

## Chronicle III of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in Jerusalem

By Martin Hoegger

### Jerusalem, Monday 23 January 2023.

We began the day with a "Lectio Divina" on the text of the prophet Isaiah from which the theme of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is taken: "Strive to do good, seek justice" (1:17). About twenty people connected with us through a video conference. They came from France, Belgium and Switzerland. Times of reading, silence and sharing allow the three stages of Lectio to be lived peacefully: reading, meditation and prayer.



### Listening with the heart

Each person is invited to underline a word or a verse that touches him or her personally and to meditate on it, then to pray... because the aim of Lectio divina is to say "You" to Jesus. As far as I am concerned, it is the double invitation to listen well that resonates with me: "If you want to listen, you will eat the good things of the land" (v. 10 and 19).

All the problems come from not listening to the Word of God and not putting it into practice. This is a permanent truth: in the time of Isaiah, as in the time of Jesus who never stopped calling to "listen" in order to practice justice, as today.

Here is the prayer I wrote from this text:

*Again I find that what you want above all is to listen.  
Let my days begin by listening to You  
and continue by listening to those you put in my path!  
That I take this call seriously and return to it  
when I let myself be dragged into nothingness!  
Listening to you means obeying you and  
obeying means choosing the good and seeking justice.  
Give me the ear of Jesus,  
his ear as a disciple who listens with his heart!*

It seems to me that our many visits over the past two days have confirmed this call: above all, listen to those we meet!

On my website I have meditated at length on this great text.

See: <https://martin.hoegger.org/predications/658-apprendre-bien-et-justice>

## Talitha Koumi!



**Harry Tees**, the General Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance of Israel, visits us by the “White Sisters” in Nablus Street. Of Dutch origin, he has lived in the Old City of Jerusalem for almost 40 years.

The Alliance links some 30 evangelical churches and organizations. Among the challenges he faces are the development of

African communities in the Tel Aviv area and the lack of space in cemeteries. He met Olivier Fleury in 2010 and is aware of the JC2033 initiative and appreciates its focus on the resurrection of Christ. He likens The Church with the girl in the story of Mark 5:22- 43. The Church, like the girl, isn't dead, she just needs to rise.

See: <https://ea-israel.org/members#christian-alliance-church>

## True justice

In the early evening we go to the Cathedral of the Armenian Apostolic Church in the Armenian Quarter. How beautiful it is to enter in silence into a Church illuminated only by the light of a hundred candles! And to hear hymns sung by twenty young seminarians with clear voices! Hearts are truly opened to listen attentively to the Gospel read in several languages, where Jesus says: "*I have come to serve and not to be served*".

**Koryoun Baghdasaryan**, Chancellor of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, speaks on the theme of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, specifically, '*true justice*'. It means giving to others what is due to them. It also means getting angry at what makes God angry (Jonah's anger, for example, is wrong). True justice is difficult to do. It is both social and interpersonal.



True justice respects the Ten Commandments in everyday life, considers the other person superior to oneself in serving him or her and wants to live the Golden Rule. It is an expression of love for God and neighbor. "*If we seek true justice, we will be true Christians and the world will be more just,*" the preacher concludes.

After the prayer, the assembly is invited to the large hall of the Armenian Seminary, opposite the Cathedral of Saint James. This is an opportunity to get to know some people, in particular Koryoun Baghdasaryan, to whom I have the opportunity to present the JC2033 initiative and who finds it beautiful to invite people to prepare the Jubilee of the Resurrection in an ecumenical way by walking each year on the road to Emmaus.

