

Reflection for last Sunday

Reflection for the 5TH Sunday of Lent B, 2015



Fr. Tom says:

Serious business this week!

In case we have lost sight of the purpose of Lent, Jesus puts us straight. He is preparing himself for his impending death. He accepts this mission willingly, in obedience to the Father. We are invited to share in this victory and in the suffering so that the life Jesus won for us will be truly something that we cherish and that sets us free.

The first part of John's Gospel on Sunday is spent clarifying who Jesus is. He is the one promised by God, the Messiah, the one who will set us free and redeem us from the clutches and shackles of sin. Then Jesus tells us how he is going to do this – he will give away his life for us. And throughout the Gospel we are reminded that Jesus does this to give glory or to honour God. Although honour can be used in different ways, true honour is recognised (by others) in the one who fulfils his purpose and destiny in life. We honour or give glory to God because God fulfils the promises he made to us and for the most magnanimous and loving way in which he does this. God never gives the impression that he saves, helps, supports and forgives us out of a sense of duty but from the heartfelt desire of a true lover – and this is unmistakably truly honourable. Despite all the signs Jesus has given the people, the leaders still fail to recognise and honour Jesus who is obedient to the Father. Jesus is honourable because he fulfils the Father's will out of love not out of duty.

This week we have celebrated two great Saints: St Patrick and St Joseph - two great men of honour. Both fulfilled difficult missions. They both help us to understand the importance and value of trust. Joseph was asked to believe that Mary was pregnant through the power of God, that the baby would be the Saviour of the world. Patrick was sent back to the people who had mistreated him as a slave for six years despite the suffering he had been through and the fear that his mission must have invoked. We even catch a glimpse of fear in Jesus as he thinks about asking God to relieve him of his mission, but his love of the Father and for us is greater than his fear, and he had learned to trust his Father.

The invitation that Jesus makes to us this week is to follow him, to walk with him through the final hours of his life. For, whenever we walk with someone, their spirit permeates into our lives and vice versa. In walking with Jesus, Jesus is reminded why he makes this journey because he experiences our needs, our frailty and our richness, our value and our goodness. In turn, by walking with Jesus we learn from Jesus his deep, deep trust in and love for the Father.

Jeremiah offers us some welcome words of reassurance. He tells us that the Lord has written his law – the law of love – deep within our being. In fact this law was written there as we were born. Journeying with Jesus we will be led into an ever deeper understanding of the strength and power of this law of love as he sets us free from the power of evil that hides this law from our sight. Jeremiah then leaves us with these words of reassurance for our journey, as the Lord says to us *"they will all know me, the least no less than the greatest . . . since I will forgive their iniquity and never call their sin to mind."* Jer. 31:34.

In trust, let us honour Jesus by journeying closely with him during these final few days of Lent!