

From the Pastor
April 2, 2023
Palm Sunday

Betrayal

At the Last Supper in the upper room, our blessed Lord tells his Apostle, Judas Iscariot, *“What thou dost, do quickly.”* The other Apostles believe that Jesus is instructing him to go out to purchase what is needed for the Passover meal, but Jesus already knows Judas’ heart. And sadly, Judas accordingly does the deed of darkness that he has plotted out of jealousy and self-centeredness. He “sells-out” his friend and Master to those who wish to destroy Him. Judas’ kiss was a lie, for with it, he showed not love, but cold-hearted betrayal against Love Himself.

Although we will not betray our Lord for 30 pieces of silver or hand Him over with a false kiss, as Disciples of Christ we must always be aware of the poisonous sin of **calumny**. As Judas was directly unfaithful to the Lord and, we too bear false witness when we engage in any kind of **gossip**. As Christians we must be cautious to not fall into this *seemingly innocuous* behavior which is in fact an act of betrayal and is very destructive. As our dear Lord teaches us in the Gospel... *“It is not what enters one’s mouth that defiles; but what comes out of the mouth is what defiles one.”* (Matthew 15:11)

We should be aware that we can destroy others with our ungoverned tongues or merely by lending an ear to malicious talk. There is a saying that goes “listening to gossip...is gossip”. How true! If there are no listeners, there would never be any gossip. The harm of gossip does not only exist in the “betrayal” of others, but the harm also lies in what we do to ourselves when we engage in it. Whether we practice gossip through speech or as passive listeners, there is no way we can continue to grow spiritually when we engage in this behavior. Spiritual growth can only take place within us in an environment completely free of any ill will.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church at #2479 teaches us about ‘Offenses Against Truth.’ Detraction and calumny destroy the *reputation and honor of one’s neighbor*. Honor is the social witness given to human dignity, and everyone enjoys a natural right to the honor of his name and reputation and to respect. Thus, detraction and calumny offend against the virtues of justice and charity.

Some of us may pride ourselves in refraining from gossip, yet as weak human beings, we may still (unknowingly) have big a problem with it. It’s possible that though we keep our tongues silent, we might keep our ears open for any “juicy talk” that can fall our way. We might also try to “shake the tree” if we believe another person has some “chatter” or “dirt” to share with us. This is almost always done in an apparently innocent manner (recall the “kiss” of Judas), often by simply mentioning the name of someone about whom those with whom we are conversing may have strong opinions.

As we begin Holy Week, let us keep in mind, amongst many memories of our dear Lord's Passion, that act of betrayal, hidden in the guise of a kiss. Gossip is a betrayal in a sense, as it rescinds the active commandment given to us by almighty God: To live out our lives as His true disciples, we must "love God with all our heart, with all our mind, and with all our soul...and our neighbor as ourselves." Let us be aware of any tendency we have toward gossip and remind ourselves that gossip is the enemy of the love and faithfulness that we should render unto God. Therefore, in His Truth, what we do as Christians, we must do quickly ...and that is to **LOVE**...our neighbor as ourselves!

Please make use of this Holy Week to grow in holiness. We should make every effort to attend the Liturgies of Holy Week. All of us (myself included) should make our confessions during Holy Week so that we may celebrate Easter with soul and heart renewed. Please see the schedule for the times for confession. Remember **Confessions will be heard on Monday April 3rd after the 9.00AM Mass and then from 4.00PM to 5.30PM and then from 7.00PM until 8.00PM.**

Holy Thursday: On Holy Thursday there will be no morning Mass. However, there will be **Morning Prayer at 9.00AM in the Church.** The **Mass of the Lord's Supper** is celebrated at 7.00 in the evening. On Holy Thursday we celebrate the Institution of the Blessed Eucharist, the Sacred Priesthood, and Our Lord's command of Charity. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will continue until 10.00PM in the Church.

Good Friday: On Good Friday there will be **Morning Prayer at 9.00AM in the Church.** Confessions will be heard on Good Friday from 10.00AM until 12 Noon. The Solemn Liturgy of the Passion and Death of Our Lord with the Veneration of the Cross and Holy Communion will be at **3.00PM.** There will be the Stations of the Cross at 7.00PM. And confessions will be heard from 8.00PM until 9.00PM

Holy Saturday: On Holy Saturday there will be **Morning Prayer in the Church at 9.00AM.** After morning prayer there will be the traditional blessing of the food that will be eaten at Easter at **9.30AM.** The Great and Holy Vigil of Ester will be celebrated at 7.00pm on Saturday evening.

May we remind you that there is no 5.00PM mass on Holy Saturday and that on Easter Sunday Masses will be at 8.00AM, 9.30AM, and 11.00AM

Please see the Bulletin for the complete schedule.

May we all have a very Blessed and Holy Week.

In Jesus and Mary,
Monsignor James F. Pereda