

Third Sunday of Lent Year A. 3rd March 2023, The Purification of the Temple.

The first reading presented us with the Ten Commandments of God. They are not a punishment to us but rather a gift from God. In a nutshell, the Ten Commandments provide us with a moral framework for living a righteous and ethical life, guiding individuals in their relationships with God and others. They continue to serve as a foundational set of principles for many people around the world. The world that was created in an orderly manner has become something else, there is nothing like orderliness in our world; the commandments of God are there to help us to reshape our moral lives.

This commandment that Moses gave was to help us understand how God loves us and that he does not wish the death of sinners. (Ezekiel 18:32) Later Jesus would summarize the Law into two, the love of God and neighbor. The law aimed at Love. If we must love, it shall go beyond boundaries. As Christians, we can't claim to love God while we hate the people we see around us. Love is the greatest of all the commandments (Mark 12:31), expected to be practiced by everyone as long as Christianity is concerned.

Today the devil is deceiving many people to trust in themselves, to think of themselves as the ultimate goal and no other again. This is why the world is becoming so self-centered, we think we don't need others therefore, there is no need to Love beyond oneself.

Jesus was angry in the gospel not because he was an angry man, but because he was not happy with the attitude of those who rejected the love of God, by refusing to follow the law regarding the temple. A temple is where God dwells and if you Love God, you will not desecrate his house by engaging in mundane activities leading to cheating the poor and the needy through money changing. Because they desecrated the temple, Jesus promised to destroy it and build a new one after three days. He was talking about how he would bring salvation to mankind through death and resurrection.

God has the message of eternal life, and He desires that we live by this message so that we can attain the joys of being reunited with Him. The actions of the money changers in the temple were tantamount to disobedience of the first commandment.

Very often we like the money changers we desecrated the Holy Communion. How we receive where and when. We pray during this period of Lent for more understanding to love God above everything else.

Peace, Fr JINGBE Simon