

REFLECTIONS 3rd SUNDAY OF LENT 2021.
THE CLEANSING.

Wherever there is more than one person, there ought to be regulations, rules, and laws to govern the well-being of the group. It is in line with this, that the Israelite community had to have regulations as they prepared to enter the promised land in Mount Sinai; hence the **Ten Commandments**. The commandments are there to **guide and lead the community**. The Ten Commandments point out the direction to heaven if we observe and adhere to them. The first three commandments deal with the relationship between God and His people, whereas the rest deal with human relationships.

Jesus teaches the new community of God by summarizing the Ten Commandments into two: **LOVE OF GOD AND LOVE OF NEIGHBOUR.**

-He is telling us in the first three commandments that **He is not distant** from us.

-He is telling us to avoid **adoring** other gods of materialism and luxuries and to **respect His name**.

-He is telling us not only to **keep the Sunday Holy BUT ALL DAYS HOLY.**

-He is telling us to **love and respect NOT ONLY** our parents **BUT THAT ALL** people and properties deserve our respect, hence, LOVE OF NEIGHBOR.

-He is telling us not to **hurt** others, and to **pray for those who curse and speak ill of us**.

-He is telling us to **respect and love** our vocation, whether it is marriage, religious life, or the single life and not to destroy other people's vocation by being **unfaithful or insincere**.

-He is telling us to avoid adultery by **thought, desire, or deed**.

-He is telling us to avoid destroying other people's property.

This is the central call for the commandments. They should become beacons in our lives, not only as Christians but as human beings.

It is in view of this that we find Jesus ***cleansing the temple*** of all those things which did not line up with love and respect for a worshipping place. He became so furious and His anger couldn't be hidden at all. The human part of Jesus was evident when the people ***commercialized the worshipping place***. We can visualize what was happening in the temple; ***selling, buying, coins dropping, animals out of control, coins of different nationalities being exchanged, cheating, bitterness, and insincere arguments***. He couldn't hold back, He had to act. He had to ***cleanse***.

The church has provided us with this Lenten period to ***search, find, and cleanse*** the debris in our lives. What do we need to ***drive out, scatter, or take out from our way of life this lent?***

We must look for the ***merchants and money changers within us***. The opportunity is there through ***prayer, fasting and almsgiving and keeping the commandments and cleansing through the Sacrament of RECONCILIATION***. We should ask ourselves here and now.

-Do we put business and our own interest before God?

-Do we realize our bodies are temples of God hence should be kept Holy?

-Do you give God the first place in your heart?

What sort of dwelling have you prepared in your heart for God?

St. Paul in the second reading says it without fear that we must ***proclaim without apology the crucified Savior*** noting the fact that this will ***scandalize and shock*** many like the Jews and Greeks. We must adhere to the commandments without fear. They will set us free because they are God-given ***avenues to liberate us and genuinely cleanse our spiritual life***.

