

Daily Mass Homily
3 April 2020
Friday of the Fifth Week of Lent

“Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am in distress. Deliver me from the hands of my enemies and those who pursue me. O Lord, let me never be put to shame, for I call on you.”

Reading 1: Jeremiah 20: 10-13

Psalm 18: **In my distress I called upon the Lord, and he heard my voice.**

Gospel: John 10:31-42

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Again, today before I start my homily, I have a couple of items to share with you.

First, I want you all to be aware that there are, once again, a group of individuals that are sending out emails and such claiming again to be Father James or someone from the parish seeking assistance for those that are in need, in essence, it is again saying that Fr. James need a favor to help someone. These are scams. Please do not reply to these emails. While I do ask that if you can continue to contribute to the parish as you can each week by dropping off your donation at the office or drop it into the regular mail, I will not be texting or emailing individual parishioners making these requests. If you have any questions, please contact the parish office. Also, be careful when it comes to the IRS as well. Some people have already received fake “stimulus checks” in the mail or have been contacted to give their account information so that the government can deposit your check, these too can also be scams. Just be careful and alert.

Second, this weekend we come to the celebration of Palm Sunday. Again, as I mentioned yesterday, I am going to try to make a recording of the reading of the passion and have it posted to the website. Additionally, there will be blessed palms available outside of both St. Louis Church and Sacred Heart Church. At St. Louis they will be outside the front door and at Sacred Heart they will be right inside the

Adoration Chapel and by the entrance door near the bell tower. Please try and keep touching the palms to a minimum and if others happen to be there at the same time you are picking up your palms, please keep a six-foot distance.

Again, there is someone in the office every day during regular office hours. Please feel free to call or email and we will assist you as best we can.

May the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, lead us to the eternal life that is promised to each of us!

With love,

Fr. James

Homily for Friday of the Fifth Week of Lent

As we are getting closer and closer to the Passion of our Lord and Holy Week our readings have taken a dramatic change and have a different focus. While our early readings during Lent offer us ideas and suggestions in relation to the life that our father in heaven wants us to be living, our later readings begin to take on a more somber tone. We have been hearing more and more of how the religious leaders were trying to trap Jesus and to find a way in which they can arrest him. The problem is that more and more people are beginning to follow Jesus and to believe what he is teaching, mainly because of the things that they have seen Jesus do, healing the blind man and telling people that he knows God the father and that he is one with him.

In the first reading this Friday from the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 20:10-13) we hear that many people are whispering, there is terror on every side. "All those that were my friends are on the watch for any misstep of mine". These words are from Jeremiah, and the people do not like hearing the words that Jeremiah the prophet is speaking. He is challenging them and as we all know, we don't like to be challenged, especially when it comes to the way that we may be living our lives and the fact that maybe we need to change those ways.

This is also a foreshadowing of what the people are going to say about Jesus. I am sure that Jesus is afraid. He knows that there are people that are trying to put a stop to his teaching and the many great works that he is carrying out, showing now only the power that he has, that comes from God, but also that we can be set free from all the struggles and things that we face in our lives each day. Jesus also knows that everyone is watching him, especially those that want him in jail, especially even those that are his friends

Sometimes, I know that we too can feel that we are constantly being watched, even by other people in our own church. It is as though that everyone is watching to see if we might make a misstep. There are those that are judging others and the lives that live. Are they being true Christians? Are they following what Jesus asks us to do and also what the church wants us to do? Sometimes it feels that there is always someone there waiting to pounce and correct us when we have done something wrong or even cast us out for not doing what they think that we should be doing.

One of the images that I picked up along the way at my time at Mt. Angel Abbey as a seminarian was that the monastery is a hospital for sinners. The men at the monastery are working out their salvation and they are not yet perfect. The church can be seen in a similar light, the church is a hospital for sinners, we go to the hospital because we are sick with sin and God will cleanse up and wash away our impurities.

As we continue our Lenten journey, let us remember that we are all sinners and are working on our salvation, let us not look at the missteps of our brothers and sisters, waiting to pounce on them, but let us focus on our own sins and brokenness and continue to prepare ourselves for the coming Easter celebrations.