

# Journeying Together

## Third Week of Lent: The Clearing of the Temple



### OPENING RESPONSES

Reader: We gather in the name of the Father

**All: Who sees the suffering of the world  
and hears the cry of the poor;  
the Father who yearns that people will come to know his love  
and justice and bring them to birth in the lives of all his children.**

Reader: We gather in the name of the Son

**All: Who saw and named cruelty, injustice and prejudice –  
reaching out to those cast aside by society  
and helping them to know their worth and value as children of God.**

Reader: We gather in the name of the Holy Spirit

**All: Who opens our eyes to see the suffering of our brothers and sisters—  
and our ears to hear those whose lives a blighted by injustice;  
who opens our hearts to the love of God – to know it for ourselves  
and to share it with others.**

Reader: We gather...

**All: (*making the Sign of the Cross*) in the name of the Father  
and of the Son  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

## GOSPEL READING – John 2: 13-25

*Listen as the Gospel is read. It can help to close your eyes—or look at the person—or the image on the screen. Choose the one that suits you.*

## PERSONAL TIME WITH THE GOSPEL

*Think about the Gospel – and all that happens and then ponder for yourself*

- What is it that makes Jesus so angry?
- Was Jesus' reaction appropriate – or a bit over the top?
- What lesson was he trying to teach the people who witnessed his actions and heard his words?

## GROUP REFLECTION

*Here are some thoughts to help you to reflect together on the Gospel.*

- What emotional journey did the disciples go on from heading up the hill to going back down again?
- How did it change their view of Jesus?
- Why does Jesus choose to have people accompany him during the Transfiguration rather than doing it alone?

## LISTENING TOGETHER – OPTION 1

*Here are some thoughts drawn from the Gospel. As you listen or read them, make a note of any that strike you – either because they open up a new idea – or because they challenge you – or... any other reason!*

- Jesus is angry because he sees something that makes life difficult for others.
- Jesus acts to highlight the wrong he sees being done.
- Jesus tunes into a deep feeling of anger and injustice in himself – he does not act in temper or to hurt other people.
- Jesus uses the incident to show God's desire that people can come and spend time in prayer and worship without having to jump through hoops to do so.
- People are angry with Jesus – but he continues to argue his cause and to help them to see the bigger picture.

- Jesus sees into people's hearts – and see the deep goodness – or the deep selfishness in there.
- Jesus' deepest desire is to let people know that God loves them with an unconditional and unending love.

*Share Together:*

- What strikes me about how Jesus deals with a deep feeling of anger against something that is not allowing people to live life to the full?
- What does Jesus teach me about the deep feelings I have in my own life, maybe of anger against injustice, or other strong emotion?
- How do we discern between negative or selfish anger (or other deep emotion) and a God-given response to something that needs to be dealt with?

## LISTENING TOGETHER – OPTION 2

*The series "Broken" is set in the north of England and shows the life of a parish priest and how he accompanies people in all sorts of circumstances. Without wishing to spoil the series, we will use a few extracts which will help us to think about Jesus' actions and how they might apply today.*

*Our first scene is one in which a young woman responds to something that has happened in her life. Her mother has become addicted to gambling with devastating consequences for her family. The young woman takes matters into her own hands. She is powerless to change things and Fr Michael recognises this and uses it as the basis of his homily.*

*Fr Michael has had several conversations with the young woman's mother but sees that the issue is even greater than what has happened to this family. His parish is in an area with a lot of poverty and he sees how easy it is for his people to fall into the spiral of debt... here is a scene where he speaks out against what he sees.*

*And finally, a conversation between Fr Michael and the young woman which focuses on resolving anger in a different way.*

- How does Fr Michael's anger echo Jesus' anger? Who is it directed at? And who *isn't* it directed at?
- How is his anger different from that of the young woman?
- How might the anger raised by the issue of compulsive gambling – or other social problem – be channelled into making a real difference to people's lives?

## REFLECTION AND ACTION POINT FOR THE WEEK

*In your journal this week, you are invited to look back over your life and reflect on times when you have had a strong reaction to something. Think about times when those feelings seemed to lead you closer to God – when it led you to act in a way that was life-giving to yourself and to others. Do not judge yourself – that can close down honest reflection. What seems to leave you feeling at rights with yourself and with God? What leaves you feeling that you are missing the mark somehow? Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as to what to do with the emotions and what they are leading you to do and to be.*

## CLOSING PRAYER

**All: You have the message of eternal life, O Lord.**

Reader: The law of the Lord is perfect, it revives the soul.  
The rule of the lord is to be trusted, it gives wisdom to the simple.

**All: You have the message of eternal life, O Lord.**

Reader: The precepts of the Lord are right, they gladden the heart.  
The command of the Lord is clear it gives light to the eyes.

**All: You have the message of eternal life, O Lord.**

Reader: The fear of the Lord is holy, abiding for ever,  
The decrees of the Lord are truth, and all of them just.

**All: You have the message of eternal life, O Lord.**

Reader: They are more to be desired than gold, than the purest of gold,  
and sweeter are they than honey, than honey from the comb.

**All: You have the message of eternal life, O Lord. Amen.**