

Wellspring Fransalian Center for Spirituality

March 7, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Our first Scripture reading today, the third Sunday of Lent, invites us to meditate on God's commands. The demands of God's law are spelled out for the Israelites then and for us now. Many consider these as ten suggestions while others consider them as moral absolutes. There are still others who consider them as of no particular value in modern society. We are invited to see the Ten Commandments as God's gracious gifts of guidance for our life, which came from His heart. They teach us how to live with deep reverence for self, for others, for the world and above all for God of love. Let us embrace these words of wisdom and allow them to guide our life.

Our responsorial Psalm sings the praises of God's law. The Psalmist says, "The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul; the decree of the Lord is trustworthy, giving wisdom to the simple." The Psalmist sings about the Law of God as being perfect for man, reviving the soul of man, refreshing his spirit and redeeming the world. Our responsorial psalm today carries only four verses of the fifteen verses of Psalm 19. I encourage you to turn to your Bible and pray the whole Psalm and meditate it on it for some time.

In the second reading St. Paul speaks of being moved by the wisdom of God which was contrary to Jewish expectations and defied the logic of the Greeks. Paul's message did not fit into the wisdom of the world at the time. Wisdom was thought of as a quality which could be achieved through intellectual and philosophical pursuits. Paul spoke of wisdom as God's gracious gift and the fullness of that gift was revealed on the cross.

The Gospel of today invites us to meet Jesus as he cleanses the temple, moved by zeal for his Father's House. Jesus then challenged the Jews to destroy the temple and proclaimed that he would build it up in three days! Jesus proclaimed a unique and intimate relationship with the Father. He compared the temple to the temple of his body. Destroy the temple and it would be rebuilt in three days, he said. Temple was the meeting place, the place of encounter with God and God's word. Now Jesus himself becomes the place for meeting God and hearing God's word because he is God and God's word.

The first reading offers us the commandments as coming from the heart of God, The Psalmist offers us the whole creation as proclaiming the word of God without speech or word, St. Paul offers us the cross as the wisdom of God, and Jesus offers himself as the word of God. Let us take a few minutes each day of this week to reflect on the word of God that comes to us through the Scriptures, through people we meet and through God's creation that surround us.

God bless you and your family.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

Third Sunday of Lent

March 7, 2021

Penitential Act

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Take a moment of silence to thank the Lord for all that has been.

Take another moment to remember your sinfulness and to pray for forgiveness and peace.

I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

Lord have mercy Christ have mercy Lord have mercy

Collect

O God, author of every mercy and of all goodness,
who in fasting, prayer and almsgiving
have shown us a remedy for sin,
look graciously on this confession of our lowliness,
that we, who are bowed down by our conscience,
may always be lifted up by your mercy.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Liturgy of the Word

Prayerfully read the first reading and then read my reflections below and spend a few moments of personal reflection. Do the same with Responsorial Psalm and other readings.

First Reading: Exodus 20:1-17

We are invited to consider God's commands and mediate on them. The demands of God's law are spelled out for the Israelites then and for us now. Many today consider these as the ten suggestions while others consider them as moral absolutes. There are still others who consider them as of no particular value in modern society.

It is up to us now to meditate on them as God's word of wisdom. We are invited to see the Ten Commandments as God's gifts and his loving and gracious guidance for our life. They teach us how to live with deep reverence for self, for others, for the world and above all for God. They are divine guidance, gifts of God's wisdom, for us. Let us allow these words to sink into our hearts and allow them to transform our life.

Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.

Listen to the Ten Commandments again. Allow them to enter your hearts. Contemplate the gift of God's wisdom in these commands.

Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 19

The psalmist gazes at the heavens and contemplates the mystery of creation. He "hears" the voice of God...the heavens declare and the skies proclaim and the earth sings! No speech or word, but the whole marvel of creation speaks, proclaims the "glory" of God! Behind every created reality is God's word...no word or speech, creation proclaims! The whole creation, even without a word, spells out the divine word!

Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.

God has revealed himself through the marvel of creation. Our poet joined creation in singing the glory of God. Now he moves on to meditating and singing the word that came from the mouth of God, from the very heart of God, the word of Torah, the law of the Lord that keeps all creation in good order. Because, Torah, the Law of God is perfect for man. It revives his soul, refreshes his being and redeems his world.

Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.

Our poet concludes his poem with a profound prayer: "May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer". Let us make this our prayer for the week.

Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.

**The law of the Lord is perfect,
Refreshing the soul;
The decree of the Lord is trustworthy,
Giving wisdom to the simple!**

Pray the whole Psalm now – if not now, pray it later when you have a little more time

Second Reading: I Corinthians 1:22-25

Jews and Greeks regarded Paul as a fool. He proclaimed a crucified and risen Messiah. This was contrary to Jewish expectations and defied the logic of the Greeks. Paul's message did not fit into the wisdom of the world at the time. Wisdom was thought of as a quality which could be achieved through intellectual and philosophical pursuits.

Paul was moved by a sense of urgency about his mission. He felt, as he says, urged or compelled to proclaim the crucified Lord. He spoke of wisdom as God's gracious gift and the fullness of that gift was revealed in the cross.

Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.

**Christ crucified is God's gift of wisdom to the world.
Welcome this gift and let it transform your life.**

Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.

Gospel: John 2:13-25

Money changers, animals and those who sold them busied themselves in the temple and the consecrated place became a marketplace. Moved by "zeal" for the "Father's House", Jesus cleansed the temple. Jesus was accused of blasphemy and this incident was brought at his trial as evidence against him. Jesus not only cleansed the temple but challenged them to destroy the temple and he would build it up in three days! The temple had been under construction for over 40 years, still incomplete and he would build it in three days?!

Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.

Jesus proclaimed a unique and intimate relationship with the Father. He compared the temple to the temple of his body. Destroy the temple and it would be rebuilt in three days, he said. He spoke of the temple of his body.

Temple was the meeting place, the place of encounter with God and God's word. Now Jesus himself becomes the place for meeting God and hearing God's word.

Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.

Contemplate the wisdom of God in the death and resurrection of Jesus! Jesus is, for us, God's word and God's wisdom!

Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.

Be Still for a few moments!

Pray for your needs and those of your family and community.

Intercessions: Take a few moments to pray from your heart.....

Remember our Holy Father Pope Francis, Bishop Joseph Strickland and all our spiritual leaders.

Remember our president and all leaders of our country and the world and pray that God will enlighten them with His wisdom to make wise decisions during these difficult days.

Remember your most urgent need and that of your family and those in your care.

Remember those who are affected by the pandemic and those who care for them.

Remember all who suffer and all who have no one to care for them.

Our Father...

Spiritual Communion

Lord Jesus, I believe in your real presence in the Eucharist, the Sacrament of the Altar. I place myself in your presence and adore you, worship you and glorify you. I am unable to receive you in Holy Communion at Mass today. I hunger and thirst for your way, your truth and your life. Come into my heart Lord and satisfy my hunger and quench my thirst. Bless me that I may give witness to your presence in my life. Amen

Be Still: Spend a few moments in silent prayer

Prayer after Communion:

As we receive the pledge
of things yet hidden in heaven
and are nourished while still on earth
with the Bread that comes from on high,
we humbly entreat you, O Lord,
that what is being brought about in us in mystery
may come to true completion.
Through Christ our Lord.

Let us praise the Lord. Thanks be to God.

**Saint of the Day, March 7 - Saints Perpetua and Felicity and 10 other saints
are remembered this day**

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs



