

**Third Sunday of Lent – Year B**

**March 4, 2018**

**Christ the Good Shepherd, ORCC**

**Reflection by Father Charles Blanchard**

Exodus 20:1-17

1 Corinthians 1:22-25

John 2:13-25

WELCOME to this AMAZING Church where we hear God's Word and feast at this Table for spiritual comfort where **YOU're LOVED** without measure!

My sisters and brothers; enduring members of this Church and new-found-Friends of Christ the Good Shepherd, WELCOME! You and are embracing our Lenten journey of fasting, prayer, and alms eqqqgiving; so as to be **CLEANSED** or **MADE ANEW** in God's Peace and Love.

We are temples of the Holy Spirit. Christ cleanses the physical temple in Jerusalem of all that is not leading people to God. We ourselves must be cleansed of all that does not lead us to God.

The first reading, from the Book of Exodus, it says **KNOWING** and **STRIVING**, to live the Commandments is one way of being cleansed for God's Peace and Love. We cannot achieve our own salvation, but you and I can strive to cooperate with what God is asking of us; and has asked of His People throughout the ages, to be slow to anger, abounding in compassion, and full of great love..

The Book of Exodus makes it clear that God wants His People for Himself and is jealous in His love for us. This is a good jealousy that leads us to salvation and assures us that God is always there striving to love us and draw us to Himself.

Lent is a wonderful time to reflect on our own responses to God's Peace and Love.

- **First, we can always ask ourselves: Do I really believe that God loves me, just as I am right now?**
- **Second, Do I believe that God is my ally in seeking to cleanse my life of all that impedes my relationship with God?**
- **Third, Do I really trust the love of this God, who never wants to destroy me but who always wants me to be for Him?**

**The second reading is from the First Letter to the Corinthians. Saint Paul is clear that he proclaims Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles.**

- **Imagine how odd it must have sounded, to people of Saint Paul's time, to say that a Savior had actually come and was crucified—but that the Crucified One was and is God! Even today people find it very difficult to believe that Jesus is Lord and God.**
- **We can think of a Eastern song that proclaims: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life! That is the heart of our Christian proclamation.**
- **We must believe that Jesus is fully human and fully God; that Jesus lived among us, that Jesus was crucified for us—and yes, Jesus rose from the dead for us.**
- **Over and over we return to the incredible Good News:**
  - **Christ rose from the dead!**
  - **Christ is risen!**
  - **He died for us!**
  - **But, whether Catholic or non Catholic, Jew or Greek, LGBT or non-LGBT, single or married, He rose for us as well, to**

**show us that there is another life and that there is life after death and that we are all invited to share in this Divine Life.**

**Today's section of the Gospel of Saint John reflects on the cleansing of the temple and shows us Jesus telling those who doubt Him: "Destroy this temple and I shall raise it up in three days."**

- Those around Him did not understand until after the Resurrection.**
- Jesus spoke to His followers and to others with clarity, even when they could not yet understand what He was saying.**
- Do we listen to the Lord?**
- Can we believe His words?**

**Lent prepares us to celebrate the death and resurrection of the Lord—when we have faith.**

**In our remaining days, our Lenten journey of fasting, prayer, and alms giving, let's collectively be **CLEANSED** or **MADE ANEW** in God's Peace and Love.**

