

**Homily – John 2: 13-25**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent Year B**  
**06/07 March 2021, Soeey**

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“Anyone can become angry”, says Aristotle, the Greek Philosopher, and he continues: “getting angry is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way-that is not within everyone’s power and is not easy”.

Abraham Lincoln, the 16<sup>th</sup> President of the United States of America was righteously angry at slavery and remained a vocal opponent of slavery. And today he is known as one of the greatest American Presidents. Martin Luther King, Junior an American Baptist Minister and activist who became the most visible spokesperson and leader in the civil rights movement from 1954 through 1968 was definitely angry at the racial discrimination. He played a pivotal role in advancing civil rights in America and has won a Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to fight racial inequality. Mahatma Gandhi couldn’t stay silent at the racial discrimination against the “untouchables” by the “high castes” in India ...

Now, coming down to our ordinary levels of day to day life: If we happen to see a bully, beating up on a young kid, or if we see a thief stealing an old woman's purse, or a group of people being catty and mean to an innocent person, we turn indignant, we become angry. The Lord God has wired us in such a way that most healthy human beings are angry inside when we see evil and injustice being done to someone.

Well, Today's Gospel gives us the dramatic account of Jesus' cleansing the Temple of its merchants and money-changers, followed by a prediction of His death and Resurrection. The abuses which kindled the prophetic indignation of Jesus were the conversion of God's Temple into a "noisy market place" by the animal merchants, and into a "hideout of thieves" by the money-changers with their grossly unjust business practices – sacrilege in God's Holy Place. Jesus' reaction to this commercialized Faith was fierce. Since no weapons were allowed inside the Temple, Jesus had to construct his own weapon, a whip of cords to drive out the merchants and money-changers from the Court of the Gentiles.

This unique event in the life of Jesus is an event, at once baffling and revealing. The meek Jesus suddenly turns furious. The reason is simple. It was all because of

His intimate relationship to His Father. Jesus is extremely firm when He says: “take these things away; you shall not make my Father’s house a house of trade”. Yes! Only if my father is dear to me, my father’s house will be dear to me and I will protect it with jealous care.

Now, a man was driving without his seatbelt when he spotted a patrol car right behind him. He grabbed for the belt and put it on. But it was too late, and the red lights began to flash.

“You weren’t wearing your seatbelt,” said the officer. “Yes, I was,” said the man, “and if you don’t believe me, ask my wife.” “So how about it, ma’am?” asked the cop. “Officer,” she said, “I’ve been married to this man for forty years, and there’s one thing I’ve learned: Never argue with him when he’s drunk! Just give him a ticket for not wearing the seat belt.”

In today’s Gospel, Jesus doesn’t bother to argue with the unjust merchants and moneychangers who have converted the Temple of Jerusalem into a noisy “marketplace” and a “hideout of thieves.” Instead, he frightens them with his angry order and chases them away, holding a whip in his hands.

Now, when asked on what authority He is acting so unconventionally, Jesus makes a qualitative leap in His

argument and affirms:” The house my Father made is not of brick and mortar, it is My own body, Myself, it is the handiwork of my Father. The temple built and inbuilt by My Father is My Body. My whole person is framed and filled by My Father. Your desecration of the material temple is symbolic of desecrating Me. You may destroy this temple of My body, but in three days My Father will raise it anew more glorious”.

Yes! The glory of His Father is the principal priority of Jesus. The passion for His Father’s glory plays so vital a role in Jesus’ life that His person and actions can be understood only in terms of His filial relationship with His Father.

I think it is good to examine the depth of our own relationship with God our Father, and to see if we maintain a close relationship with Him in our daily life, making Him the very centre of our own existence. And we need to remember dear friends that we are the temples of the Holy Spirit: St. Paul reminds us that we are God’s temples, body and soul, because the Spirit of God dwells in us. Hence, we are expected to cleanse our hearts: of pride, hatred, jealousy, and all evil thoughts, desires, and plans. Let us welcome Jesus into our hearts

and lives during this Lent by repentance and the renewal of our lives.

As St. James 4:8 would remind us: “Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you”, let us resolve during this Sacred Season to draw nearer to the Lord, to stay closer to the Lord Day by day. God bless you all, **Amen.**