

Homily for November 19, 2021

*The Temple of our Hearts.<sup>1</sup>*

**Jesus Dwells in the Temple:** Why would one go to the temple? It was a sacred palace, unique and set apart, the place where God dwelt in the Holy of Holies, and a place of worship and sacrifice to God. As a young boy, Jesus called it “my Father’s house”. With that same affirmation in his heart, Jesus came to the temple to drive out those who were desecrating its purpose, those who would use the things of God in their own name and for their own gain, and those who would misrepresent the face of God upon the earth. Jesus came to drive them out, for his very mission was to reveal the face of the Father—the Father’s authentic face, not how others would imagine him to be.

**Driving Out Our Inner Thieves:** In our own day, Jesus wishes to purify our image of the Father, to “drive out” of the temple of our hearts images of God that are misconstrued. There are thieves in our interior which attempt to rob the faith, hope, and love that give it light, life, and a future. Invoking the light of the Holy Spirit, we can ask him: Are there fears or doubts which tug at my heart, keeping me from “letting go and letting God”? Are there insecurities which make me believe I must earn my worth before God and others that my own perfection makes me worthy of him? Is there a second-guessing in my heart which makes me think I must make myself loveable, disbelieving that it is God himself who makes me loveable?

**The Temple of Our Hearts:** Just as every day Jesus was in the temple area, so every day he dwells anew in our hearts to cast out the thieves and the robbers and reveal the face of the Father. He awaits the acceptance of those who see him. The scribes and the Pharisees were looking for a way to put him to death. His overturning of tables was too threatening for them; it came too close to undoing their self-made world order. But perhaps we can find our place among the crowd, hanging on his every word. His words are spirit and life; may we allow them to speak truth and grace into our sacred, inner temple—our heart, which is his preferred dwelling place.

Resolution: Lord, today by your grace I will put my headphones aside and renew some of my interior headspace for God.

**Let us pray:** Lord Jesus, just as you came into the temple with passion and enthusiasm to defend and claim what was your Father’s, remember also that I am yours and come to my defense before the lies and doubts which can sometimes plague me and those I love. You reveal that the name of God is mercy, that his face is love and forgiveness and life. I wish to welcome this grace into my life. Come, Holy Spirit, and speak your truth in these places where I need it most.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.epriest.com/reflections>