

Meditation 2014-03-26
Wednesday Of The Third Week Of Lent
Meditation Theme: “Whose Lead Do I Follow?”

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 there came to Jesus from Jerusalem scribes and Pharisees, saying: Why do Thy disciples transgress the tradition of the ancients? For they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But He answering, said to them: Why do you also transgress the commandment of God for your tradition? For God said: Honour thy father and mother: And: He that shall curse father or mother, let him die the death. But you say: Whosoever shall say to father or mother, The gift whatsoever proceedeth from me, shall profit thee. And he shall not honour his father or his mother: and you have made void the commandment of God for your tradition. Hypocrites, well hath Isaias prophesied of you, saying: This people honoureth me with their lips: but their heart is far from me. And in vain do they worship me, teaching doctrines and commandments of men. And having called together the multitudes unto Him, He said to them: Hear ye and understand. Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man: but what cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. Then came His disciples, and said to him: Dost Thou know that the Pharisees, when they heard this word, were scandalized? But He answering, said: Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they are blind, and leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the pit. And Peter answering, said to Him: Expound to us this parable. But He said: Are you also yet without understanding? Do you not understand, that whatsoever entereth into the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the privy? But the things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and those things defile a man. For from the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies. These are the things that defile a man. But to eat with unwashed hands doth not defile a man.

Point 1. – The Pharisees reprimand Jesus because His disciples do not ceremoniously wash before eating. Jesus responds that the Pharisees are worse because they break the Law of God when they teach incorrectly.

Point 2. – Jesus is advised that the Pharisees are scandalized by His words. Jesus tells them to not follow the Pharisees, for they could wind up in the same pit into which the Pharisees will fall.

Point 3. – Jesus tells His disciples that it is not what a man eats that defiles him, but rather it is what he speaks that can defile him.

Meditation: Jesus gives the example of the Pharisees' incorrect interpretation of the commandment as something that is much more serious a fault than not washing ceremoniously before eating. The Pharisees break a more serious law and criticize others for breaking a lesser one.

Am I like a Pharisee? Do I "nit-pick" little faults I observe in others while ignoring larger ones in myself? Do I notice other people's mistakes, and think critically of them? Am I on the lookout for them? Do I wait anxiously for the opportunity to find fault? Does finding fault with others make me feel as if I am "less bad?" Is there something bad about me that I need to find ways to feel less so? Is my goodness only in comparison to others? Should it be? Can it be?

Am I spiritually blind? Does my soul see as clearly as it should? As it needs to? Who does my soul follow? What thoughts or concepts do I allow to sway me? Do I change my thinking just because I hear something that seems to "make sense?" Do I follow along with the crowd? Do I adopt positions or attitudes based on what "everyone knows?" Do I have confidence that those I follow can see where they are headed? If they fall into a pit, will I wind up right there with them? Who is the most trustworthy leader I can follow? Who will definitely not lead me into a pit? How can I be certain that I will always follow? Can I establish safeguards? Can I make plans?

Are the things that I treat as important really important? There are many rules that I follow in life. How can I tell which are more important and which are less so? Have I ever thought about it? Do I treat the less important with great respect and let the more important go ignored? Is what comes out of my heart always good? Do I pay attention, and do my best to make it so?

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.