



3rd Sunday Lent, Yr B

Lectio Divina

Lectio: This Sunday's gospel is taken from the Gospel of St John. The text comes before Jesus has started his preaching. He has been baptized by John the Baptist. He has met with his first disciples¹. Then he was at the wedding at Cana with his mother and his disciples. Jesus gives 'The first Sign', changing the water into wine². The wedding at Cana ends what is called 'The Week of Discovery' i.e. the first part of the narrative of John's gospel following 'The Prologue'. John's gospel was the last of the gospels written so John is building on a significant lived experience of the early Church. So, though our text is early in John's gospel, he refers to the Resurrection and the experience of the first disciples³.

So in our text, Jesus steps out on his own and goes to Jerusalem and the Temple there. The Temple was "*like the heart of the Jewish nation and the symbol of their religion. ... But the Temple is also the place where corruption and lust for power have taken hold*" ⁴. So we can see the Lenten challenge for us – what corruption, or the like, has crept into our routines in our lives? Jesus can see "*what a man had in him*" (Jn 2:25b).

To facilitate the Temple priests' services for Temple sacrifices: ①the people brought gifts that were then at the disposition of the chief priests, ②the people purchased animals etc for the sacrifices, ③the people could only buy these items with 'Temple money', so there were money-changers and they were taxed by the Temple authorities. Unfortunately, the opportunities for corruption by Temple authorities were being taken up!

Read: John 2: 13 - 25

Meditatio: In what moments of my life have I 'stepped out on my own'? What place is the center of my religious life? What do I think of the Church and fundraising? What experiences of corruption have I encountered? What have I done to counter corruption? Am I looking critically at my life and my motives especially during this Lent? Do I support my Parish through regular donations? Do I expect to receive the services of the Church without contributing to its upkeep? Is there a danger that our church buildings can be like a market? Do I understand that my body is a 'sanctuary of the Holy Spirit'? Do I trust in the power of Jesus' resurrection? Has the Lord given me signs of resurrection in my life? Do appreciate that I am continually growing as a follower of Jesus, 46 or more years? Do I have hope in the resurrection of the dead? Can Jesus trust me? Am I open to what the Lord might call me to change as he knows what is in me? Is Lent a graced opportunity for me?

Oratio: Pray for the elimination of corruption in all its forms throughout the world. Pray for those engaged in fighting against corruption. Pray for a clear understanding of the Resurrection. Pray for renewal of ourselves and in our world through the practices of Lent. Pray that we will see signs supporting our trust in Jesus' ways⁵. Pray that through Lenten reflection we may recognize areas in need of change. Pray that we will be worthy of Jesus' trust. Pray that we will enter into Lent trusting that the Lord can show us the truth in our lives.

Contemplatio – Dwell in stillness, simply aware of the boundless expanse of mercy that surrounds you.

After your prayer – Make our parish churches places of prayer.

✍ Fr Joe

John 2: 13 - 25

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 changes 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 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.

Notes:

1 This meeting was the text of 2nd Sun in Ord time Yr B. you can refer back to Lec Div of that Sunday.

2 John refers to Seven Signs or miracles throughout his Gospel. These Signs show Jesus' power to bring to life and renew the world. Is this why the Jews ask for a sign "*to justify what you have done?*" (Jn 2:18)?

3 John's Gospel, is written last when people were starting to reflect on the identity of Jesus. So John's Gospel is more reflective than the first Gospel written – Mark's.

4 Consider footnote on Jn 2:13 of Christian Community Bible, pastoral edn 1988.

5 i.e. to believe in his name. cf Jn 2:23.