

LENT 2021: Our Hope Renewed

3rd Sunday of Lent



Christ Driving the Money Changers out of the Temple ~ [Valentin de Boulogne](#)

*“Take these out of here,
and stop making my Father’s
house a marketplace.”*

Opening Prayer

Loving God,
you have the words that lead us out of slavery to everlasting life.
As we journey through Lent open the ears of our hearts that we may hear those words anew and so reach the joy of Easter with our hope renewed.
In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.

Readings for the Third Sunday of Lent - Year B

First Reading: Exodus 20: 1-17
Psalm: Psalm 18(19): 8-11
Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:22-25

Gospel Reading: John 2:13-25

Since the Passover of the Jews was near, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. He found in the temple area those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, as well as the money changers seated there.

He made a whip out of cords and drove them all out of the temple area, with the sheep and oxen, and spilled the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables, and to those who sold doves he said, "Take these out of here, and stop making my Father's house a marketplace." His disciples recalled the words of Scripture, Zeal for your house will consume me.

At this the Jews answered and said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and you will raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking about the temple of his body. Therefore, when he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they came to believe the Scripture and the word Jesus had spoken.

While he was in Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, many began to believe in his name when they saw the signs he was doing.
But Jesus would not trust himself to them because he knew them all, and did not need anyone to testify about human nature. He himself understood it well.

Lectio Divina

Reading

Take your time and read the passage. Get a sense of what it is saying. Read the passage a second time. Listen for any words or phrases that strike you, and listen in your heart. Be attentive to detail. Note versus or phrases that stand out to you. Where to understand meaning and background.

In this passage... My favourite verse was... I noticed...

Reflecting

Read the passage again, slowly. As you pause on the words or phrases that strike you, take time to consider what the word, phrase, or passage means, particularly its connection to your life. Imagine being present to hear the passage or witness the story.

This reminds me of... If I were there... I can connect this story to...

Responding

Read the passage again, slowly. Consider now how God has spoken to you in this passage and respond back to him. You may want to consider how this passage is asking you to act differently. Thank God for his word. Ask him to lead you into deeper understanding.

Dear Jesus... Thank you God for... Please help me understand...

Remaining

Now take some time to simply remain in the presence of God. Quiet expression of love between you and God. Note what God is trying to teach you through the passage and time of prayer.

I think Jesus is teaching me... Lord, I love you for... I believe...

Reflection

To understand the cleansing of the temple as a protest against those who would treat the house of God as a business premises is to miss the real point of this event.

By driving out those who sold the animals necessary for the sacrifices of the Jewish religion, Jesus is passing judgement on those very sacrificial practices. In doing so HE is saying that those practices are no longer fit for purpose.

The worship that Jesus is looking for is not a ritualistic, sacrificial worship but rather a spiritual worship. One where it is; *'the heart that is broken not the garment torn'*, as we heard on Ash Wednesday from the Prophet Joel.

The Jewish people of the time of Jesus were focussed on obeying the law to the letter. On not breaking the Commandments. Indeed to not break any of the Commandments is a good thing. However, it would be a better thing to actively live the Commandments. To actively put GOD first and foremost in our lives, to actively honour GOD's name. To actively keep holy the Sabbath; to love and honour our parents, be they alive or dead. To actively defend life. To show love to our spouse and family, to share our goods with the poor, to speak out in defence of someone's good name and to put our self out to help a neighbour.

This is the kind of worship that Jesus is looking for. This is what it means when HE drove out the animal sellers and money changers. It is this, actively living the law of Love, that Jesus requires of those of us who call themselves Christian, not the mere obedience to a set of laws and rules.

As we reflect on and dare I say ruminate on this Gospel passage this week here are some reflective and active questions to aid in our rumination:

1. Look for moments in every day to actively live the Commandments, perhaps taking one a day. In other words:
 - a. Can I honestly say that I have no other god's before GOD? TV? My phone? Social Media? etc...
 - b. Do I take the name of the LORD in vain or tolerate others doing it? You get the idea!
2. If Jesus were in the temple of my heart what is that HE would want to drive out?
3. Choose a word or phrase that strikes you, either from the Gospel or one of the other readings, and use that as a prayer word during the week. Reciting it throughout the day, almost like a mantra, to keep our mind and heart on the word of GOD.

Closing Prayer

Lord GOD,

Your word is alive and active.

I pray that as we meditate on Your word that we will be filled with the life it brings.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.