

## Homily for 3rd Sunday Lent March 7, 2021

Deacon Alvin M. Frerich

Third Sunday of Lent  
Year B

Lectionary: 29

FIRST READING Ex 20:1-17

In those days, God delivered all these commandments:

"I, the LORD, am your God,  
who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that place of slavery.  
You shall not have other gods besides me.  
You shall not carve idols for yourselves  
in the shape of anything in the sky above  
or on the earth below or in the waters beneath the earth;  
you shall not bow down before them or worship them.  
For I, the LORD, your God, am a jealous God,  
inflicting punishment for their fathers' wickedness  
on the children of those who hate me,  
down to the third and fourth generation;  
but bestowing mercy down to the thousandth generation  
on the children of those who love me and keep my commandments.

"You shall not take the name of the LORD, your God, in vain.  
For the LORD will not leave unpunished  
the one who takes his name in vain.

"Remember to keep holy the sabbath day.  
Six days you may labor and do all your work,  
but the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD, your God.  
No work may be done then either by you, or your son or daughter,  
or your male or female slave, or your beast,  
or by the alien who lives with you.  
In six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth,  
the sea and all that is in them;  
but on the seventh day he rested.  
That is why the LORD has blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

"Honor your father and your mother,  
that you may have a long life in the land

which the LORD, your God, is giving you.

You shall not kill.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife,  
nor his male or female slave, nor his ox or ass,  
nor anything else that belongs to him."

Responsorial Psalm

19:8, 9, 10, 11

R. (John 6:68c) Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.

The law of the LORD is perfect,

refreshing the soul;

The decree of the LORD is trustworthy,

giving wisdom to the simple.

R. Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.

The precepts of the LORD are right,

rejoicing the heart;

the command of the LORD is clear,

enlightening the eye.

R. Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.

The fear of the LORD is pure,

enduring forever;

the ordinances of the LORD are true,

all of them just.

R. Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.

They are more precious than gold,

than a heap of purest gold;

sweeter also than syrup

or honey from the comb.

R. Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.

SECOND READING 1 Cor 1:22-25

Brothers and sisters:

Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom,  
but we proclaim Christ crucified,  
a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,  
but to those who are called, Jews and Greeks alike,  
Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.  
For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom,  
and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

Verse Before the Gospel

[Jn 3:16](#)

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,  
so that everyone who believes in him might have eternal life.

GOSPEL 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.

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Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.

The kids were playing on the baseball diamond at the Little League park. The season had not begun, and the parents and coaches were in the building hammering out the schedules and rules for the upcoming season. There was no equipment on the baseball field, no bases, a few had gloves, and a one had a ball. An old gentleman was watching as the kids figured out their rules, "here is first base, that line is out, and you bat first". They proceeded to have a great time. As the old man watching, turned and told another adult watching, "if the parents, coaches, and umpires would just get out of the way, these kids would have a good time".

Today, in the gospel, it is somewhat similar. Jesus, makes a whip and chases the money changers out of the temple. It is not because what they were doing was not needed. Actually, money changers and sellers of animals for sacrifice was necessary. A writer of the time, estimated it could be as much as a million people coming to the temple to celebrate the passover. The people needed to have a way to purchase the animals for the sacrifice that they would be offering to God. The scripture scholars tell us, the Money changers were in the court yard were Gentiles would come to pray, a section made for them. How could these gentiles, pray if they were in the middle of a marketplace. For these kids playing there game on the baseball Diamond, They could not have played with the Coaches and parents were doing their arguing on the field, Thanks to the leaders, they move it instead into a meeting room.

There are three points in the Gospel we could focus on today.

The first is summed up in the words:

His disciples recalled the words of Scripture,  
Zeal for your house will consume me.  
Jesus, physically cleanses the temple,  
making it a place of worship for God

The Second point.

The Jews ask Jesus,

“What sign can you show us for doing this?”

Jesus answered,

“Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.”

In Jesus response, he is signifying, that He is the New Temple of God. The Temple of Jesus body offered as a sacrifice on the cross for us. He takes over the role of the Temple as the way in which we encounter God, enter into relationship with God, and come to know God. If we want to know God, we must first know Jesus.

The third point, and one I wish to focus on during this time of Lent, Jesus is the New Temple of God. We are all one body, the Mystical Body of Christ. Therefore we are all call to be a Temple of God. As Jesus cleansed the Temple, we are being called to cleansed our Temple, for Lord. ~~How do we do that?~~

The lent season is a time for repentance, a time for evaluation what is important in life and what is not.

God wants to live in our hearts. How do we invite God into our hearts? Lent is a time for repentance, self examination of our conscience.

The First Reading today, from Exodus, one would do well, to use it for our examination of conscience. The commandments are Holy. God gave the Jews, through Moses, the 10 commands, a blue print for living life on earth. Read through them slowly. Which one grabs your attention? Do not try to deal with them all at once? Where does the Holy Spirit lead me today? Think about the commandment: Did I give a blessing or a curse to the other. God gave the Israelites the blue print, the commandments, affirmed by Jesus, when he said, The two greatest commandments are: Love God and love our neighbor. Take a Missalette, read the First Reading from Exodus: the Ten Commandments handed down to us. The promise is so clear and direct what is necessary, to obtain mercy for ourselves and our children.

For I, the LORD, your God, am a jealous God,  
inflicting punishment for their fathers' wickedness

on the children of those who hate me,  
down to the third and fourth generation;  
but bestowing mercy down to the thousandth generation  
on the children of those who love me and keep my commandments.  
What better gift could you give you child, then the lord bestowing mercy on  
children to the thousandth generation.

Jesus, as he is holding a child, tells us " unless we become like a child,  
will shall not enter into the Kingdom. Or if we cause on of these children to  
be lost, it would be better we had a millstone tied to our next and tossed  
into the sea.

The children playing, in there simplistic way, experienced an encounter  
with God, just by playing together. The old man, spending time, watching  
the laughter, the giggles of the children, he was experiencing an encounter  
with God.

The commandments, by following God blueprint for everlasting life, we  
will be giving people a blessing instead of giving them a curse. By following  
the first command,

I, the LORD, am your God, .

Do I give God the praise he is due? Do I spend God time letting him know?

How we live our lives according to the commandments, as God  
intended, will determine if we really believe.

Lord, you have the words of everlasting Life.