governors of Southern Israel. Reading *Jeremiah (7:1-15 and 9:1-8)* it is easy to identify the putridity of **corruption** and injustice among the religious, political and official leaders of the prophet's time.

The theme of words/tongues is the key word in this prophecy. The tongue is used as weapon of destruction; tongues are used for lying and not for truth, (*Jer 9: 2,4,7*). They have put their trust in deceptive words (*Jer 7: 4,8*), living immersed in dirty deceit and rotten **corruption**. (*Jer 7:6,9. 9:4-5*).

The prophet concludes that the religious leaders (priests) are so **corrupted**, that the House of God, the Holy Temple of the Lord, became a house of criminals and evil-doers.

“...a den of thieves...” (Jer 7:11a)

These two sermons in the chapter 7 and 9 of Isaiah, are from the time of King Jehoiachin (609-598 BC), few years before the destruction of Judah's Kingdom and Jerusalem's Temple by the Babylonians in 586 BC.

Certainly, we can conclude that Psalms 14 and 53, are sharing the same prophetic denunciation addressed by the prophets of 8th and 7th Centuries BC. Despite the fact that scholars are not able to say if the final composing of these prophetic psalms was done before, during or after the Exile in Babylonia, undoubtedly, they express the prayer of the Israelite community and invite us to praise God through our liturgy (Mass) with authenticity/fidelity, **without corruption** or hypocrisy.

Therefore, we look at all these discourses of the prophets, the denunciation of the violation of the law, violation of the rights, practices of injustice and **corruption**, masked by the power itself and mystified by a deceptive discourse.

2 – REALITIES OF CORRUPTION IN KENYA

a) *“Nairobi, Kenya - A bare piece of land in Kenya's Rift Valley region, where two hydropower and irrigation dams should be standing. Millions of dollars paid out for projects that still exist only on paper. Twenty-eight people charged with financial crimes.”*

“Colossal amounts of money have been illegally paid out through a well-choreographed scheme by government officers, private individuals and institutions.”

NOORDIN HAJI, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS, KENYA

<https://www.aljazeera.com/ajimpact/kenyas-corruption-crackdown-era-political-theater-190726154554617.html>

b) *Kenya Power token scandal*

“The company has had its fair share of scandals under its name that almost had the entire management suspended. The latest Kenya Power scam on the spotlight is the 1 billion pre-paid token generation revenue fraud. It is claimed that the tech-savvy employees manipulated the system to divert the State Corporation's revenue into their own pockets. The employees are said to have connived to generate extra tokens, which facilitated the sale of genuine tokens in the black market. Five employees in the IT department have already been suspended by the company and are under investigation. Investigations are underway following the 1 billion shillings lost at Kenya Power.”

<https://www.tuko.co.ke/306088-biggest-corruption-scandals-scams-kenya-2019.html>

c) *NHIF scandal*

“The funds that are supposed to help lives and promote affordable health payment services are also filled with corruption cases. The scandal involved the

National Hospital Insurance Fund and its officials with a cost of 50 billion shillings. Some rogue NHIF officials went ahead and colluded with hospitals to generate false medical bills. Their sole purpose was to direct the money to kitty beneficiaries who did not require treatment. The payment was made in premiums to NHIF by the National Treasury. This was capitation for group life cover and last



expense for civil servants, the Kenya Police Service, National Youth Service and Kenya Prisons Service since 2013.”

<https://www.tuko.co.ke/306088-biggest-corruption-scandals-scams-kenya-2019.html>,

<https://www.kenyans.co.ke/news/top-5-corruption-cases-remain-unresolved-kenya>

d) Maize scandal

“The maize scandal was a major scam that involved National Cereals and Produce Board (NCPB) top officials and traders. The Ksh. 5 billion maize scandal saw NCPB officials arrested.... They were charged alongside 16 other officials and accused of fraudulently acquiring public property worth Ksh.468 million, through irregular purchases and supply of white maize to NCPB. Three North Rift Jubilee MPs claimed that the Deputy President William Ruto is as suspect to blame for the farmers' woes and the maize scandal.”

<https://www.tuko.co.ke/306088-biggest-corruption-scandals-scams-kenya-2019.html>

e) NYS – National Youth Service

“Among scandals that saw individuals charged, perhaps the second looting spree at the National Youth Service (NYS) takes the cake as it involved the theft of Sh8 billion in a notorious supplies payment hijack scheme now popularly referred to as 'supplying air.' This came before justice had been served in an earlier looting scheme that was unearthed in 2015 when Kirinyaga Governor Anne Waiguru was the Devolution and Planning CS and the NYS fell under the ministry before being moved to the Youth and Gender Affairs docket. So far, 35 people have been charged in connection with the theft and all have denied the accusations.

The list of suspects initially had 51 individuals, but eight have since become prosecution witnesses with others being let off for lack of evidence. The looting spree thrust a few little-known individuals into the limelight, as they were accused of getting billions meant for businessmen and women who actually supplied goods to the NYS. The Ngirita family — matriarch Lucy, her daughters Ann and Phyllis, son Jeremiah and daughter-in-law Catherine Mwai — became perhaps the most known as they are believed to have jointly received nearly Sh1 billion from the NYS.

GHOST SUPPLIERS

Mr James Thuita Nderitu and Ms Yvonne Wanjiku Ngugi, who own Firstling Supplies Ltd, are believed to have also received Sh1 billion through their firm.

The swoop on suspects saw former NYS director-general Richard Ndubai and ex-Youth and Gender Affairs PS Lillian Omollo charged alongside junior and senior public officials for the loss of taxpayers' money.



Starting January, the court will hear the NYS cases which have been split into two to enable a speedy conclusion.

Mr Haji holds that the scam saw the charged individuals collude to forge contracts genuinely awarded to several firms, after which the fake documents were used to hurriedly pay ghost suppliers.

KCB has been fined Sh149.5 million, Standard Chartered Bank (Sh77.5 million), Equity Bank (Sh89.5 million), Cooperative Bank (Sh20 million), and DTB (Sh56 million).

Some of the firms flagged during investigations include Firstling Supplies (Sh1.48 billion), Flagstone Merchants (Sh1.03 billion), Fastlane Freight Forwarders (Sh221 million), Techbiz Ltd (Sh767 million), Excella Ltd (Sh282 million), Era Two Thousand Enterprises (Sh273.9 million), Interscope Tech and Services (Sh176 million), Smart Variety Stores (Sh153 million) and Ngiwaco Enterprises (Sh117 million).

Others are Njewanga Enterprises (Sh80 million), Evergreen Enterprises Ltd (Sh70.5 million), Evertec General Trading Company Ltd (Sh68.7 million), Bosqure Systems Limited (Sh59 million), Emaki Ventures (Sh39.3 million), and Ngirispa Enterprises (Sh18 million)."

<https://www.nation.co.ke/news/Big-corruption-scandal-amounts-that-shook-Kenyans-in-2018/1056-4915472-m10u9bz/index.html>

f) "A majority of the senators voted in support of removing Waititu from office over allegations of corruption, gross misconduct and abuse of office.

They voted against Waititu on three charges; Violation of the Constitution of Kenya 2010, Crimes under the national Law and Abuse of office/

Gross Misconduct. The tallies for the three separate votes were 23 against 13, 28

against 11 and 27 against 11."

<https://www.kenyans.co.ke/news/49195-ferdinand-waititu-impeached>

Land Corruption in Coastal Kenya

By Mary Maneno and Gareth Benest

"For over fifty years, Hamisi Bidii farmed a small piece of land 50km north of Mombasa in Kilifi County, Kenya. Hamisi grew cashew nuts, palm and mango trees on his four-acre plot — which provided a modest income for his family — and served his community and country as a local Administration Chief in the years immediately following Kenya's independence.

When Hamisi passed away in the 1970s, his eldest son took a small loan of 1,500 Kenyan Shillings (US\$15) from the

neighbouring Katana family to help pay for the funeral expenses. When he too passed away in 1996 — leaving the debt unpaid — the families sought to draw a line under the issue and settle the debt. The money was paid by Hamisi's daughter and only surviving heir, Faiza, and his late son's widow, during a mediation process overseen by the village chief.

Soon after the debt was settled a member of the Katana family — a young man called Mwari — began encroaching on Faiza's land, which he had fraudulently registered in the name of his deceased father (Katana Samba) who had died ten years earlier. Faiza became convinced that the chief had connived with Mwari Katana to illegally register the title deeds and encroach upon her precious farmlands.

"Perhaps these people bribed their way to the land offices. How else do you explain what happened?" asks Faiza. "The area chief has not assisted us either, but he was probably bribed to remain silent. We became squatters on our own land."

Faiza sought legal advice but was informed that registration of land could only be challenged at the High Court. The costs of bringing such litigation are far beyond the means of Faiza, and many like her, for whom just putting food on the table is a daily struggle.

With the illegally obtained title deed going unchallenged by the courts or local chiefs, Mwari Katana and his brothers began to sub-divide and sell the land to property developers. Numerous houses and commercial units were built on Faiza's land, where once the family's trees and cashew nuts grew. Faiza and her six children now live together with her elderly mother in a temporary structure built on a small corner of land owned by her uncle. Even this situation is precarious, with calls from her uncle's extended family to evict the family and sell the land.

The family has been left landless, destitute, and psychologically scarred by their experiences. Without land to provide an income for the family, Faiza now scratches out a living by selling palm wine, but the income is scarcely enough to buy food let alone educate the children. As a consequence, all of her children have now been forced to leave school.

"This injustice has happened because we are women...because we are widows. If my father and brothers were alive, things would have been different," insists Faiza.

Transparency International Kenya is supporting Faiza to fight for her land rights, starting with an appeal to the National Lands Commission. If you would like to help Faiza — and the countless women in Kenya denied their land rights,

leaving them uniquely vulnerable to corruption — please visit the TI Kenya website and follow updates on Facebook and Twitter. **Note:** names have been changed to protect the identities of individuals in this story.”

<https://voices.transparency.org/land-corruption-in-coastal-kenya-8ba946565466>

The grabbed state: lawyers, politics and public land in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

“In 2002, Kenya’s new National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) undertook to investigate and ensure the recovery of all public lands illegally allocated by the outgoing government. A Commission of Inquiry into the Illegal and Irregular Allocation of Public Land, chaired by the lawyer Paul Ndung’u, was appointed. The commission’s report sets out the illegal land awards made to powerful individuals and families, provides important information about the mechanisms by which public land was misallocated, and shows how the doctrine that public land should be administered and allocated ‘in the public interest’ was consistently perverted. This paper explores what the Ndung’u report tells us about the role of the legal profession in the illegal and irregular misallocation of public land. It makes clear that the legal profession, far from upholding the rule of law, has played a central role in land corruption, using its professional skills and networks to accumulate personal wealth for itself and others. This stands in contrast to the role of the legal profession in promoting good governance and the rule of law envisaged by donors of international development aid. This paper focuses on ‘local’ land grabbing, and argues that the ‘global land grab’ or ‘investor rush’ needs to be understood alongside local manifestations of land privatisation.”

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/259425006> The grabbed state Lawyers politics and public land in Kenya

Pilfering the Public: The Problem of Land Grabbing in Contemporary Kenya

“Political liberalization in Africa is a more problematic process than earlier thought. Powerful actors will attempt to maintain patrimonial control by developing creative counter-strategies to change. When faced with declining patronage resources, they will find alternative sources, often amplifying corruption and violence in the process. This paper provides a concrete example of this dynamic through an examination of Kenya’s land grabbing-the irregular privatization of public lands. It argues that president Moi and his clients are increasingly and

violently turning to public lands, which are less fettered by international scrutiny, as a patronage resource and instrument to maintain control. In response, many Kenyans are resisting this form of corruption and in the process are constructing a notion of the public that challenges the rules of the patrimonial game."

JOURNAL ARTICLE
Jacqueline M. Klopp
Africa Today

Vol. 47, No. 1 (Winter, 2000), pp. 7-26

Published by: [Indiana University Press](#)

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/4187305?seq=1>

'Our greatest asset in Kenya is our land. This is the heritage we received from our forefathers. In land lies our salvation and survival.'

- Jomo Kenyatta, 1968

'If the Attorney General cannot prosecute known land-grabbers and the ordinary citizen lacks the locus standi to take such cases to court, who will save Kenya?'

- Dr. Wangari Maathai, 1997

II – ROOTED IN THE WORD

This new step is called rooted in the Word, because will be following the Lectio Divina style, having the WORD OF GOD as heart of our prayer and meditation.

Praying, meditating and sharing the WORD OF GOD, we will be able to discern and reflect about our own weakness, mistakes and **corruption** in order to judge our own selves based in the WORD OF GOD through prayer, silence, consciousness and sharing.

Therefore, for a better use of this Lectio Divina prayer, just follow the themes on page three of this booklet and the instructions that will be given bellow.

DYNAMIC ENVIROMENT FOR LECTIO DIVINA

- *Keep always the Word of God and a lighting candle at the centre of the group.*
- *If possible, use symbols according to the Biblical text which will be prayed and meditated.*
- *Duties of the Prayer leader: welcoming and the opening prayer; inviting all to enter to every step of the lectio; always taking care of the time after the reading of the Word.*
- *Reminder: The Word is the spine of the prayer; it is very important to read with the heart, slowly and clearly for all to listen; silence after listening the Word is the heart of the prayer; prayer lasts minimum of 30 minutes.*

OPENING PRAYER OF LECTIO DIVINA

- *Always during entrance - welcoming by the leader with short words; Welcome the Holy Trinity (Prayer or song).*

L. Holy Spirit of God,

A. We open our hearts to receive you, that we may learn how deeply and invisibly, you are present everywhere.

A. Holy Spirit, be to us a source of light, strength and courage against corruption, so that we may hear your call to justice and righteousness ever more clearly and follow it ever more generously.

A. Amen!

*WORSHIP WITHOUT TRUTH AND
JUSTICE, IS CORRUPTION*

JEREMIAH 7: 1-15

HOLY WORD

¹ The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying,

² 'Stand at the gate of the Temple of Yahweh and there proclaim this message. Say, "Listen to the word of Yahweh, all you of Judah who come in by these gates to worship Yahweh.

³ Yahweh Sabaoth, the God of Israel, says this: Change your behaviour and your actions and I will let you stay in this place.

⁴ Do not put your trust in delusive words, such as: This is Yahweh's sanctuary, Yahweh's sanctuary, Yahweh's sanctuary!

⁵ But if you really change your behaviour and your actions, if you really treat one another fairly,

⁶ if you do not exploit the stranger, the orphan and the widow, if you do not shed innocent blood in this place and if you do not follow other gods, to your own ruin,

⁷ then I shall let you stay in this place in the country I gave for ever to your ancestors of old.

⁸ Look, you are putting your trust in delusive, worthless words!

⁹ Steal, would you, murder, commit adultery, perjure yourselves, burn incense to Baal, follow other gods of whom you know nothing? -

¹⁰ and then come and stand before me in this Temple that bears my name, saying: Now we are safe to go on doing all these loathsome things!

¹¹ Do you look on this Temple that bears my name as a den of bandits? I, at any rate, can see straight, Yahweh declares.

¹² "Now go to the place which used to be mine at Shiloh, where I once gave my name a home; see what I have done to it because of the wickedness of my people Israel!

¹³ And now, since you have done all these things, Yahweh declares, and refused to listen when I spoke so urgently, so persistently, or to answer when I called you,

¹⁴ I shall treat this Temple that bears my name, and in which you put your heart, the place that I gave you and your ancestors, just as I treated Shiloh,

¹⁵ and I shall drive you out of my sight, as I did all your kinsfolk, the whole race of Ephraim."

LECTIO – READ THE WORD

- *Anyone can read spontaneously (all shall listen clearly)*
- *SILENCE 2 MINUTES (after reading the Holy Word)*

VERBUM & MEDITATIO – READ THE WORD SECOND TIME

- a) Instrumental questions for meditation (*Can be read in silence by yourself or read by the prayer leader*).
 - *Why to say, "This is Yahweh's sanctuary" or "This is the Temple of the Lord" are deceptive/delusive words? In my daily life, where am I putting my trust and my faith? When I go to worship God in the church, do I repent of my corrupted deeds and seek for a change or just acknowledge them? Am I faithful to God's commandment or do I seek for other doctrines and believes, deceptive doctors, witchcraft, pastors and churches?*
- b) Chooses a word, phrase or verse which strikes you personally (*done in silence*)
 - *SILENCE 3 MINUTES*

VERBUM & DELECTATIO – SAVOR THE WORD

Each one shares some key words, phrases or verses from the reading itself.

– (You shall share only the Word itself from – Jeremiah 7:1-15 – It is very important to pronounce the Word slowly, clearly and loudly for all to hear).

VERBUM & CONTEMPLATIO – READ THE WORD THIRD TIME

- *Link your heart and your imagination with the Holy Word; Have a dialogue with God or Jesus on his Word. "He looks at me and I look at Him" – "He talks to me and I listening Him."*
- *SILENCE 5 MINUTES*

VERBUM & NUNTIUS – SHARING THE HOLY WORD

- Everyone shares the Word and its message to the members of the group.
- Attention! Uses the grammatical classes such as verb or pronoun in the first person of singular (I, My, Mine, for me...); Try to talk about yourself and your own experiences or feelings and not someone else's. Be concise, no more than 3 minutes per member.
- In this moment the prayer, the leader shall be attentive to guide the group in terms of time and faithfulness to the sharing.

ORATIO – CONCLUSION

- A spontaneous prayer of the community/ a song or the prayer against corruption on page two (optional);
- Final blessing (can be done by any member of the group).

P *THE CONDEMNATION OF CORRUPTED TONGUES AND LIPS* PSALM 12: 1-9

HOLY WORD

For the director of music. According to sheminith. A psalm of David.

- 1 Help, Lord, for no one is faithful anymore;
those who are loyal have vanished from the human race.
- 2 Everyone lies to their neighbour;
they speak with deceiving lips
and a double heart.
- 3 May the Lord cut off all deceiving lips,
and every boastful tongue—
- 4 those who say,
“By our tongues we will prevail;
our own lips will defend us—who is lord over us?”



- 5 "Because the poor are plundered and the needy groan,
I will now arise," says the Lord.
"I will protect them from those who malign them."
6 And the words of the Lord are flawless,
like silver purified in a crucible,
like gold refined seven times.
- 7 You, Lord, will keep the needy safe
and will protect us forever from the wicked,
8 who freely strut about
when what is vile is honoured by the human race.

LECTIO – READ THE WORD

- *Anyone can read spontaneously (all shall listen clearly)*
- *SILENCE 2 MINUTES (after reading the Holy Word)*

VERBUM & MEDITATIO – READ THE WORD SECOND TIME

- a) Instrumental questions for meditation (*Can be read in silence by yourself or read by the prayer leader*).
 - Why is the Psalmist asking for help from God? Is there in my family or community people with deceiving tongues, lips and false words; How do I related to them? Are you aware of situations where manipulation is present in your daily life? Where do you find yourself, as a manipulated one or a manipulator? In Psalm 12 who are the manipulators and who are the manipulated ones? The Psalmist says that God's Word is flawless and pure as finest silver or gold; How about me? What is the Word of God to me?
- b) Chooses a word, phrase or verse which strikes you personally (*done in silence*)
 - *SILENCE 3 MINUTES*

VERBUM & DELECTATIO – SAVOR THE WORD

Each one shares some key words, phrases or verses from the reading itself.

- (You shall share only the Word itself from – Psalm 12:1-9 – It is very important to pronounce the Word slowly, clearly and loudly for all to hear).

VERBUM & CONTEMPLATIO – READ THE WORD THIRD TIME

- Link your heart and your imagination with the Holy Word; Have a dialogue with God or Jesus on his Word. “He looks at me and I look at Him” – “He talks to me and I listening Him.”
- *SILENCE 5 MINUTES*

VERBUM & NUNTIUS – SHARING THE HOLY WORD

- Everyone shares the Word and its message to the members of the group.
- Attention! Uses the grammatical classes such as verb or pronoun in the first person of singular (I, My, Mine, for me...); Try to talk about yourself and your own experiences or feelings and not someone else’s. Be concise, no more than 3 minutes per member.
- In this moment the prayer, the leader shall be attentive to guide the group in terms of time and faithfulness to the sharing.

ORATIO – CONCLUSION

- A spontaneous prayer of the community/ a song or the prayer against corruption on page two (optional);
- Final blessing (can be done by any member of the group).

SOCIAL INJUSTICES AND GOD’S JUDGEMENT AGAINST CORRUPTED LEADERS AND GOVERNORS M ICAH 2: 1-9; 3:1-4, 9-12

HOLY WORD

*21 Woe to those who plan iniquity,
to those who plot evil on their beds!*

*At morning's light they carry it out
because it is in their power to do it.*

*2 They covet fields and seize them,
and houses, and take them.*

*They defraud people of their homes,
they rob them of their inheritance.*

3 Therefore, the Lord says:

*"I am planning disaster against this people,
from which you cannot save yourselves.*

*You will no longer walk proudly,
for it will be a time of calamity.*

*4 In that day people will ridicule you;
they will taunt you with this mournful song:*

*'We are utterly ruined;
my people's possession is divided up.*

He takes it from me!

He assigns our fields to traitors.'"

*5 Therefore you will have no one in the assembly of the Lord
to divide the land by lot.*

6 "Do not prophesy," their prophets say.

*"Do not prophesy about these things;
disgrace will not overtake us."*

7 You descendants of Jacob, should it be said,

*"Does the Lord become[a] impatient?
Does he do such things?"*

*"Do not my words do good
to the one whose ways are upright?"*

*8 Lately my people have risen up
like an enemy.*

*You strip off the rich robe
from those who pass by without a care,
like men returning from battle.*

*9 You drive the women of my people
from their pleasant homes.*

*You take away my blessing
from their children forever.*

31 *Then I said,*

*"Listen, you leaders of Jacob,
you rulers of Israel.*

Should you not embrace justice,

2 you who hate good and love evil;
 who tear the skin from my people
 and the flesh from their bones;
 3 who eat my people's flesh,
 strip off their skin
 and break their bones in pieces;
 who chop them up like meat for the pan,
 like flesh for the pot?"
 4 Then they will cry out to the Lord,
 but he will not answer them.
 At that time, he will hide his face from them
 because of the evil they have done.
 9 Hear this, you leaders of Jacob,
 you rulers of Israel,
 who despise justice
 and distort all that is right;
 10 who build Zion with bloodshed,
 and Jerusalem with wickedness.
 11 Her leaders judge for a bribe,
 her priests teach for a price,
 and her prophets tell fortunes for money.
 Yet they look for the Lord's support and say,
 "Is not the Lord among us?
 No disaster will come upon us."
 12 Therefore because of you,
 Zion will be plowed like a field,
 Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble,
 the temple hill a mound overgrown with thickets.

LECTIO – READ THE WORD

- Anyone can read spontaneously (all shall listen clearly)
- SILENCE 2 MINUTES (after reading the Holy Word)

VERBUM & MEDITATIO – READ THE WORD SECOND TIME

- a) Instrumental questions for meditation (*Can be read in silence by yourself or read by the prayer leader*)
 - Who are the corrupted ones, according to the Prophet? What are the corrupted actions described by the Prophet? Have you found yourself in any one of these corrupt acts pointed out by the prophet? Do you know in your family or community anyone that has been victimized by these corrupted deeds described by



Prophet Micah? How does God react to these corrupted people? Do I keep silence before corrupted people and theirs corrupted acts, or what is my attitude and reaction? Do I fear to stand together with God and his prophets to fight against corruption? If, yes or no, Why?

- b) Chooses a word, phrase or verse which strikes you personally (*done in silence*)

- SILENCE 3 MINUTES

VERBUM & DELECTATIO – SAVOR THE WORD

Each one shares some key words, phrases or verses from the reading itself.

- (You shall share only the Word itself from – Micah 2:1-9; 3:1-4,9-12 – It is very important to pronounce the Word slowly, clearly and loudly for all to hear).

VERBUM & CONTEMPLATIO – READ THE WORD THIRD TIME

- Link your heart and your imagination with the Holy Word; Have a dialogue with God or Jesus on his Word. “He looks at me and I look at Him” – “He talks to me and I listening Him.”

- SILENCE 5 MINUTES

VERBUM & NUNTIUS – SHARING THE HOLY WORD

- Everyone shares the Word and its message to the members of the group.
- Attention! Uses the grammatical classes such as verb or pronoun in the first person of singular (I, My, Mine, for me...); Try to talk about yourself and your own experiences or feelings and not someone else’s. Be concise, no more than 3 minutes per member.
- In this moment the prayer, the leader shall be attentive to guide the group in terms of time and faithfulness to the sharing.

ORATIO – CONCLUSION

- A spontaneous prayer of the community/ a song or the prayer against corruption on page two (optional);
- Final blessing (can be done by any member of the group).

CORRUPTION LEADS TO DEATH

1 KINGS 21: 1-24; 2 KINGS 9: 30-37

HOLY WORD

21 ¹Some time later there was an incident involving a vineyard belonging to Naboth the Jezreelite. The vineyard was in Jezreel, close to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. ²Ahab said to Naboth, "Let me have your vineyard to use for a vegetable garden, since it is close to my palace. In exchange I will give you a better vineyard or, if you prefer, I will pay you whatever it is worth."

³But Naboth replied, "The Lord forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my ancestors."

⁴So Ahab went home, sullen and angry because Naboth the Jezreelite had said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my ancestors." He lay on his bed sulking and refused to eat.

⁵His wife Jezebel came in and asked him, "Why are you so sullen? Why won't you eat?"

⁶He answered her, "Because I said to Naboth the Jezreelite, 'Sell me your vineyard; or if you prefer, I will give you another vineyard in its place.' But he said, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'"

⁷Jezebel his wife said, "Is this how you act as king over Israel? Get up and eat! Cheer up. I'll get you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

⁸So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, placed his seal on them, and sent them to the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth's city with him. ⁹In those letters she wrote:

"Proclaim a day of fasting and seat Naboth in a prominent place among the people. ¹⁰But seat two scoundrels opposite him and have them bring charges that he has cursed both God and the king. Then take him out and stone him to death."

¹¹So the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth's city did as Jezebel directed in the letters she had written to them. ¹²They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth in a prominent place among the people. ¹³Then two scoundrels came and sat

opposite him and brought charges against Naboth before the people, saying, “Naboth has cursed both God and the king.” So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death. ¹⁴ Then they sent word to Jezebel: “Naboth has been stoned to death.” ¹⁵ As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, she said to Ahab, “Get up and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite that he refused to sell you. He is no longer alive, but dead.” ¹⁶ When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he got up and went down to take possession of Naboth’s vineyard.

¹⁷ Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite: ¹⁸ “Go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who rules in Samaria. He is now in Naboth’s vineyard, where he has gone to take possession of it. ¹⁹ Say to him, ‘This is what the Lord says: Have you not murdered a man and seized his property?’ Then say to him, ‘This is what the Lord says: In the place where dogs licked up Naboth’s blood, dogs will lick up your blood—yes, yours!’”

²⁰ Ahab said to Elijah, “So you have found me, my enemy!” “I have found you,” he answered, “because you have sold yourself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord. ²¹ He says, ‘I am going to bring disaster on you. I will wipe out your descendants and cut off from Ahab every last male in Israel—slave or free. ²² I will make your house like that of Jeroboam son of Nebat and that of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have aroused my anger and have caused Israel to sin.’”

²³ “And also concerning Jezebel the Lord says: ‘Dogs will devour Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.’”

²⁴ “Dogs will eat those belonging to Ahab who die in the city, and the birds will feed on those who die in the country.”

⁹ ³⁰ Then Jehu went to Jezreel. When Jezebel heard about it, she put on eye makeup, arranged her hair and looked out of a window. ³¹ As Jehu entered the gate, she asked, “Have you come in peace, you Zimri, you murderer of your master?”

³² He looked up at the window and called out, “Who is on my side? Who?” Two or three eunuchs looked down at him. ³³ “Throw her down!” Jehu said. So they threw her down, and some of her blood splattered the wall and the horses as they trampled her underfoot.

³⁴ Jehu went in and ate and drank. “Take care of that cursed woman,” he said, “and bury her, for she was a king’s daughter.” ³⁵ But when they went out to bury her, they found

nothing except her skull, her feet and her hands. ³⁶ They went back and told Jehu, who said, "This is the word of the Lord that he spoke through his servant Elijah the Tishbite: On the plot of ground at Jezreel dogs will devour Jezebel's flesh. ³⁷ Jezebel's body will be like dung on the ground in the plot at Jezreel, so that no one will be able to say, 'This is Jezebel.'"

LECTIO – READ THE WORD

- *Anyone can read spontaneously (all shall listen clearly)*
- *SILENCE 2 MINUTES (after reading the Holy Word)*

VERBUM & MEDITATIO – READ THE WORD SECOND TIME

- a) Instrumental questions for meditation (*Can be read in silence by yourself or by read by the prayer leader*)
 - *Literary approach to the Word: Whom? Where? When? What happening? How? With what means? Consider the various elements of the text such as: characters, places, situation, actions and main verbs.*
 - *Spiritual approach to the Word: What God has to say to me through the story of Naboth's vineyard? Through his HOLY WORD, God invites me to be what and for what? How do I find myself, as king Ahab, as Jezebel, as Naboth, as the elders or as Elijah? What does it mean for you to see the way that the corrupted Jezebel died?*
- a) Chooses a word, phrase or verse which strikes you personally (*done in silence*)
 - *SILENCE 3 MINUTES*

VERBUM & DELECTATIO – SAVOR THE WORD

Each one shares some key words, phrases or verses from the reading itself.

- (You shall share only the Word itself from – 1Kings 21:1-24; 2Kings 9:30-37 – It is very important to pronounce the Word slowly, clearly and loudly for all to hear).

VERBUM & CONTEMPLATIO – READ THE WORD THIRD TIME

- Link your heart and your imagination with the Holy Word; Have a dialogue with God or Jesus on his Word. “He looks at me and I look at Him” – “He talks to me and I listening Him.”
- *SILENCE 5 MINUTES*

VERBUM & NUNTIUS – SHARING THE HOLY WORD

- Everyone shares the Word and its message to the members of the group.
- Attention! Uses the grammatical classes such as verb or pronoun in the first person of singular (I, My, Mine, for me...); Try to talk about yourself and your own experiences or feelings and not someone else’s. Be concise, no more than 3 minutes per member.
- In this moment the prayer, the leader shall be attentive to guide the group in terms of time and faithfulness to the sharing.

ORATIO – CONCLUSION

- A spontaneous prayer of the community/ a song or the prayer against corruption on page two (optional);
- Final blessing (can be done by any member of the group).

THE ROTTENNESS AND HYPOCRISY OF CORRUPTION **A** MOS 5: 7-14b; 6:4; 8:4-6

HOLY WORD

- 5 7 There are those who turn justice into bitterness
and cast righteousness to the ground.
- 8 He who made the Pleiades and Orion,
who turns midnight into dawn
and darkens day into night,
who calls for the waters of the sea

and pours them out over the face of the land —
the Lord is his name.

9 With a blinding flash he destroys the stronghold
and brings the fortified city to ruin.

10 There are those who hate the one who upholds justice
in court
and detest the one who tells the truth.

11 You levy a straw tax on the poor
and impose a tax on their grain.
Therefore, though you have built stone mansions,
you will not live in them;
though you have planted lush vineyards,
you will not drink their wine.

12 For I know how many are your offenses
and how great your sins.
There are those who oppress the innocent and take bribes
and deprive the poor of justice in the courts.

13 Therefore the prudent keep quiet in such times,
for the times are evil.

14a Seek good, not evil,
that you may live.

6 4 You lie on beds adorned with ivory
and lounge on your couches.
You dine on choice lambs
and fattened calves.

8 4 Hear this, you who trample the needy
and do away with the poor of the land,
5 saying,
“When will the New Moon be over
that we may sell grain,
and the Sabbath be ended
that we may market wheat?” —
skimping on the measure,
boosting the price
and cheating with dishonest scales,
6 buying the poor with silver
and the needy for a pair of sandals,
selling even the sweepings with the wheat.

LECTIO – READ THE WORD

- *Anyone can read spontaneously (all shall listen attentively)*

- *SILENCE 2 MINUTES (after reading the Holy Word)*

VERBUM & MEDITATIO – RED THE WORD SECOND TIME

b) Instrumental questions for meditation

- Have I been involved in any one of these corrupted acts, which Prophet Amos is denouncing? Is Amos prophesy true in my life, why?

c) Chooses a word, phrase or verse which strikes you personally (*done in silence*)

- *SILENCE 3 MINUTES*

VERBUM & DELECTATIO – SAVOR THE WORD

Each one shares some key words, phrases or verses from the reading itself.

- (You shall share only the Word itself – Amos 5:7-14b; 6:4;8:4-6 – It is very important to pronounce the Word slowly, clearly and loudly for all to hear).

VERBUM & CONTEMPLATIO – READ THE WORD THIRD TIME

- Link your heart and your imagination with the Holy Word; Have a dialogue with God or Jesus on his Word. “He looks at me and I look at Him” – “He talks to me and I listening Him.”
- *SILENCE 5 MINUTES*

VERBUM & NUNTIUS – SHARING THE HOLY WORD

- Everyone shares the Word and its message to the members of the group.
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- In this moment the prayer, the leader shall be attentive to guide the group in terms of time and faithfulness to the sharing.

ORATIO – CONCLUSION

- A spontaneous prayer from the community, a song or prayer against corruption on page two (optional);
- Final blessing (can be done by any member of the group).

THE COMMITMENT TO THE PRACTICE
OF JUSTICE, DESIRED BY GOD

P ROVERBS 16

HOLY WORD

- 16 1 *To humans belong the plans of the heart,
but from the Lord comes the proper answer of the tongue.*
- 2 *All a person's ways seem pure to them,
but motives are weighed by the Lord.*
- 3 *Commit to the Lord whatever you do,
and he will establish your plans.*
- 4 *The Lord works out everything to its proper end
even the wicked for a day of disaster.*
- 5 *The Lord detests all the proud of heart.
Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished.*
- 6 *Through love and faithfulness sin is atoned for;
through the fear of the Lord evil is avoided.*
- 7 *When the Lord takes pleasure in anyone's way,
he causes their enemies to make peace with them.*
- 8 *Better a little with righteousness
than much gain with injustice.*
- 9 *In their hearts humans plan their course,
but the Lord establishes their steps.*
- 10 *The lips of a king speak as an oracle,
and his mouth does not betray justice.*
- 11 *Honest scales and balances belong to the Lord;
all the weights in the bag are of his making.*
- 12 *Kings detest wrongdoing,
for a throne is established through righteousness.*
- 13 *Kings take pleasure in honest lips;
they value the one who speaks what is right.*
- 14 *A king's wrath is a messenger of death,*

- but the wise will appease it.*
- 15 *When a king's face brightens, it means life;
his favour is like a rain cloud in spring*
- 16 *How much better to get wisdom than gold,
to get insight rather than silver!*
- 17 *The highway of the upright avoids evil;
those who guard their ways preserve their lives.*
- 18 *Pride goes before destruction,
a haughty spirit before a fall.*
- 19 *Better to be lowly in spirit along with the oppressed
than to share plunder with the proud.*
- 20 *Whoever gives heed to instruction prospers,
and blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord.*
- 21 *The wise in heart are called discerning,
and gracious words promote instruction.*
- 22 *Prudence is a fountain of life to the prudent,
but folly brings punishment to fools.*
- 23 *The hearts of the wise make their mouths prudent,
and their lips promote instruction.*
- 24 *Gracious words are a honeycomb,
sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.*
- 25 *There is a way that appears to be right,
but in the end it leads to death.*
- 26 *The appetite of laborers works for them;
their hunger drives them on.*
- 27 *A scoundrel plots evil,
and on their lips it is like a scorching fire.*
- 28 *A perverse person stirs up conflict,
and a gossip separates close friends.*
- 29 *A violent person entices their neighbour
and leads them down a path that is not good.*
- 30 *Whoever winks with their eye is plotting perversity;
whoever purses their lips is bent on evil.*
- 31 *Grey hair is a crown of splendour;
it is attained in the way of righteousness.*
- 32 *Better a patient person than a warrior,
one with self-control than one who takes a city.*
- 33 *The lot is cast into the lap,
but its every decision is from the Lord.*

LECTIO – READ THE WORD

- *Anyone can read spontaneously (all shall listen attentively)*
- *SILENCE for 2 MINUTES (after reading the Holy Word)*

VERBUM & MEDITATIO – READ THE WORD SECOND TIME

a) Instrumental questions for meditation

- What is justice desired by God? Do I trust in God and commit to him whatever I do? In my relationship with others, how much do I value the one who speaks what is right or stands for justice? Am I afraid to tell the truth or to speak what is right when it is needed? Have I been acting passively and silently regarding some injustices, Why? What is my feeling when the Psalmist says, “Whoever winks with their eye is plotting perversity”?

b) Chooses a word, phrase or verse which strikes you personally (*done in silence*).

- *SILENCE 3 MINUTES*

VERBUM & DELECTATIO – SAVOR THE WORD

Each one shares some key words, phrases or verses from the reading itself.

- (You shall share only the Word itself from Proverbs 16. It is very important to pronounce the Word slowly, clearly and loudly for all to hear).

VERBUM & CONTEMPLATIO – READ THE WORD THIRD TIME

- Link your heart and your imagination with the Holy Word; Have a dialogue with God or Jesus on his Word. “He looks at me and I look at Him” – “He talks to me and I listening Him.”
- *SILENCE 5 MINUTES*

VERBUM & NUNTIUS – SHARING THE HOLY WORD

- Everyone shares the Word and its message to the members of the group.
- Attention! Uses the grammatical classes such as verbs or pronouns in the first person of singular (I, My, Mine, for me...); Try to talk about yourself and your own experiences or feelings and not someone else’s. Be concise, no more than 3 minutes per member.

- In this moment the prayer, the leader shall be attentive to guide the group in terms of time and faithfulness to the sharing.

ORATIO – CONCLUSION

- A spontaneous prayer of the community/ a song or the prayer against corruption on page two (optional);
- Final blessing (can be done by any member of the group).

THE FABULOUS STORY OF THE RENEWED EAGLE

Many of you may not know the eagle has the longest lifespan among birds. It can live up to 70 years. To reach this age, however, the eagle must make some hard choices.

In its 40's, the eagle's long and flexible talons can no longer grab the prey that serves as its food. Its long, sharp beak becomes so curved that it prevents the eagle from eating. Its feathers become aged, frazzled and heavy, and stick to its chest when it tries to fly. It is during this time of its life that the eagle is left with only two options: to die or to go through a painful process of change that lasts 5 months and results in an extended, productive life.

The process I am speaking of requires the eagle fly to a mountaintop and sit on its nest. There the eagle knocks its beak against a rock until its beak falls out. With its beak broken off the eagle waits several weeks for a new one to grow back. In time, the beak regrows and, at that point, the eagle uses it to pluck out its curved and long talons. This, as you can imagine, is a painful process of pecking and pulling until the talons are ripped from the eagle's feet. Again, the eagle waits for several weeks until its new talons grow back. While it waits for its talons to grow, the eagle plucks out its aged feathers and new, fresh and firm feathers replace them. After five months, the eagle takes its first renewed flight. Now it has a renewed ability to fly, capture prey and eat. Typically, the revived eagle can live for another 30 more years. A healthy eagle who can fly high, snatch prey from the ground over a larger area is much more likely to be revived than an eagle who is not willing to go through the transformation needed to remove its old beak, talons, and feathers.

Honestly, renewing and transforming ourselves allows us to spread our wings and soar like eagles.

All the very best!

III – COMMITTED TO HIS MISSION

Wherever we are, God calls us to participate in his mission and to be his witness, in the same way as He called the 72 disciples and the Samaritan woman, (*Lk 10:1-12; Jn 4:28-29,39*). That is why, this last step is entitled “Committed to his Mission”.

Considering what we have seen, prayed and reflected on, the aim of this step is to commit ourselves to action and evaluation, that can transform the realities of **corruption** where we live. It starts within ourselves, and then extends to our neighbours and communities.

Following this spirit of commitment, we will be open to renew our lifestyle and our relationship with God and neighbours. For this commitment and renewing to take place, we will be asking some instrumental questions below, which will help us to reflect the situation of **corruption** in our daily life, involving our families, business, work, schools, churches, etc...

If we are rooted in God’s HOLY WORD and committed to his mission, we ought to celebrate and be guided by love of Christ and the blessings of God in our lives,

INSTRUMENTAL QUESTIONS REGARDING **CORRUPTION**

These Instrumental questions will be based on the two previous steps, involving the biblical texts chosen for Lectio Divina, and the diagram about, **corrupt** acts, deeds and doings on page 8. These questions can be used as instruments for debates, seminars or dialogue on the themes of **corruption**.

Having observed **corruption** in the times of the Israelite prophets and kings, to today's **corruption** in our country, we might ask ourselves:

- *Why is corruption so common in our society?*
- *What can I do to fight corruption?*
- *What changes do I need to implement in my life to avoid corruption?*

- *Are there people, thoughts, insecurities or other things that hold me back from to become righteousness to God, Why?*
- *What behaviour and habits I need to commit myself to, so that I can achieve and live faithful to God's mission against injustice and corruption?*

Based on our diagram on page 8, which refers to different acts and ways of corruption presented in the Bible, let us reflect on the following questions:

- *In the Book of 2 Kings (9:14; 10:1-36), why and how, Jehu conspired against the king? What was the consequences of Jehu's conspiracy? What is conspiracy? Why conspiracy is considered corruption?*
- *In the story of Naboth's vineyard Jezebel acts corruptly, practicing forgery, falsification and the act of grabbing land; How does it happened? Why the acts of Jezebel are considered corruption?*
- *The sons of King David were involved in corruption. How did Prince Amon abuse and misuse the power (2 Sam 13:1-19)? Why did Prince Absalom campaigns with falsity (2 Sam 15:1-6)? Do you think that abusing and misusing power or leadership and also campaigning with falsity is corruption? If yes or no, Why?*
- *Why the act of violation is corruption? Which kind of corrupted business and violations the prophets talk about (Ez 45:10-12; Mi 6:11; Am 8:5)?*

Now, based on the biblical texts of Lectio Divina on page 3; Let us reflect on the following questions.

- *What were the corrupted deeds in that made the Prophet Jeremiah (7:1-15) call the people, the priests and the Temple "the den of thieves"?*
- *Psalm 12 denounces tax exploitation; at this point it is interesting to ask: What would have caused the*



prophetic denunciation of corruption and request for help from God? In the conflict described in Psalm 12, in which side is God on? Why?

- *In Micah chs. 2 and 3, the prophet accuses the governors, leaders, rulers, judges, priests, false prophets, and landlords of being corrupted. Which kind of corruption they practiced and why those acts were considered corruption? How can Micah 3:2-3 be understood and what those verses mean for myself?*
- *How could I relate the situation of corruption in 1 Kings 21:1-24 to my country, based on the stories on pages 15 and 16?*
- *How could I relate the corrupted actions in Amos 5:7-14b; 6:4; 8:4-6 with the cases on pages 13 and 14? What initiatives and actions as a community can we take to fight those corrupt practices?*
- *Proverbs 16:8 states, "Better a little with righteousness, than much gain with injustice"; What does it mean for you? Are you ready to take such an attitude in any circumstances of corruption: if yes or no, Why?*

**"THEY ACT CORRUPTLY
AND PRACTICE INJUSTICE;
THERE IS NONE THAT DOES GOOD"**

PSALM 53: 2b



שחת



MOTHER OF THE WORD

L. Mother of the Word and of hope.

A. *In your heart as Mother you nurtured a hope /
In our hearts as people you kept alive a promise.
In your fertile womb you cradled the Son of Love.
And God's dream for justice and peace for all/ found in your 'Yes' the
response/ that would become light and salvation for all people.*

L. Mother of the Word, companion of the poor,

A. *Look upon our life, / our struggles and our hope. /
May the Spirit regenerate our communities. /
help us to be faithful to your Son/
in times of corruption and injustices,
standing for God's kingdom.*

AMEN!



ROME, 18TH GENERAL CHAPTER SVD 2018:

On Resolution 1.1.5 from GC2018 –

(Spirituality Reflection Guide and Programs)

On Recommendation 2.2.4 from GC2018

*(Bible Sharing contemplating SVD, Characteristics Dimensions –
Bible Apostolate and Justice, Peace and Creation)*

Mk 4:31-32

“It is like a mustard seed that, when it is sown in the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on the earth. But once it is sown, it springs up and becomes the largest of plants and puts forth the large branches, so that the birds of sky can dwell in its shade.”



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