



LENT WEEK 3

John 2:13-25

GOSPEL READING:

Just before the Jewish Passover Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and in the Temple he found people selling cattle and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting at their counters there. Making a whip out of some cord, he drove them all out of the Temple, cattle and sheep as well, scattered the money-changers' coins, knocked their tables over and said to the pigeon-sellers, 'Take all this out of here and stop turning my Father's house into a market.' Then his disciples remembered the words of scripture: Zeal for your house will devour me. The Jews intervened and said, 'What sign can you show us to justify what you have done?' Jesus answered, 'Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews replied, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this sanctuary: are you going to raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking of the sanctuary that was his body, and when Jesus rose from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and the words he had said.

During his stay in Jerusalem for the Passover many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he gave, but Jesus knew them all and did not trust himself to them; he never needed evidence about any man; he could tell what a man had in him.

REFLECTION:

In John's gospel we heard about the Cleansing of the Temple right near the start of his public ministry though here Jesus is already talking about the Resurrection! He clearly understood his mission from the very start.

The Temple manifested God's desire to live together with his human creatures and rule the world through them. Designed by David and built by Solomon, it was the place where heaven and earth met and a cornerstone of the Jewish people's covenant relationship with God.

In outward expression, the Temple officials were doing things by the book. Jesus knew of the adulteration of right worship taking place; the vendors selling the animals overcharging and the moneychangers charging exorbitant fees. Externally religious, interiorly greedy merchants!

In Jesus, we have the ultimate defender of humanity's authentic relationship with God. The righteous indignation he expressed in the Temple (John 2:13-25); the words he spoke to the woman caught in adultery (John 8:11); the lessons on interior cleanliness; the parables he taught, all explain and make present Jesus' desire for us all to turn back to God and thereby find true happiness.

- What strikes you most from this passage?
- What are some of the hypocrisies that might creep into our lives as Catholics today?
- What has helped you make your relationship with Christ more heartfelt and personal, less transactional and mechanical?