

Meditation 2014-03-07
Friday After Ash Wednesday
Meditation Theme: “What Reward Do I Seek?”

Place yourself in the presence of Jesus Christ. Make sure He knows that every thought, action, and experience of today is dedicated exclusively to Him.

The Scenario: From the Gospel of today’s Mass

AT that time, Jesus said to His disciples had entered into Capharnaum, You have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thy enemy. But I say to you, Love your enemies: do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you: That you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven, who maketh his sun to rise upon the good, and bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust. For if you love them that love you, what reward shall you have? Do not even the publicans this? And if you salute your brethren only, what do you more? Do not also the heathens this? Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect. Take heed that you do not your justice before men, to be seen by them: otherwise you shall not have a reward of your Father who is in heaven. Therefore when thou dost an almsdeed, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honored by men. Amen I say to you, they have received their reward. But when thou dost alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth. That thy alms may be in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee.

Point 1. – Jesus tells us that He is establishing a new law, to “love thy enemies.” This is different from what men did before.

Point 2. – Jesus tells us that even the heathens love their brothers. We need to do more than this. We need to meet a higher standard.

Point 3. – Jesus tells us that almsdeeds are not to be done so as to be praised by others for having done them. Our good works should not draw attention to ourselves. God knows of them, and that is enough.

Meditation: All people are affected by others around them. We have to live among them and get along with them. This is always easier if they think well of us, and we tend to try to make that happen. There is nothing wrong with being thought well of, is there?

Do I consider it important to be thought well of? Why is it good for me? What do I get from being respected by people around me? In what way do I benefit? If the praise of others is good, is more better? If others think I’m great, what reward does that bring me? Do I get extra money for that? Do I get the best table at restaurants? (Would that be a result of me, or the size of the tip?) If everyone thinks I’m wonderful, do I get a higher place in Heaven when I go there?

Who do I have to impress to get a higher place in Heaven? How do I impress God? Would He be impressed by my making a public display of piety? Would He be impressed by the number of people who were convinced of my sanctity? Can He be impressed at all? I know He pays attention if I commit sin. Could I impress Him by not sinning? Can I impress Him simply by following His rules? If I follow God's rules so that I will gain a benefit, is that better than following God's rules just because I love Him? With which do I suppose God will be more pleased?

Colloquy: Take a minute or two to converse with God, in any of His three Persons, or the Triune God complete in Himself. Tell Him what you have learned from your meditation, and thank Him for it.

Hold the Gain: Consider what you can do to keep the fruits of your meditation. Try to plan how you can think of them through the day, and through the days ahead. Come up with ways you can apply your conclusions to what you do in your everyday life, conversations you engage in, the choice of what movie to watch, what books you choose to read.