

2021 March 07

*Third Sunday of Lent*

**Reading:**

**First:** Exodus 20.1-17 "Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy." (8)

**The Psalm:** 19 "The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart." (8a)

**Second:** 1 Corinthians 1.18, 20-25 "God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom." (25)

**The Gospel:** John 2.13-25 "The zeal for your house will consume me." (17b)

### ***The Confrontation!***

Toward the end of today's gospel John the Evangelist says that Jesus did not trust the people who believed in him. Their belief in him was because of the signs they saw. The Pharisees and the priests did not believe. They asked for more signs in order to approve his works. In reality they were looking for loopholes to accuse and condemn him. Jesus did not trust the so-called believers because he knew that they would walk away at the slightest distraction or threat and they would forget all that they saw and experienced.

These, the Pharisees and the people, were those who really saw, witnessed, and experienced Jesus in his earthly life. They heard most of the things Jesus said and often were astounded by his words and deeds, the like no one ever said, did or heard of before. They saw or came to know of the signs, wonders, miracles, and healings Jesus did, like which no one in human history has ever done. They ate the bread and fish he multiplied. However, they faltered; they did forsake Jesus, and joined the Pharisees to condemn and crucify him. From the mood and their look Jesus realized that their fascination with Jesus was transitory. That was the reason John wrote, "*Jesus would not entrust himself to them.*" (John 2.24)

Those of us living today, we haven't seen Jesus; we haven't heard directly from Jesus except maybe, through the experience of his invisible presence and unheard and inspiring whispers to us. However, we continue to believe Jesus and in his words and promises. We believe that all that we have received through the gospels really happened, Jesus did say and do those things, and that he died and rose up from the dead, that he, the risen Lord, is living today among us and within us. We continue to believe in his promises. We believe that we will see his glory, that he will glorify us in his kingdom. I would say our faith today is stronger than those who seemed to believe in Jesus in his lifetime on earth.

Often we doubt the strength of our faith. Perhaps the only proof we need to confirm ourselves in the truth of our faith in Jesus is our very presence in this assembly in the church congregation, our life of faith in the parish community, our witnessing to our faith in our daily life, in our receiving the sacraments, in our responses to the day-to-day events and challenges of life in the world in our times, our daily prayers and supplications to Jesus. All these acts and behaviour are eloquent proof that we believe in Jesus and that we are his true followers. This is what Jesus said to St. Thomas the Apostle, "*Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe*" (John 20.29) Faith is a divine virtue, it is a free gift from God, and God in his great providence chose us and bestowed upon us this gift of faith. Let us rejoice and feel proud of it and share it with as many as possible. By this we become dispensers of the gifts of God, of the gift of faith.

Fr. George

*(The readings of the day are given at the beginning. The numbers in parentheses refer to the quotes from them. Good to go through the readings beforehand to properly understand the Reflections)*

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