

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of lent

The lesson is based on the Gospel of St John 2:13-25

### Jesus clears the temple



#### Instructions

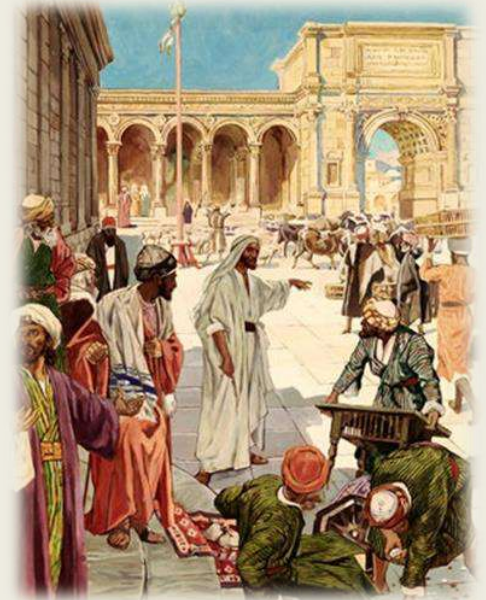
Read the gospel of St John 2:13-25 and;

- Read the following passage and
- Do the activity below

1. The temple in Jerusalem was built by Herod about twenty years before the Lord Jesus was born. It was a center of Jewish religious life and pilgrims would come even from outside Israel, hence the need for money changers. There was a succession of courtyards leading to the inner grounds where only the priests were allowed. The outermost courtyard was also called the court of the gentiles. There, animals needed for sacrifice were for sale, as it was more convenient for pilgrims to buy them at the site than to bring them over far distances. The richer ones may offer cattle and sheep while the poor may offer pigeons (Jn. 2:15-16).
2. As Jesus cleansed the temple with great anger, He said, "Take all this out of here and stop turning my Father's house into a market" (v. 17). Luke, Mark and Matthew would use harsher words, referring to the market as "den of thieves". Bible scholars describe some of the unpleasant practices happening in the temple grounds. There were profiteering, monopolies and corruption. The pilgrims had little choice but buy from dishonest dealers. Temple authorities got their share of the business. The temple was being used for activities other than worship. We are not talking of the inner courtyards. These were happening in the outer courtyard like our very own church compounds for the general public. Yet, Jesus was angered.
3. **What are temples for? Or for that matter, what are churches for?** Jesus gave the answer, "My house is a house of prayer" (Lk. 19:46). A temple or a church is a house of prayer. It is a meeting place between for God and his people, such encounters may be facilitated by persons such as priests, or by sacred objects such as icons. The encounter may be facilitated by rituals and ceremonies. The meeting may have the quiet simplicity of a heart to heart conversation.

4. Worship is not only an individual affair. It is also a community activity. Wherever people come together to pray as a community, they also become engaged in conversations about their day to day concerns. Places of worship also become venues for meetings, teaching and decision-making. As often happens, wherever there are gatherings, business takes place. The lesson of the gospel is that business activities must have their proper places and must observe ethical considerations of justice and charity.

5. All our activities are to be done in the light of the first commandment (first reading), "You shall have no gods, except me" (Ex. 20:3). All other commandments follow from this. I venture to say that what made Jesus angry was the worship of money in God's own house. Such worship of money is related to the present modern temptations of materialism (Greediness). These are the worship of things, pleasures, and commodities. This idolatry angers God.



This Lenten season is a time to do our own temple cleansing. St. Paul refers to us as temples of the Holy Spirit.

#### Prayer

Lord, I know that I am a sinner who is in need of Your mercy and, at times, in need of Your holy wrath. Help me to humbly receive Your rebukes of love and to allow You to drive all sin from my life. Have mercy on me, dear Lord. Please have mercy. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen

#### Activity

1. What did Jesus do in today's Gospel?
2. What does Jesus call the Temple?
3. What did Jesus say when the people asked for a sign of his authority?
4. How would you describe the people's response to Jesus' words?
5. Apart from worship what was the temple used for?
6. After how many days did Jesus say he will rebuild the temple? What did that really mean? Explain.

## Eucharist our food for the journey

### The presence of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament

**Notes: In this season of Lent we focus on prayer to the Blessed Sacrament since praying is one of the pillars of the Lenten period. We will also refer to the Bible verses in order to fully appreciate the presence of our Lord in our midst.**



**Spend less time at the computer and more time in My presence. I wait for you here. I long to see you before Me. I want to give you all the signs of My friendship that My Heart has destined for you and for no other, but for this you must come to Me. Follow the promptings of My grace. By A Benedictine Monk.**

Prayer and meditation before our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament are great ways to spend some special time with Him. You can ask Him for graces for yourself or for loved ones, reflect on His Word, or just keep Him company! And it's no bother for Jesus. In fact, He very much wants to see you!

**He is truly present.** "I myself am the living bread come down from heaven." (Jn 6:35). Day and night Jesus dwells in the Blessed Sacrament because of his Infinite love for you. "Behold I will be with you always even to the end of the world," because "I have loved you with an everlasting love, and constant is my affection for you." (Mt 28:20; Jer 31:3)

**The specific way that Jesus asks you to love him in return is to spend one quiet hour with him in the Blessed Sacrament.** "Where your treasure is, there is your heart...." "Could you not watch one hour with me?" (Mt 6:21; 26:40). When you look upon the Sacred Host, you look upon Jesus, the Son of God. "Indeed, this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks upon the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life. Him I will raise up on the last day." (Jn 6:40)

**Each moment that you spend in His Eucharistic Presence will increase his divine life within you and deepen your personal relationship and friendship with him.** "I have come that you may have life, and have it more abundantly." "I am the vine and you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him shall bear much fruit because without me, you can do nothing." (Jn 15:5).

**Each hour you spend with Jesus will deepen his divine peace in your heart.** "Come to me all of you who are weary and find life burdensome and I will refresh you..." "Cast all of your anxieties upon the one who cares for you..."

"My Peace is My Gift to you." (Mt 11:28; Pt 5:7; Jn 14:17)

**Jesus will give you all the graces you need to be happy.** "The Lamb on the throne will shepherd them. He will lead them to the springs of life-giving water." (Rev 7:17). Jesus is infinitely deserving of our unceasing thanksgiving and adoration for all he has done for our salvation. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honour, glory and praise." (Rev. 5:12)

**For peace in our country!** "When my people humble themselves and seek my presence... I will revive their land." (2Chr 7:14). Each hour you spend with Jesus on earth will leave your soul everlastingly more beautiful and glorious in heaven! "They who humble themselves shall be exalted...." "All of us, gazing on the Lord's glory with unveiled faces, are being transformed from glory to glory into his very image." (Lk 18:14; 2Cor 3:18)

**Jesus will bless you, your family and the whole world for this hour of faith you spend with Him in the Blessed Sacrament.** "Blessed are they who do not see and yet believe..." "Faith can move mountains..." "What is needed is trust... "Behold I come to make all things new."

(Jn 20:29; Mk 11:23; Mk 5:36; Rev 21:5). Each moment you spend with

Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament brings joy, pleasure, and delight to his Sacred Heart! "My joy, my pleasure, my delight is to be with you." (Prov 8:31)

**Think of it!** Our Lord Jesus Christ could calm the winds and the waves with a rebuke (Mk 5:35-41). He could turn a meal for one into one for 5000 (Mt 14:13-23). He could even heal people of their physical afflictions with just a touch (such as in Lk: 12-14). This very same God of such power and majesty makes Himself present and readily available in countless altars and tabernacles in churches around the world to be with each one of us, indeed to be with you!

So, how should we **"revere this amazing gift,"** as the Blessed Sacrament is called in the famous hymn Jesus My Lord My God My All? Approach Christ, as always, with humbleness, contrition and love. Make your heart a vessel into which He can pour his grace. Unite your troubled heart with His Sacred Heart and ask Him for the wisdom and graces you need in difficult situations.



#### Prayer

**Jesus, each time I look at the sacred Host, sanctify my eyes, that they may close more and more to all that is merely earthly. Jesus, each time I look at the sacred Host, send a ray of divine light into my soul, that I may better know you and myself. Jesus, each time I look at the sacred Host, send a flame of divine love into my heart to consume everything in it that is displeasing to You and to set it all on fire with Your love. Now and in eternity may my only desire be to contemplate the infinite beauty of Your divine countenance which delights the angels. Amen.**

# St. Joseph

**Theme: St Joseph**

**Objectives: Knowing and understanding St. Joseph as a father of our Lord and protector of families.**

**Display: White cloth, candle, statue of St. Joseph and Jesus, and flower and a bible**

## INTRODUCTION

Everything we know about the husband of Mary and the foster father of Jesus comes from Scripture and that has seemed too little for those who made up legends about him.

1. St Joseph was a carpenter, a working man. He wasn't rich for when he took Jesus to the Temple to be circumcised and Mary to be purified he offered the sacrifice of two turtledoves or a pair of pigeons, allowed only for those who could not afford a lamb (Luke 2:24). Despite his humble work and means, Joseph came from a royal lineage. Luke and Matthew disagree some about the details of Joseph's genealogy but they both mark his descent from David, the greatest king of Israel (Matthew 1:1-16 and Luke 3:23-38). Indeed the angel who first tells Joseph about Jesus greets him as "son of David," a royal title used also for Jesus.



2. Joseph was a compassionate, caring man. When he discovered Mary was pregnant after they had been betrothed (engaged), he knew the child was not his but was as yet unaware that she was carrying the Son of God. He knew women accused of adultery could be stoned to death, so he resolved (decided) to send her away quietly to not expose her to shame or cruelty. However, when an angel came to Joseph in a dream and told him, **20 "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins," he did as the angel told him and took Mary as his wife. (Matthew 1:19-25).**

2. When the angel came again to tell him that his family was in danger, he immediately left everything he owned, all his family and friends, and fled to a strange country with his young wife and the baby. He waited in Egypt without question until the angel told him it was safe to go back (Matthew 2:13-23).

## Activity

- 1) From whose lineage is Joseph the father of Jesus?
- 2) Explain how St Joseph felt after learning that Mary was pregnant of a child which was not his?
- 3) Explain why Joseph and his family flee to Egypt?

Do the following Scrabble

1. RETNEAPC	
2. DEHTROETB	
3. RESTOF THERFA	

**Remember, O most pure spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, my great protector, Saint Joseph that no one ever had recourse to your protection, or implored your aid without obtaining relief. Confiding therefore in your goodness, I come before you. Do not turn down my petitions, foster father of the Redeemer, but graciously receive them. Amen.**